



January 7, 2014

Dear Administrators, Teachers, and Parents:

The Region 4 Education Service Center (Region 4 ESC) is currently recruiting 30 Science Teacher Mentors to participate in the 2014-2015 Region 4 Science Collaborative. The Collaborative is funded by a grant from the Texas Regional Collaboratives (TRC) for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching and the Texas Education Agency (TEA). All middle school science teachers and biology teachers from public, charter, and private schools are cordially invited to participate in the Region 4 Science Collaborative.

This year the Region 4 Science Collaborative will focus on life science. Each Science Teacher Mentor (STM) will receive a minimum of 100 hours of professional development in the life sciences as well as instructional strategies to raise student achievement. As a member of Region 4, there will be no charge for your teachers to attend any of the Collaborative professional development sessions at Region 4 ESC.

The Region 4 Science Collaborative is also recruiting immersion campuses to participate in the 2014-2015 grant. Campuses wishing to be an immersion campus must target at least one STAAR tested grade level at which they will focus training and evaluation. For each targeted grade level there must be at least one STM (preferably two) at the targeted grade level. All of the teachers on the campus at the targeted grade level must either be served as a Cadre Member or be additional Teacher Mentors. Cadre Members on the campus must receive at least 12 hours of mentoring and 12 hours of professional development through the Region 4 Science Collaborative. Applicants applying as an immersion campus will receive additional points on the scoring rubric for applications.

The benefits to the science teachers include:

- The opportunity to receive a minimum of **100 hours** of sustained, *high quality* science professional development in science content **at no charge**
- **Free** professional development from various informal science education agencies
- **Free** materials
- Networking opportunities with other teachers
- Paid registration to attend the Region 4 Science Conference in February 2015 at the Region 4 Education Service Center
- Creating a positive impact on science education within the classroom, campus, and district
- Training in utilizing technology in the science classroom
- **Up to \$500 of stipend money for the completion of grant guidelines**

The total benefit for each teacher participant is approximately \$3700, and all of this is offered free of charge to teachers accepted into the Region 4 Science Collaborative. A teacher application form is attached and may be duplicated for additional applicants.

The TRC requires a program evaluation component addressing student achievement. In return for the professional development, equipment, and instructional resources, the Region 4 Science Collaborative and the TRC will require access to STAAR data from the 2014 and 2015 administrations for both the teacher and the grade level. The data will include:

- The number of students taught by the Teacher Mentor
- The number of students with state assessment data in science for 2015
- The number of students who **did not** meet standard on the state assessment in science for 2015
- The number of students who **did** meet standard on the state assessment in science for 2015

The data from these assessments will be provided to the Region 4 Science Collaborative for use in evaluating the Region 4 Science Collaborative program as well as the TRC. The data for the TRC will be submitted through a secure internet portal, coded by each teacher's UT EID, reported only in aggregate form and will not be made available on an individual basis to anyone outside the Region 4 Science Collaborative evaluation staff or the TRC evaluation staff.

In addition to attending professional development sessions at Region 4, STMs will spend time on their campuses collecting data and providing 12 contact hours of mentoring to the other science teachers on the campus.

Attached is the current draft of professional development sessions offered for the 2014-2015 Region 4 Science Collaborative. Many professional development trainings will be offered with a majority taking place during the summer and on weekends.

The teachers will need to complete the application form and return it by **May 9, 2014**. As part of the application the building principal must also complete the attached letter of support and release of data. A template of the letter of support and release of data is attached. Applications and letters may be mailed to Jennifer Wellman at Region 4 ESC, 7145 W. Tidwell, Houston, TX 77092 or faxed to 713.744.0646. If you need additional information, please call 713.744.6807 or email jennifer.wellman@esc4.net.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wellman
Education Specialist, Science Solutions

Enclosures