



## Innovation Zones Pilot Project Application

Chapter 263 establishes a five-year pilot project (FY 2014-18) to allow groups of school districts to collaborate in providing innovative education programs and activities and sharing district resources. The application must be made to the Commissioner by **February 1, 2013**. To participate in this pilot project to improve student and school outcomes, a group of two or more school districts must collaborate with school staff and receive formal school board approval to form a partnership. The partnership must develop a plan to provide challenging programmatic options for students, create professional development opportunities for educators, increase student engagement and connection and challenging learning opportunities for students, or demonstrate efficiencies in delivering financial and other services.

The plan must establish:

- collaborative educational goals and objectives;
- strategies and processes to implement those goals and objectives, including a budget process with periodic expenditure reviews;
- valid and reliable measures to evaluate progress in realizing the goals and objectives;
- an implementation timeline; and
- other applicable conditions, regulations, responsibilities, duties, provisions, fee schedules, and legal considerations needed to fully implement the plan.

The following information must be contained in an innovation zones application:

- Collaborative inter-district plan
- Goal(s) of collaborative plan
- Formal School Board approval by all participating districts
- Outline of plan to document progress
- How the plan might be replicated by other districts
- District Names
- District Numbers
- Superintendents
- Superintendent's Phone Numbers
- Superintendent's Email Addresses
- District Office Addresses (Mailing Address, City, State, ZIP)
- Name/Title/Phone Number/Email Address of Person(s) who Prepared Plan
- Date of Board Approval of Plans
- Date of Submission to MDE

The Commissioner will convene an advisory group composed of a teacher appointed by Education Minnesota, a principal appointed by the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, a school board member appointed by the Minnesota School Boards Association, and a superintendent appointed by the Minnesota Association of School Administrators. In consultation with the advisory group, the Commissioner must select between three and six qualified applicants by April 1, 2013. The Commissioner must submit a report by February 1, 2018.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin McHenry, Director of Government Relations, at 651.582.8292.

Applications can be e-mailed to [kevin.mchenry@state.mn.us](mailto:kevin.mchenry@state.mn.us).