

## OPPORTUNITY FOR SCHOOLS INTERESTED IN CLOSING GAPS IN MIDDLE GRADES MATH for 2016-17 SCHOOL YEAR

**APPLICATIONS DUE WEDNESDAY, May 11, 2016 at 3PM**

We know that proficiency in eighth grade math provides access to rigorous high school courses, predicts college completion and increases access to high-demand jobs. Yet, only one-third of BPS eighth graders are currently proficient in math. **In response to this quiet crisis in our schools, EdVestors has launched Zeroing in on Math: an initiative to dramatically improve student proficiency in middle grades (4-8) math across Boston.** Our ultimate goal: increase the number of Boston schools that are able to educate at least 75% of their students to proficiency in math by eighth grade.

As part of the Zeroing in on Math initiative, EdVestors seeks to partner with charter and district schools that are committed to improving the math achievement of their students in the middle grades, defined here as grades 4-8. We know from our research that improving math outcomes for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will require a multi-pronged approach. (For more information on Zeroing in on Math, [click here](#).) One common challenge we heard when visiting schools and talking with educators is that students arrive in any given grade with a wide range of math preparation.

**We are looking to widen the learning community of schools to partner with EdVestors to help answer the following question: how can technology-based or other interventions be part of the solution for closing knowledge and skill gaps in math in grades 4-8?**

Eight schools participated during the 2015-2016 school year implementing seven unique interventions. Schools interested in using the lessons learned from the 2015-2016 cohort and exploring and implementing intervention strategies, with the goal to identify other successful practices that can then be shared more broadly with other schools, are encouraged to apply. For more information on the first year of the partnership, check out the cohort featured in the [Boston Globe](#).

### **Eligibility**

All public schools in Boston enrolling 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, or in the process of growing to include 8<sup>th</sup> grade, are welcome to apply. This includes BPS district and charter schools of all types (Commonwealth charters, Horace Mann in-district, pilot, Innovation and traditional district schools). Within these schools, any grades - 4 through 8 - can be the target of the school's gap-closing plan.

### **Expectations for Participating Schools and Teachers**

To build a rich learning community, all participating schools and teachers will need to commit to:

- participate in training on their chosen solution and related instructional practices;
- be willing to open their classrooms to observation and feedback by other teachers and EdVestors staff on a regular basis, at least monthly;
- provide access to data related to student progress and outcomes, including student-level data;
- be willing to administer a one hour grade-level diagnostic pre-test in September and a one hour grade-level post-test in June to measure student growth across the cohort;
- attend at least two meetings to share lessons learned and challenges with colleagues from other schools, on either your chosen intervention or blended learning models;

- be willing to participate in any research activities related to the Zeroing in on Math Initiative.

### **Expectations of EdVestors**

Participating schools and teachers can expect EdVestors to:

- provide lessons learned from the current cohort to help inform decisions for any school looking to switch interventions or refine their current intervention;
- work with math companies to coordinate purchasing and training, when multiple schools have chosen the same program;
- provide feedback from classroom observations to support implementation and learn together about what works;
- collect and analyze data to track outcomes; and
- coordinate formal and informal opportunities to share lessons learned across participating schools.

### **Guidelines and Criteria**

Schools interested in applying for participation will need to demonstrate:

1. Time in their school schedule for additional and/or more personalized math instruction on a regular basis during the school day, including extended learning time where applicable. Some common examples of additional time, though not an exclusive list, include an additional block of math instruction, intervention time, or study groups.
2. Computer-access (notebooks, tablets, computers) for participating students, if needed.
3. Willingness of teachers to work collaboratively with at least one other teacher in their school, as well as teachers across schools.

Schools may select an intervention solution from the list in the attached application, or may propose their own, based on their school's needs and approach to teaching math.

### **Funding:**

Total investments per school will range in size from \$5,000 to \$12,000 depending on the scope of the project and number of students served. Project costs, as described in your budget, may include costs paid directly by EdVestors to vendors (i.e. some costs for software/materials, training and support) as well as funds allocated directly to schools to use to implement the gap-closing strategy.

### **Questions Regarding Application Guidelines:**

We encourage all interested school applicants to contact us with any questions about this opportunity or the overall Zeroing in on Math initiative. Please reach Karen Levin at [levin@edvestors.org](mailto:levin@edvestors.org) or by phone at 617-585-5740.

### **Timeline:**

April 1, 2016	Application available at <a href="http://www.edvestors.org">www.edvestors.org</a>
May 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Applications due by 3:00pm to <a href="mailto:mathimpact@edvestors.org">mathimpact@edvestors.org</a>
Mid May 2016	Participating Schools Selected & Notified
Late May TBD	Information session for selected schools to learn about different intervention options
Late May/mid June	Visit exemplary classroom to see model of your intervention in action.
Mid to late June	Goal setting conversation with Director of Zeroing in on Math, Karen Levin.

## APPLICATION for Closing Gaps in Middle Grades Math for School Year 2016-2017

Applications are due Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 3 p.m.

EdVestors will consider applications from schools wishing to employ targeted intervention strategies with the goal to close knowledge and skill gaps and to increase the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency in math in grades 4-8.

### SECTION 1: ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

*Note: Applying schools may have a variety of grade configurations, ie. K8, middle schools, 6-12, but must have an eighth grade. However, the target population for your gap-closing strategy may be in any grades 4th-8th. For example, if your school begins in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and you wish to target newly entering students, you are welcome to limit your focus to 5<sup>th</sup> grade.*

School Name:	
Grades and number of students directly served by this application (check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 4 # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 5 # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 6 # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 7 # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8 # _____
Participating Teachers (names and grades)	
Total Funds Needed: (see expense worksheet)	
Additional Schools or Partners (if any):	

### Applicant Information

Lead Contact Name:	
Title:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
School Phone:	
Cell Phone:	
E-mail:	
Fiscal Agent, if any. Please include your BEDF account number if using BEDF as your fiscal agent	

## SECTION 2: WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Please answer the following questions about your gap-closing strategy in no more than three typed pages.

1. What problem are you trying to address? What students will you be targeting and why? What do your math data tell you about the students at your school?
2. Describe the intervention strategy you wish to implement, and why you think technology or another approach may be a good solution. Include information on what activities will take place, the frequency and duration of the intervention or gap-closing strategy, and who will be responsible for implementing the intervention.
3. When in your school schedule will this occur? How have you identified time in your school schedule for this to happen?
4. What other interventions or gap-closing strategies, if any, are you currently using or have you tried recently? How successful have these been? What have been the challenges or barriers to success?
5. Who will be responsible for the overall implementation of the proposed intervention or gap-closing strategy?
6. Why do you want to be part of the Zeroing in on Math intervention cohort?

Through pilots with the first intervention cohort this school year, EdVestors has identified the following programs as possible options for participating schools. These interventions focus on building students' conceptual knowledge or fluency, or both. Many use a technology web-based platform. For schools that are selected to participate, EdVestors will host an information session in late May for schools and teachers to learn more about these options before schools are asked to make a final selection of a single program to implement in the fall.

**7a. Let us know which options below may be of most interest and why, or suggest one of your own.**  
**Note: Your selections below are an expression of interest and do not commit you.**

### Tier 1 Blended Learning Options

- ☐ [Carnegie Learning- MATHia](#)
- ☐ [iReady Math](#)
- ☐ [Reflex Math](#) (Targeted at math facts)
- ☐ [ST Math](#)
- ☐ [TenMarks](#)

### Tier 2/3 Paper-and-Pencil Option

- ☐ [Do The Math Now!](#)  
(Two units: Fractions and Multiplication and Division)

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**7b. Why are the selected programs of interest?**

### SECTION 3: WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU NEED?

Describe how the funds will be used and provide expense details in chart below. Please add or delete rows as needed. Also, include any in-kind support provided by the school. Some examples are provided below.

NOTE: Initial training may be funded and coordinated directly by EdVestors if multiple schools choose the same program. Regardless, the budget should include an estimate for the selected math program, based on the formula below, though the actual amount may be more or less depending on the option selected. You may also include stipends for teachers to collaborate or receive professional development, though this may also be an in-kind contribution by the school.

EXPENSES	Amount
Software License/Program Materials and Training (budget \$50 per student, though the actual cost may be more or less depending on the option selected)	
Teacher Planning, Development and Collaboration (ie. looking at data, planning lessons, sharing lessons learned)	
Other	
IN-KIND SCHOOL SUPPORT	Description
# and type of computers available, if needed	
Time for planning or professional development for teachers	
Other	

To help us better determine the level of support your school may need for a technology-focused solution, please answer the following question. Your answer will not impact whether your school is selected for participation.

Is there someone at your school who can trouble-shoot technology issues with hardware devices and/or the Internet    YES    MAYBE    NO

If YES, who (name and title/role)? \_\_\_\_\_