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\$4.2 million in grants awarded to create T-STEM Academies, Early College High Schools

AUSTIN – The Texas Education Agency has awarded \$4.2 million in grants to establish three new Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Academies and seven new Early College High Schools (ECHS) throughout Texas.

Early College High Schools are innovative high schools that allow students who may not otherwise consider attending college an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit. The target population includes first-generation college-goers, low-income students, minority students, and English language learners – groups that have historically been underrepresented in higher education.

Early colleges provide “rigor with support”. They offer students numerous dual credit and Advanced Placement courses and provide counseling, mentoring, and tutoring assistance in order to help students succeed. Most Early Colleges are located on the college or university campus.

Each of the new ECHS locations will receive a \$425,000 grant. The grants commence Feb. 1, 2008, and conclude May 31, 2010. The new grantees include:

- Cedar Hill ISD, Cedar Hill Ninth Grade Center (Cedar Hill)
- Edgewood ISD, New Campus – Westside Training and Education Center (San Antonio)
- Frenship ISD – Frenship High School (Lubbock)
- Houston Community College System – Northeast College
- Houston ISD – Academy of International Studies High School
- Houston ISD – Empowerment High School
- Mercedes ISD – Mercedes High School (Mercedes)

TEA has also awarded three new T-STEM Academy grants for the grant period March 1, 2008, through May 31, 2010. The new grantees include:

- Fruitvale Junior High and High School, Fruitvale ISD, \$300,000
- Ball High School, Galveston ISD, \$480,000

- Energized for Excellence, Houston ISD, \$480,000

T-STEM seeks to improve math and science achievement among all Texas students and to increase the number of students who enter STEM careers. The mission of T-STEM Academies is to develop school models that provide a rigorous, well-rounded education with outstanding STEM instruction. These academies will also showcase best practices in teaching and learning.

Both the T-STEM Initiative and Early College High School Program are part of the Texas High School Project, a public-private initiative working to ensure that all Texas students leave high school prepared for college and careers in the 21st century economy. The Texas High School Project is a strategic alliance of the Texas Education Agency, the Governor's Office, Texas Legislature, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the Communities Foundation of Texas.

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