



**Superintendent's Office**

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[InnovativeSchoolDistrict.org](http://InnovativeSchoolDistrict.org)

August 15, 2017

Dear Colleagues and Partners in Student Success,

As many of you may be aware, last year the North Carolina General Assembly designed and launched a new strategy in our state focused on improving student outcomes in low-performing schools. This effort, the North Carolina Innovative School District (ISD), will partner with local communities and schools across the state, with a focus on creating innovative conditions that promote student achievement. The ISD will deploy two distinct strategies in low-performing schools selected by the state, which include:

**Innovative Schools**

These are low-performing schools that have been approved by the State Board of Education to be operated under the Innovative School District (ISD) by qualified charter or education management organizations (CMO/EMO). CMO/EMO partners will work under contract for five years, with performance expectations that must be met annually. At the end of the contract, the school shall be transitioned back to the control and management of the local school district unless other options are agreed upon by the local school board, the NCISD Superintendent and the State Board of Education.

**Innovation Zones (I-Zones)**

If a local school district partners with the ISD for the transfer of a low-performing school for operation as an Innovative School, that district may apply and be considered for the creation of a locally controlled Innovation Zone (I-Zone). The I-Zone is a strategy that provides a group of low-performing schools within a local district the opportunity to benefit from additional flexibilities, often aligned with those provided to charter schools in the state. These zones and their schools are established and managed by a separate division in the local district using matching grant funds from the state.

As we prepare for the launch of our first cohort of schools in the 2018/2019 school year, the ISD will be seeking qualified charter/educational management organizations (CMO/EMO) interested in operating one of our state's approved low-performing elementary schools. CMO/EMO's interested in partnering with the ISD and our local communities in the operation of approved low-performing elementary schools should submit a Notice of Intent to Apply by 5:00 PM EST on September 29, 2017.

To learn more about this exciting new partnership strategy focused on improving student outcomes, visit the ISD webpage at <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/ncisd/> or call Eric Hall, Superintendent of the ISD at 919-807-3435.

Sincerely,

Eric Hall, Ed.D.  
Superintendent, Innovative School District

