

Public Schools of Innovation Exploration Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are the objectives of this fellowship program?

We hope that participating districts will have the opportunity to learn from successful innovative schools in South Carolina and nationally, identify potential district needs that could be addressed through the Public School of Innovation framework, and begin brainstorming potential action steps for the future

What does the programming look like?

- There will be 7 whole-group sessions from May to December
- Topics will include:
 - The possibilities offered by Public Schools of Innovation
 - Learning from similar efforts in South Carolina and across the country. One of the sessions will include a visit to a South Carolina Public School of Innovation, and the other session will include an out-of-state visit.
 - Building investment in Public Schools of Innovation, including from community, family, educators, and more
 - Effective approval and supervision of Public Schools of Innovation
 - Building visions for success in Public Schools of Innovation
- Up to six 1-hour individualized discussions about district needs / opportunities

If I'm not sure Public Schools of Innovation are right for my district, is this the right program for me?

This program is purely exploratory and there is no commitment to formally pursue Public Schools of Innovation. We believe this experience will be informative and inspire creative ideas, whether or not you choose to bring Public Schools of Innovation to your district.

What if, after completion of the program, Public Schools of Innovation doesn't seem like a good fit in my district?

As mentioned above, participating in this program does not lead to any obligation to launch a Public School of Innovation in your district. You need not take any additional steps after the end of the fellowship.

What if, after completion of the program, my district decides that a Public School of Innovation is the right next step for us?

If you choose to take additional steps toward creating a Public School of Innovation, we are happy to support your district in figuring out the best plan of action. Some districts may choose to

move forward with a council made up of community members to plan and execute a new school model in one or more schools; some may contract with an external partner to help design and launch a Public School of Innovation; some may choose to start the work in partnership with an existing school operator; and some may choose any of the many additional pathways that can help lead to thriving Public Schools of Innovation.

Who from my district should participate in the fellowship?

Participation in this fellowship is up to your discretion based on the unique makeup of your district. While a superintendent could join these workshops alone, we have seen in other communities that engaging a team of 4-6 people can pave the way for alignment across a district as you consider these big possibilities. The team leader should be a direct report of the Superintendent and the team could additionally include the superintendent, a deputy superintendent, a school board member, one or more school-based staff members, and a community member such as a representative of the chamber of commerce, a philanthropic leader, a community leader, a local representative, or a parent

What is the role of my board?

We hope that board members will participate in some programming during the fellowship. We will provide board-focused materials for districts that want to continue with the Public School of Innovation process beyond the cohort