

Request for Application

Program Guidelines

2023-2024 Communities In Schools

Authorized by Texas Education Code (TEC) §33.151-159; General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 22, 88th Texas Legislature; 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 89, Subchapter EE; and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) State Plan

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

TEA, as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA), Program Guidelines, is to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of Application Part 1 (PDF – narrative schedules) and Application Part 2 (Excel – budget schedules) to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² Grantee is defined as the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the federal government for the use of the funds provided. The term "grantee" does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors that may receive funds from a grantee. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Contact for Clarifying Information

Grant Program Contact

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US Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with the US Department of Education Appropriations Act:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$34,370,266
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	11%
Amount of federal funds	\$3,898,450
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	89%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$30,471,816

Grant Timeline

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

With the opening of the Houston program in 1979, Communities In Schools (CIS) was established in Texas to address the growing number of students dropping out of school. The Texas Legislature began funding the program in 1985 to expand the reach of the CIS program. In the 2021-2022 school year, 27 local CIS affiliates have continued to provide targeted services to over 123,912 students statewide who are at-risk of dropping out of school and/or economically disadvantaged

Ensuring youth stay in school and graduate is not simply the role of teachers or the school administration—it is a community responsibility. Students drop out for a variety of reasons, but there are usually signs that indicate a student is disengaging—lowering grades, higher absentee rate, or concerning behaviors. CIS works in collaboration with school personnel to develop and provide a comprehensive Integrated Student Support (ISS) program uniquely tailored to address unmet academic and non-academic barriers to student success. CIS staff complete a thorough campus needs assessment to identify campus needs, gaps in service, available resources, and the goals and priorities of the campus administration. CIS staff use this information to then develop a plan of service to address identified needs. In partnership with community providers, professional CIS staff provide and coordinate a range of intentionally targeted services that are provided to all students on campus and to a smaller cohort of “case-managed” students to ensure all students consistently come to school ready to learn and remain on the path to graduation.

Through the delivery of a comprehensive Integrated Student Supports (ISS) model, referred to as the “CIS Model,” the CIS program helps campuses and students achieve positive academic, attendance and behavior outcomes. CIS provides services within a multi-tiered system of support that ensures students, and their families, receive the amount and intensity of services necessary to address their unique needs or barriers to learning. The specific needs of each campus and student drive the services that CIS provides.

As part of a comprehensive campus needs assessment and in collaboration with school administration, CIS determines at least one campus goal or priority with which to align services on each campus served. CIS identifies the data used to measure each campus goal, establishes a baseline of current performance for each campus goal, establishes a target metric for each campus goal, and monitors progress throughout the year. Examples of campus goals or priorities include but are not limited to raising the graduation rate, increasing the attendance rate, and lowering disciplinary actions across campus.

Once campus goals are determined, CIS plans a variety of services intended to support the achievement of these campus goals including schoolwide services available to all students and targeted services provided to students with higher needs who have been recommended for case management. TEA defines the types of services provided as Tier I, Tier II, Tier III, and Indirect.

CIS staff document the level of student need in the areas of academics, behavior, attendance, and social services at the beginning of CIS’ relationship with a case-managed student as part of an initial assessment. This assessment contains specific data points, or indicators, CIS will use to both assess **areas** of student need as well as determine progress in academics, behavior, and attendance. For these areas of student need, TEA sets a goal

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for case-managed student growth and uses the specific indicators to determine the student outcomes in these areas. This is further outlined in the student goals and associated indicators chart below.

Student Goals and Associated Indicators

Academic Growth

85% of assessed students identified as having an academic need will show improvement in an academic growth indicator.

Indicator	Data Source	Improved	No Change	Regressed
Core Course Grades*/GPA**	Report Cards or Transcripts	Increase in at least one core course grade or GPA	No Change	Decrease in all core course grades and GPA
STAAR	STAAR Student Report Card	Data source shows student improved	No Change	Data source shows student regressed
Benchmark Data	Beginning, middle, and end of the year benchmark data	Increase in score	No Change	Decrease in score

*Growth in core course grades is determined by using an average of the student's official grades over the time the student participates in the CIS program, not including the initial grading period.

**GPA is only calculated in high school.

Behavioral Growth

75% of assessed students identified as having a behavior need will show improvement in a behavioral growth indicator.

Indicator	Data Source	Improved	No Change	Regressed
Student Conduct*	Report Card/Disciplinary Actions	Data source shows student improved in conduct	No Change	Data source shows student regressed in conduct
Mental and Behavioral Health	TEA-approved Student, Teacher, or Parent/Guardian Pre and Post Mental and Behavioral Health Survey	Data source shows student improved in mental and behavioral health	No Change	Data source shows student regressed in mental and behavioral health
College and Career Readiness	TEA-approved Student Pre and Post College and Career Readiness Survey	Data source shows student improved in college and career readiness	No Change	Data source shows student regressed in college and career readiness

*Growth in student conduct using a report card conduct grade or disciplinary actions is determined by using an average of these data over the time the student participates in the CIS program, not including the initial grading period.

Attendance Growth*

70% of assessed students identified as having an attendance need will show improvement in an attendance growth indicator.

Indicator	Data Source	Improved	No Change	Regressed
Absences	Report card and attendance records	Decrease in absences	No Change	Increase in absences
Tardies	Report card and attendance records	Decrease in tardies	No Change	Increase in tardies
Attendance Rate	Calculation: Days in attendance/Days enrolled in school * 100%	Increase in rate	No Change	Decrease in rate

**Growth in student attendance using absences or tardies is determined by using an average of the absence or tardy data over the time the student participates in the CIS program, not including the initial grading period. Growth in student attendance using the attendance rate is determined by comparing the final attendance rate for the current school year or the attendance rate over the time the student participates in the CIS program to the final attendance rate of the previous school year.*

TEA sets end of school year program goals for case-managed students. These are highlighted below.

End of Year Program Goals

Retention Rate	90% of case-managed students in grades 7-12 will stay in school.
Promotion Rate	85% of case-managed students will be promoted to the next grade level.
Graduation Rate	90% of case-managed students eligible to graduate will receive a high school diploma or a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE).

CIS affiliates that do not meet one or more of the student or end of year program goals will submit a Program Improvement Plan (PIP). Details for PIPs can be found in the current CIS Rules (TAC §89.1511) on the [TEA website](#). In addition, TEA reserves the right to create an Action Plan to address other deficiencies in grantee performance. The Action Plan would set forth actions aligned to the expectations within the CIS Grant Program Guidelines.

Campus Goals and End of Year Outcomes

CIS will identify at least one campus goal for every campus served as described in the CIS of Texas Program Manual and will document the baseline metric and a target metric for each campus goal at the beginning of the school year. Progress toward this goal is monitored throughout the year using the identified data source as available. At the end of the school year, CIS documents the end of year goal metric and determines the campus goal outcome by comparing the end of year goal metric to the baseline goal metric and the target metric. This is further outlined in the campus goals and end of year

outcomes chart below. If the end of year goal metric data is not available at close out, the campus goal outcome will be captured during the end of year reporting process.

Campus Goals and End of Year Outcomes

Data Source	Goal Met	Goal Not Met, Progress	Goal Not Met, No Progress	Data Not Available
Varies for each campus goal	End of year goal metric meets or exceeds the target goal metric	End of year goal metric does not meet the target metric, but exceeds the baseline goal metric	End of year goal metric does not exceed the baseline goal metric	End of year campus goal data is not available at the time of closeout

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility for Funding.

Eligibility List

An eligibility list with eligible CIS affiliates is posted on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cost Match Requirement.

TEA requires a 25% cost match for this program. Cost match includes cash contributions that are documented in the affiliate's accounting records.

As a reminder, other federal funds cannot be comingled or used as cost match in this CIS grant program. Do not include other federal funds or budget full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for any federally funded positions on the state grant application. While local CIS organizations may coordinate separate and distinct federally-funded services on behalf of the students served in the CIS state grant program, the federal program activities and services must stand on their own with allocable costs to the federal source or federal cost share. Thus funds, time and effort, and any cost share or match attributed to any other federally funded source may not be co-mingled with the CIS state grant program.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration's [Training and Other Resources](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision does not apply to this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

NOTE: Administrative funds include **both** direct administrative costs **and** allowable indirect costs.

Direct Administrative Costs

TEA limits the amount of direct administrative costs for this grant program to no more than 15% of the total grant award.

Indirect Costs

For this state-funded grant, the grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to **the lesser** of its current, approved unrestricted indirect cost rate or 15%.

To calculate the maximum indirect costs that can be claimed for a grant, complete the [Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet](#), located on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page.

Pre-Award Costs

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

Application Requirements and Assurances

This section identifies the types of requirements in which applicants must comply to be eligible for funding:

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)
- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)

Statutory Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Statutory Requirements.

Per Section 22.0834 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a grantee or subgrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fingerprinting Requirement.

The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program. The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. The local CIS program has a funding plan to ensure that the level of services is maintained if state funding is reduced.
2. At least 10% of the number of students in average daily attendance at each campus receiving services through this grant are students at risk of dropping out of school.
3. Each case-managed student served through this grant is a) a student at risk of dropping out of school as defined by TEC §29.081, b) a student who is eligible for a free or reduced priced lunch, c) a student who is in family conflict or crisis, or d) a student who exhibits delinquent conduct as defined by the Texas Family Code §51.03.

TEA Program Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), TEA Program Requirements.

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements. The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. The grantee is required to serve the number of case-managed students as posted on the Eligibility List. For the purposes of the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) performance measure, a case-managed student is defined as a student who receives at least two Tier II or Tier III services in two months or one who receives at least four hours of Tier II or Tier III services while enrolled in CIS during the school year.
2. All required information for students served through this grant will be entered in the secure environment of the TEA CIS Navigator (CIS-NAV) system. Data must be entered within 30 days of a program activity or service.
3. The maximum number of case-managed students to be actively served by one full-time CIS site staff is 100. A CIS site staff that works part-time would have a maximum number of case-managed students proportionate to the time worked. For example, a CIS site staff that works 50% of full-time would actively serve a maximum of 50 case-managed students. TEA may reduce the contracted number of case-managed students for programs that do not stay within the required maximum number of case-managed students per site staff. Grant funding may be reduced accordingly.

4. TEA requires a portion of the allocated funding be used to respond to mental and behavioral health needs on campuses served. A response outlining the mental and behavioral health needs identified, the services planned, the progress and outcome measures to be used, and the budget associated with these activities will be expected within the Program Information Spreadsheet due on September 15, 2023.
5. The grantee must follow all state policies and procedures in place during the 2023-2024 school year, including any updates and revisions. Applicable policies and procedures include 19 TAC, Chapter 89, Subchapter EE—CIS Rules; Texas Education Code §33.151-159; the CIS of Texas Program Manual; any addendums or requirements in this Request For Application; and accompanying documents issued by TEA. TEA will provide the grantee written notification of any updates and revisions, as necessary. The following documents are due on or before September 15, 2023:
 - a. 2022-2023 Local CIS Board Minutes
 - b. Local CIS Program Current Strategic Plan
 - c. 2023-2024 Annual Operations Plan
 - d. 2023-2024 Program Information Spreadsheet
 - e. 2023-2024 Local CIS Professional Development and Training Plan
 - f. 2023-2024 Data Verification Procedure
 - g. 2023-2024 Parent/Guardian Consent Policy/Procedure
6. The grant program will be funded by reimbursement once the NOGA has been issued and the grantee submits payment requests through the Expenditure Reporting (ER) system. See [Expenditure Reporting](#).

Program-Specific Assurances

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Provisions and Assurances.

The program-specific assurances for this grant program are listed in the Application Part 1.

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds.

Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant include only the following:

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Include from the following list any applicable activities and any other general uses of funds allowed for the grant program. If programmatic allowable activities are more specific, as appropriate use that language instead. If limitations apply, include them (e.g., specific payroll positions, required contracts, etc.).

- Stipends/fees associated with employee licensure
- Transportation for participants or parents/guardians to or from locations hosting grant activities
- Reimbursement of tuition and fees for courses/curricula directly related to the grant program
- Activities or personnel associated with re-engaging students back into school
- Activities and/or personnel to implement the CIS program
- Payroll costs
- Professional and contracted services
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials

Other Allowable Operating Costs Requiring Specific Approval in the Grant Application (6400)

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are allowable. Out-of-state travel costs should be minimal. Travel costs are allowable as long as the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items are only incurred by employees on official business of the grantee and follow the grantee's regular business operations and written travel policy.

Out-of-state travel will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Out-of-State Travel form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Field Trips

Field trips may be funded under the grant program. Only the following types of field trips may be allowable:

- Field trips that are college and/or career-related in nature

Field trips will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Educational Field Trips form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Travel Costs for Officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members

Travel costs for officials such as executive director, superintendent, or board members may be funded under the grant program. Only the following travel costs may be allowable for these positions:

- TEA recommends budgeting funds for required staff to attend all trainings, conferences, workshops, meetings, and other technical assistance trainings as required by TEA. At a minimum, grantees will be expected in Austin for two meetings. Consider budgeting lodging and meals for the executive director and program coordinator, or their representatives, to attend meetings/training.

Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization

The cost of membership in any civic or community organization may be funded under the grant program. Only the following types of civic or community organization membership may be allowable:

- Any civic or community organization that requires a fee to provide student services

Advisory Council

An advisory council may be funded under the grant program. Only the following types of advisory council costs may be allowable:

- CIS board of directors

Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on unallowable costs.

In addition, unallowable activities and use of funds for this grant include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Travel for students to conferences (Does not include field trips)
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Hosting or sponsoring of conferences
- Souvenirs, memorabilia, or promotional items (such as T-shirts, caps, tote bags, key chains, or imprinted pens)
- Costs associated with awards banquets, ceremonies, celebrations, and social events

- Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419
- Any activity not specified above in the Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section

Performance Measures

The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance measures:

1. Case-managed student goals:
 - 85% of assessed students identified as having an academic need will show improvement in an academic growth indicator.
 - 75% of assessed students identified as having a behavior need will show improvement in a behavioral growth indicator.
 - 70% of assessed students identified as having an attendance need will show improvement in an attendance growth indicator.
2. End of year program goals:
 - 90% of case-managed students in grades 7-12 will stay in school.
 - 85% of case-managed students will promote to the next grade level.
 - 90% of case-managed students eligible to graduate, will receive a high school diploma or a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE).
3. Number of case-managed students served.
4. Number of campuses with a fully executed and signed Campus Plan served.
5. For each campus with a fully executed and signed Campus Plan, CIS must document at least one campus goal in CIS-NAV to impact through services. For each campus goal documented, CIS must report a baseline and target metric at the beginning of the school year and an outcome at the end of the school year.
6. Number, descriptions, and duration of Tier I services provided to the larger student body on campuses served.
7. Number, descriptions, and duration of Tier II and Tier III services provided to case-managed students and families.
8. Number of volunteers and mentors (adult and peer) who work directly with students.

Federal Grant Requirements

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement does not apply to this federally funded grant program.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement does not apply to this federally funded grant program.

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with your application:

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fiscal-Related Documentation Required to Be on File, for a general description of fiscal-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

Required Program-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Required Program-Related Attachments, for a general description of program-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

No program-related attachments are required for this grant program.