
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Program

RFA# 701-25-110

Questions marked with a * denote questions where similar questions were submitted multiple times. The wording of the question has been consolidated.

Section A: Eligibility Questions

Eligibility: General

Question A-1: The grant guidelines say that in order for previous grant recipients to be eligible to apply, they must partner with a different EPP from their prior application. Is this only true for awarded applications?

Yes. For example, if an LEA applied for the 23-25 grant with EPP X and was awarded, then applied for the 24-26 grant with EPP Y but was not awarded, they may apply again with EPP Y.

Question A-2: Are districts who received TCLAS funds but were not able to do strategic staffing eligible to apply and participate?

Districts who received other TCLAS funds, but did not receive TCLAS Decision 5 would still be eligible.

Question A-3: If a district received both TCLAS Decision 5 and the Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant, are they still eligible to apply if partnered with a new EPP?

Yes. LEAs who received previous grants can apply as long as they have a new EPP to partner with.

Question A-4: How do we know if we are eligible based on the "no previous grants" requirement?

[Grants Awarded Data](#) for previous grants are posted on the TEA Grants page. Please reach out if you're not sure about TCLAS Decision 5.

Question A-5: If a district is currently locally funding residents with an EPP, are they ineligible for the grant?*

Only if they have received the past grants named in the eligibility guidelines. However, districts that already have a paid residency should review program assurance carefully to ensure their goals align with the grant

purpose. They should also read application questions carefully as some questions may require districts with existing paid residencies to expound on their goals for the grant funds.

Question A-6: Why are we not eligible for this grant in order to sustain teacher residency? We currently have a Texas Strategic Staffing grant; however, it was required to be used to hire a coordinator to help us implement the program over the last two years.*

The purpose of all cycles of the Texas Strategic Staffing grant has been to support the two-year process to design and implement the paid teacher residency. Based on needs observed in the field, the option was added this cycle to support some resident stipend funding in the Implementation Year only. However, the intent of the grant is still to support the LEA-EPP partnership to develop the locally funded strategic staffing model rather than to fund its continuation. The needs of an LEA that has already developed the paid residency would only align with the goals of the grant if working with a new partner.

Question A-7: If the LEA-EPP partnership has participated in developing a paid residency with a different technical assistance provider, are they eligible for the grant?

As long as they have not received the grants named in the eligibility guidelines, they would still be eligible to apply. However, LEAs who have already partnered with an EPP to design a paid residency should name in their application responses why participating in two years of technical assistance through Texas Strategic Staffing will still be beneficial to them.

Eligible EPP (Educator Preparation Program) Partnerships

Question A-8: If an EPP was not on the 23-24 Vetted Teacher Residency List, are they still eligible to partner with an LEA?*

The Vetted Teacher Residency list does not apply to this grant. Any EPP can submit an application to offer the enhanced residency certification (TTRPR), which is what determines eligibility to partner for this grant.

Question A-9: Is there a list of eligible EPPs that LEAs can reference?*

Because the list of EPPs that have applied for the residency route is not public, there is not a list of all eligible EPPs that we can share. LEAs are encouraged to reach out to potential EPP partners to determine if the EPP meets the requirements.

Question A-10: Can an LEA submit an application without the signed form from the EPP if they indicate their EPP partner in the application responses?

No. The attachment is required in order to submit the application. Remember that in the form, the EPP can indicate they have applied for the TTRPR by December 9th, 2024 if they have not yet been approved.

Question A-11: Does the EPP's "Intent to Apply" for the residency prep route meet the requirements for the LEAs eligibility for the grant OR does the EPP have to submit the completed application by the December 2024 deadline?

No; the "Intent to Apply" does not meet the requirement for the EPPs eligibility. EPPs must have submitted their full application and artifacts for scoring by December 9th to be eligible.

Question A-12: Are EPPs currently on the 23-24 Vetted Teacher Residency list required to reapply to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route?

All EPPs must apply for the TTRPR to offer the route, no one is automatically granted approval.

Question A-13: Are ESCs a potentially eligible EPP?*

Since an ESC with an EPP may apply for the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route, and can be an eligible partner for an LEA application.

Question A-14: In order to determine which EPPs are eligible, will the LEA need to contact the EPPs directly?

Yes; unless the EPP's recommendation and/or approval can be found in public agendas or communication from SBEC. Regardless, the LEA should stay in contact with the EPP regarding the grant application and their intent to apply.

Question A-15: Can an LEA partner with more than one EPP?*

Yes. They should attach a verification form from both EPPs in their application.

Question A-16: Can an EPP partner with more than one LEA?

Yes.

Question A-17: Where is the application for an EPP to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation route?*

The first step is to submit the "Intent to Apply." This link, along with more information about the TTRPR, can be found on [TEA's Program Provider Resources](#) page for EPPs.

Question A-18: We currently work with several EPPs to place residents in our district. Would we need to partner with a new EPP to be eligible for the grant?

This depends on if the LEA's work with current EPPs was grant-funded by TCLAS Decision 5 or the 23-25/24-26 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant. If not, then they are free to apply with the EPPs they currently work with and/or a new EPP.

Question A-19: Does the EPP have to be a university, or can it be an alternative certification program (ACP)?

Any EPP is an eligible partner if they apply and are approved to offer the teacher residency preparation route, including ACPs.

Question A-20: Does the EPP have to be new to the Texas Strategic Staffing program to be eligible to partner with the LEA?

No; the EPP may have partnered with other LEAs for Texas Strategic Staffing in the past.

Question A-21: We are not applying for the TTRPR until December 9th. Are we still eligible to partner with an LEA for the grant?

Yes. To partner with an LEA applying for the grant, the EPP only has to have submitted their application by December 9th, 2024. Note that if the EPP is still not approved by April 11th, 2025, the LEA may lose eligibility.

Question A-22: If there is no eligible EPP in a region, can a district apply with an EPP outside their region?

Yes; LEAs are not limited by region in which EPPs they are eligible to partner with.

Question A-23: If we apply with 2 EPPs but one of the EPPs does not end up getting approved to offer the residency route, would our application still be eligible?

Yes, as long as one of the EPPs is approved by April 11th, 2025.

Section B: Application-Related Questions

Question B-1: Where do we find the actual grant application?*

The actual application is accessed electronically through eGrants, a TEAL application. For questions, email competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

Question B-2: For clarification, which party has to submit the application? The EPP, LEA or both?*

The LEA submits the application, but should do so with knowledge and commitment from the EPP.

Question B-3: After we choose an EPP, how do we notify the EPP that we have selected them as our EPP?

Because the applicant must attach a signed form from the EPP, the LEA MUST reach out to the EPP before applying. The specifics of this communication are up to the partnership, but strong communication both before, during and after the application process are key to success.

Question B-4: What will be the basic criteria for the selection of the awardees?

Please review the IDC Scoring and Review section of the Program Guidelines for information about how the applications will be scored and ranked.

Question B-5: To request access on TEAL for eGrants, what would the roles & parameters be for an LEA?

eGrants accounts are for individuals rather than districts. Individual eGrants roles within the district must be determined at the district level. However, only someone designated as the Grantee Official may certify and submit the grant.

Section C: Program-Related Questions

Program Related: Residency and Residency Partnerships

Question C-1: What if an applicant/awardee would like to place residents in 25-26?

The awardee is free to place residents in the district in the 2025-2026 school year, and placing residents before or during 2025-2026 does not impact eligibility. However, since this is the Design Year, the TSS provider would not necessarily support this through site visits, etc. as they would in the 2026-2027 Implementation Year. Please also remember that grant funds cannot be used for resident/host teacher stipends in the 2025-2026 Design Year.

Question C-2: Can you provide the names of EPPs that LEAs typically partner with for residency?

No; we are unable to provide such a list.

Question C-3: Do residency candidates have to be enrolled in an EPP's certification program?

Yes; a yearlong teacher residency as defined by the Texas Administrative Code occurs through a partnership between an educator preparation program and an LEA. During the Texas Strategic Staffing design year process, partnerships will collaborate on recruitment and selection of residents from the EPP.

Question C-4: Do residents have to possess a bachelor's degree to participate?

No; many teacher residency candidates are undergraduates at their EPP.

Question C-5: Is the teacher residency for only one year?

Yes. A teacher residency as defined by Texas Administrative Code is a yearlong experience.

Question C-6: When will residents complete their one year of residency?

This may vary dependent on the partnership, but the typical process for this cycle would be: LEAs will begin the Design Year of Texas Strategic Staffing process in 2025-2026 and programs will begin placing residents (Implementation Year) in 2026-2027.

Program Related: Technical Assistance

Question C-7: Since the ESC is providing the technical assistance, If an LEA partners with an EPP from an ESC, how would it look for the ESC to offer technical assistance?

Often, EPPs are housed out of different teams or divisions in the ESC than the strategic staffing service provider. Regardless, TEA provides guidance for the EPPs to ensure that the technical assistance provider can play the role of an unbiased provider to facilitate shared decision making and collaboration between the LEA and EPP.

Question C-8: Who provides In-kind technical assistance? Do they do this with the \$10,000 in contracted services?

The ESC Texas Strategic Staffing service will provide the in-kind technical assistance. The service is no cost to the district and the ESC will be funded separately, so no grant funds should be budgeted towards this. The \$10,000 in contracted services is to be used with the EPP to fund field supervisor work.

Question C-9: Can you provide an example of an LEA that has partnered with an ACP out of an ESC?

We cannot provide information about individual districts; however, partnerships of this kind have participated in TSS in the past.

Question C-10: How does the technical assistance support help fund the stipends?

To clarify, the technical assistance service does not directly fund the stipends. A variety of Texas Strategic Staffing activities throughout both Design and Implementation year are designed to support the district plan for sustainable funding. For more information, visit [our website](#) or reach out to your ESC TSS provider.

Section D: Allowable Use of Funds Questions

Question D-1: Could you provide more clarification on split funding for resident and host teacher stipends? For example, what percentage needs to come from the LEA budget and what percentage needs to come from the grant?

Cost-match is not set as a percentage, but as a minimum contribution from the district of \$1,000 per host teacher and \$3,000 per teacher resident. For example, if an LEA is using funds to pay a teacher resident stipend of \$20,000, only \$17,000 could come from grant funds and \$3,000 must be funded locally.

Question D-2: Can there be two district leads that split that funding?

Yes, how the district lead funding is allocated is at the discretion of the district, as long as at least \$30,000 is budgeted.

Question D-3: Our district already has a lead that manages residency and clinical experience. Could the funds allotted for the district lead be allocated entirely towards resident and host teacher stipends instead?

No; \$30,000 must be allocated to compensation and/or supplies and materials for the district lead role. However, supplement not supplant does not apply to this grant program and local savings could be generated by co-funding an existing position through grant funds.

Question D-4: Does the budget need to be split evenly over two years (e.g., \$40,000 in 25-26 and \$40,000 in 26-27?)*

No; the funding does not necessarily need to be split evenly.

Question D-5: Can federal funds be used to meet the cost matching requirement for resident and host teacher funds?

Yes, this is allowed.

Section E: Funding Questions

Question E-1: Is the \$80,000 award per year, or total?

This is the total amount over two years.

Question E-2: How are ESCs funded to do the technical assistance work, since it is no cost to the district?*

The ESC will be funded by a separate direct grant. Since this will be based on the number of applicants in the region that are awarded, the grant will not be announced until later in 2025.

Question E-3: For LEAs that have already done strategic staffing but are struggling to fund residencies due to lack of funding, how can we address this issue?

Throughout the course of TCLAS, we learned that certain models yield more funding for reallocation and reinvestment than others, and the importance of tracking the data on resident efficacy to make the case for funding for the roles. As we gather more data and apply lessons learned across the state, TA providers are sharing information with each other, particularly as our work supports rural and/or small LEAs.

With continued implementation of Strategic Staffing and residency, we will continue to find ways to share these lessons learned. Most recently, we started the quarterly TSS Newsletter, which will include funding tips from district, ESC, and EPP practitioners in the field.

Question E-4: Will there be a certain number of awards for new programs along with a certain number allotted to existing programs looking to expand?

The anticipated number of awards is not split among types of programs. However, note that eligibility requirements may impact existing programs that were previous recipients of a grant.

Question E-5: Are there additional funds for the person at the district monitoring the program?

Funding for the district lead is one of the primary purposes of the grant. According to the Program Guidelines, up to \$70,000 of the award can be used to co-fund the salary of the district employee leading the strategic staffing work. The award is \$80,000 total and no additional funds beyond \$80,000 will be awarded as part of the grant.

Question E-6: We are not eligible for this grant because we received a prior TSS grant. Are there other options available for funding?

Currently, there are no open grants specific to continuation funding for teacher residency. For an LEA who has already participated or is currently participating in TSS, we recommend reaching out to your TSS technical assistance provider, who will have information on how LEAs across the state are sustaining the paid residency and can provide support in developing a sustainability plan.

Question E-7: Does the allocation for year 1 look different from year 2, or is it the same across the board?

Districts may set up their own budgets across the 2 years within grant guidelines (e.g., resident stipends only for 2025-2026) and are not required to allocate a certain amount to each year.

Question E-8: Is there a cap on how many LEA applications will be awarded/approved?

We anticipate awarding 24 districts, but this number may vary and is not considered a cap.

Section F: Miscellaneous Questions

Question F-1: Will the webinars be recorded and slides shared?*

Yes. The webinar slides and recording will be posted to the Grant Opportunities page within a week of the webinar.

Question F-2: If an LEA and EPP do not receive the grant and decided to proceed without financial support, will this hurt their chances of getting the grant in the next cycle?

We are unable to speak to future grant cycles, only this current version. Note that LEAs who have participated in Texas Strategic Staffing or developed paid residency outside of a previous grant are still eligible to apply for this grant.

Question F-3: Where can we find the information about this grant?

Search for the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency on the TEA Grant Opportunities Page.