

Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC)

Program Guidelines

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

IDC Application Due Date

11:59 p.m. Central Time, March 7th, 2025

Authorized by GAA, Article III, Rider 39, 88th Texas Legislature

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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 all schedules (i.e., forms) to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding. The application to which these guidelines and instructions refer must be submitted electronically through the eGrants system.

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

Requirement for Username and Password

To access eGrants and apply for this grant, you must have access to the [TEA Login \(TEAL\)](#). Follow these steps to apply for usernames and passwords on TEAL:

1. Visit the [TEA Login \(TEAL\)](#) page of the TEA website. Select [Request New User Account](#) to begin the process of applying for a TEAL account online.
2. Once you have been assigned a TEA Login (TEAL) account, log into TEAL and under Self-Service select My Application Accounts.
3. The My Accounts tab will open. Select Request New Account, then find eGrants in the list and follow the instructions to submit your request.

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.

Application Submission Through eGrants

Submit the application for these grant programs electronically through the TEA eGrants system. Refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) for more specific information about the eGrants application process.

Applications must be submitted as follows:

- Those submitted by public LEAs must be signed electronically by the superintendent of the school district or another LEA representative with the status of Grantee Official in eGrants.
- Applications submitted by open-enrollment charter schools must be signed electronically by the chief operating officer of the school or another charter representative with the status of Grantee Official in eGrants.
- Campuses and campus charter schools must apply through their public school district, and the application must be signed electronically by the superintendent or another LEA representative with the status of Grantee Official in eGrants.

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.

Overview of IDC Process

The following steps provide a high-level overview of the process for responding to Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC), including submitting an IDC application, and being selected for funding:

1. TEA publishes IDC application and supporting documents on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#).
2. Eligible applicants submit IDC application, and any required attachments to TEA by the specified deadline.
3. IDC applications are reviewed and scored. Note: The highest scoring applicants may be required to attend an oral interview or respond to questions regarding their IDC application.
4. TEA announces applicants selected for funding on the TEA [Grants Awarded Data](#) webpage.

5. *For IDC applicants selected for funding, the IDC application will serve as the grant application. This eliminates the need for selected applicants to submit a separate grant application.*
6. TEA staff conducts budget negotiations on the IDC application.
7. Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) issued upon successful completion of the negotiation process.

*Please note. The Letter of Interest competition or LOI has been given a new name of Informal Discretionary Competition or IDC. The process for selecting and awarding applications for this type of competition has not changed.

Email Bulletins

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), GovDelivery Bulletins.

Contact for Clarifying Information

Grant Program Contact

William Sea, Manager of Texas Strategic Staffing
Talent Pathways Division
william.sea@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-9213

Funding Contact

Competitive Grants Unit
Grants Administration Division
competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-8525

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	\$1,920,000
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	0%
Amount of federal funds	\$0
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	\$1,920,000
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$0

IDC 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.

Date	Event
November 18, 2024	IDC application available in eGrants
November 22, 2024	Applicant and Partner EPP Webinar #1: Eligible Partnerships and Funding Focus See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference/Webinar 9:00a-10:00a CST Registration Link
December 3 rd , 2024	FAQ #1 (based on any questions emailed to TEA contact person between November 18 th -29 th or addressed during Webinar #1) posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page
February 4 th , 2025	Last date to submit questions for FAQs to be answered in Webinar #2 to TEA contact person, 11:59p.m., Central Time
February 6 th , 2025	Applicant and Partner EPP Webinar #2: Application and Assurances Focus See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference/Webinar 9:00a-10:00a CST Registration Link
February 12 th , 2025	Last date to submit questions for FAQs to TEA contact person, 11:59 p.m., Central Time. See General and Fiscal Guidelines , <i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>
February 14 th , 2025	FAQ #2 posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page

Program Guidelines

Date	Event
March 7th, 2025	Due date for the IDC application, which must be submitted via eGrants . The IDC application must be received by the TEA by 11:59 p.m., Central Time . See General and Fiscal Guidelines , <i>LOI Application Due Date and Time</i>
March 8th – April 4th, 2025	IDC review period See General and Fiscal Guidelines , <i>LOI Review Process</i>
April 18 th , 2025	Anticipated award announcement
June 1 st , 2025	Beginning date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , <i>Grant Period</i>
January 30th, 2027	Final date to submit an amendment (if selected for funding)
April 30 th , 2027	Ending date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , <i>Grant Period</i>

IDC at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This IDC is authorized by the GAA, Article III, Rider 39, 88th Texas Legislature.

Purpose of Program

The Texas Strategic Staffing for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Programs Grant is a two-year grant to districts and charters, designed to provide direct technical assistance and other supports to districts/charters and educator preparation program (EPP) partnerships to design and implement paid, year-long high-quality, sustainable teacher residencies across SY 2025-2026 and SY 2026-2027. Strategic Staffing supports will be provided by Education Service Centers through the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) technical assistance service. Districts/charters and EPPs will make informed decisions to develop paid teacher residencies that leverage reallocation and reinvestment of local funds to support teacher residents' wages while they engage in other instructional responsibilities such as: substitute teaching, paraprofessional roles, tutoring, and more.

Eligible Applicants

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

Eligible applicants for the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing grant are as follows:

Program Guidelines

- Any independent school district or charter that is not a previous recipient of the grants listed below are eligible for funding.
 - 2021-2024 Texas COVID Learning Acceleration Supports, Decision 5: Residency Program Support
 - 2023-2025 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant
 - 2024-2026 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant
- An independent school district or charter that received one or more of the above grants is only eligible to apply if partnering with a different EPP from their prior grant application(s).
- All applicants must produce a verification form (linked on the TEA Grant Opportunities page) from an educator preparation program that offers a yearlong teacher residency. In this form, the EPP must confirm that they have applied for, received notification from TEA of recommendation for, or received SBEC approval to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route.* They also must confirm their commitment to partnering with the district through the strategic staffing process.

Please see the following eligibility scenarios for clarification and guidance.

Eligibility Scenario	Eligibility Status
The LEA was a recipient of TCLAS Decision 5 or either of the Texas Strategic Staffing Grants. They partnered with “Texas University A” for the previous grant, and this continues to be their only EPP partner for residency.	Not Eligible to Apply
The LEA does not have an EPP partner who applied to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route by December 2024.	Not Eligible to Apply
The LEA was not a recipient of TCLAS Decision 5 or either of the Texas Strategic Staffing Grants. They have an EPP partner who applied by December 2024 to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route.	Eligible to Apply*
The LEA was not a recipient of TCLAS Decision 5 or either of the Texas Strategic Staffing Grants. They have an EPP partner who has already been approved or been recommended for approval by SBEC to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route.	Eligible to Apply
The LEA was a recipient of TCLAS Decision 5 or either of the Texas Strategic Staffing Grants. They partnered with “Texas University A” for their previous grant and they have a new residency partner, “Texas University B,” with whom they are applying for this grant. This new EPP partner meets eligibility requirements above.	Eligible to Apply

Program Guidelines

** If the EPP has not received notification of approval or recommendation for approval for the residency certification route by April 11, 2025, then the applicant may no longer be eligible.*

Please note: If the status of an EPP changes after the grant start date and the EPP is no longer able to offer the residency certification route, an awarded LEA would remain able to partner with this EPP to fulfill grant assurances through the end of the grant.

Eligibility List

An eligibility list is not posted in the Application and Support Information section of the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Shared Services Arrangement

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

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed.

Application Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#): *Continuation Funding, Fund Management, and Use of Funds*.

It is anticipated that approximately 24 districts/charters will be awarded an amount of \$80,000 dollars along with in-kind technical assistance services.

- \$10,000 of the funds must be utilized for contracted services with the LEA's partner educator preparation program (EPP) in order to fund resident field supervisor work during the Implementation Year (2026-2027).
- \$30,000-\$70,000 of the funds must be utilized to co-fund the salary of a district employee leading the strategic staffing work from 2025-2027.
 - See program-specific assurances and program requirements for more information on the time and effort required to lead the strategic staffing work at the district level.
- Remaining funds (up to \$40,000) may be used to co-fund teacher resident stipends/salaries or host teacher stipends ONLY in the 2026-2027 school year. If the LEA chooses to utilize this option, there is a cost-matching requirement of at least \$3,000 per resident or \$1,000 per host teacher.
- LEAs may be required to pay minimum stipends or salaries for residents or host teachers if choosing to utilize grant funds to pay these stipends or salaries. For guidance on minimum teacher resident salary/stipend requirements, see Program-Specific Assurances.

Funding Scenario Example #1

Scenario: LEA plans to use funds to support resident stipends in 2026-2027 as they plan for a sustainable, fully locally-funded stipend in accordance with program assurances.

LEA budgets:

- **\$10,000** for contracted services with the EPP from 2026-2027 (Implementation Year), assisting the EPP in funding a part-time field supervisor for the district's residents
- **\$30,000** to co-fund the salary of an existing position, Assistant HR Director, who will lead the work
 - Full time, existing role paid \$86,000/year
 - \$15,000 funded by grant each year in 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, accounting for time and effort for the new responsibility
 - \$71,000 per year funded locally
- **\$40,000** for resident stipends in 2026-2027
 - 4 residents paid \$15,000/year
 - \$10,000 per resident funded through grant
 - \$5,000 per resident funded locally

Funding Scenario Example #2:

Scenario: LEA plans to use funds for contracted services with the EPP, district employee payroll and supplies and materials only.

LEA budgets:

- **\$20,000** for contracted services with the EPP from 2026-2027 (Implementation Year), allowing the EPP to fully fund a part-time field supervisor for the district's residents.
- **\$57,000** to co-fund the salary of a new district role, New Teacher Recruitment and Development Coordinator.
 - Full-time role paid \$73,500/year
- \$28,500 funded by grant each year in 2025-2026 and 2026-2027
 - \$40,000 per year funded locally
- **\$3,000** for supplies and materials related to the establishment of the residency program, such as technology for the district lead and supplies for a resident recruitment event.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be selected in rank order until funding is exhausted.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

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

TEA requires the following:

- \$3,000 minimum cost share/match requirement per teacher resident for this grant ONLY if the LEA is using grant funds to pay teacher residents in 2026-2027 (funding teacher resident

stipends in 2025-2026 is not an allowable use of funds). See Application Funding and Program Elements for more information on paying teacher residents through this grant.

- \$1,000 minimum cost share/match requirement per host teacher ONLY if the LEA is using grant funds to pay host teachers in 2026-2027 (funding host teacher stipends in 2025-2026 is not an allowable use of funds). See Application Funding and Program Elements for more information on paying host teachers through this grant.
- If the LEA has not chosen to pay teacher residents or host teachers through the grant, there is no cost share/match requirement.

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.

TEA limits the amount of funds that may be budgeted to administer the program, including direct administrative costs and indirect costs, to no more than 15% of the total grant awarded.

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 permitted, if requested, from the award announcement date to the grant start date.

IDC Application Requirements and Assurances

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

Program Guidelines

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)
- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)
- Statutory and Program-specific Assurances

Statutorily Required Responses

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

TEA Application Required Responses

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

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements. Applicants must address within the application how they will achieve the following:

Standard Review Criteria/Program Requirements

A. Summary of Program

Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific instructional, teacher development, and/or teacher recruitment and retention needs of the organization.

- If your district currently HAS a yearlong teacher residency program, describe its connection to your district's mission and how participating in the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) technical assistance service will benefit your residency program.
- If your district does NOT currently have a yearlong teacher residency program, describe how a paid residency program will benefit your district's mission and needs.

B. Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the district strategic staffing lead position that would be supported by this grant is existing or proposed. **Include at least one role from the LEA and one role from the partner EPP(s).**

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Review the objectives of the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) service [found on our website at http://tss.tea.texas.gov](http://tss.tea.texas.gov). Describe the alignment between TSS goals/objectives and your district's decision to pursue participation in the two-year Texas Strategic Staffing program, including any additional or unique district goals/objectives. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet TSS and/or district objectives?

D. Performance and Evaluation Measures

Describe the performance measures identified for this program related to student outcomes and consistent with the purpose of the program. Example performance measures may include, but are not limited to:

Program Guidelines

- Resident recruitment data
- Teacher certification data
- Teacher hiring and retention data
- Perception surveys
- Student achievement data

Which key performances measures have you identified for the program? What tools do you use to measure and analyze the data to ensure the effectiveness of talent project objectives and strategies?

E. Budget Narrative

Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including contracted services with the EPP, district-level staffing, and supplies and materials. If applicable, include a high-level snapshot of funds currently allocated to similar programs. Please note that this budget should encompass two years (2025 through 2027).

- Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.
- If your proposed budget includes funding for teacher resident or host teacher stipends/salaries, describe how you will meet the cost-match requirements (at least \$3,000 locally funded per resident or \$1,000 per host teacher).
 - o Reminder: The resident/host teacher stipend funds can only be budgeted for residents/host teachers placed in SY 2026-2027 and can make up a maximum of \$40,000 of the proposed budget.

F. TEA Program Requirements

1. **Talent and Instructional Needs:** Please answer the following questions about the connection between strategic staffing for paid residency and your LEA's instructional and talent needs and strategies.
 - a. What vacancies have been historically difficult to fill in your district? What other staffing needs (e.g., lack of certified teachers) exist in your district? How could paid residencies help address those needs?
 - b. What other instructional needs exist? How could paid residencies help to address this issue? (e.g., small group support, substitute teaching, etc.) If your district is currently implementing or plans to implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), please also include how paid residencies may support your plan for HQIM implementation.
 - c. How do paid residencies fit into your district's long-term talent strategy this year? The next five years?

G. TEA Program Requirements Continued

2. **Commitment of Local Resources:** Please answer the following questions to describe how your LEA, alongside your partner EPP, will commit resources and time to the year-long design process and the implementation year.

- a. Who from the district/charter will be leading this work? How does their role fit into broader talent management in your district? What additional responsibilities, if any, does or will this person have related to talent in your district?
- b. How will you ensure that the district lead has adequate time to fulfill responsibilities in the design and implementation year of strategic staffing in accordance with program assurances? What are some ways you will ensure that time and effort for these responsibilities are locally funded beyond the life of the grant?
- c. How will district executive leadership, such as the superintendent or CFO, be included in strategic staffing design and implementation?

H. TEA Program Requirements Continued

3. **Partnership Foundations: Please answer the following questions about your LEA-EPP partnership.**
 - a. **If this is an existing LEA-EPP partnership:** How many years have you been engaged in a residency partnership with the EPP? How many yearlong residents have you placed each year of the partnership? Were these residents paid or unpaid? If residents are already paid, why is the LEA interested in engaging in the strategic staffing design and implementation strategic process for paid residency?
 - b. **If this is a new LEA-EPP partnership:** How did you decide to partner with this EPP for residency?
 - c. What other key features of the partnership will help ensure success throughout the two-year design and implementation process for paid residency?

I. TEA Program Requirements Continued

4. **Communication Elements: Please answer the following questions to describe how you will maintain strong communication with your EPP partners and your technical assistance provider.**
 - a. **If this is an existing LEA-EPP partnership:** What shared processes or norms do the LEA staff and EPP faculty currently have in place in order to address issues with residency (e.g., challenges for residents, host teachers, school sites, etc.)? Provide detailed explanations (e.g., who leads the communication, how are action steps determined, who follows up to make sure steps are complete, etc.).
 - b. **If this is a new LEA-EPP partnership:** How does the LEA plan to work with the EPP to manage issues that arise with residency (e.g., challenges for residents, host teachers, school sites, etc.)? Provide detailed explanations (e.g., who would lead the communication, at what point do you surface the challenges, how do you follow up on action steps, etc.).
 - c. Has your LEA partnered with your regional ESC or other external provider for other programs or initiatives? If so, describe how you have maintained strong communication with external service providers in the past.

J. TEA Program Requirements Continued

5. **Grow Your Own (Optional Response for Priority Points): If your LEA currently maintains a Grow Your Own program or plans to implement a Grow Your Own program through the 2024-2026**

Grow Your Own High School Education and Training Program, please respond to the following questions. If you do not have a Grow Your Own program, write N/A.

- a. Which TEA Grow Your Own grants, if any, has your district received?
- b. How long has your district maintained a Grow Your Own program? If applicable, how many of your Education and Training students have returned to teach in your district?
- c. Provide a high-level description of your district's Grow Your Own program.

Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances

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

Standard Assurances

1. The applicant assures that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
2. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Paid, Sustainable Teacher Residency Program, Program Guidelines.
3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Paid, Sustainable Teacher Residency Program, Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
4. The applicant assures that any Electronic Information Resources (EIR) produced as part of this agreement will comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements as specified in 1 TAC 206, 1 TAC Chapter 213, Federal Section 508 standards, and the WCAG 2.0 AA Accessibility Guidelines.
5. The applicant acknowledges that 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.

Program-Specific Assurances

1. **Applicant-EPP Partnership:**

- A. The applicant must assure that they have established a partnership with at least one educator preparation program (EPP) that has applied or been approved to offer an enhanced residency certificate through the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route (TTRPR). To apply, the applicant must provide a signed verification form (linked on the TEA Grant Opportunities page) from the EPP(s). In this form, the EPP must confirm they have either submitted an application for the TTRPR, been notified of recommendation to SBEC, or received SBEC approval to offer the residency certification. The EPP(s) must also confirm their commitment to the strategic staffing design and implementation process with the district.
- B. The applicant must assure that they will enter into a partnership with the EPP for contracted services utilizing at least \$10,000 of grant funds from 2025-2027. These contracted services must support the field supervisor that oversees teacher residents in the district in the 2026-2027 school year. Note: If the LEA/EPP partnership is unable to place at least one resident in the 2026-2027 school year, the LEA will be exempt from this grant assurance and a budget amendment may be submitted.
- C. The applicant must assure that they will hold structured governance meetings with their EPP partner at least quarterly to analyze teacher resident data and develop plans for teacher residency continuous improvement during the SY 26-27 residency implementation year.
- D. The applicant must assure that they will provide preferential hiring, to the greatest extent possible, to teacher residents who have successfully completed the teacher residency program and received standard certification.
- E. The applicant must assure that they will report the following data to TEA during the SY 25-26 design year (if applicable) and the SY 26-27 implementation year:
 - a. Number of teacher residents participating in the year-long paid teacher residency,
 - b. Demographics of teacher residents participating in the program,
 - c. Number and type of teacher certifications awarded to teacher residents
 - d. Selected staffing models implemented
 - e. Stipend/salary amounts for teacher residents and host teachers

2. Sustainable Funding for High Quality, Paid Teacher Residencies

- A. The applicant must assure that they will provide a stipend to each teacher resident placed within the district/charter. Districts/charters will work with their EPP to mutually agree on a stipend amount. The recommended stipend/salary amount per resident is \$12,000-\$25,000 per year, with a recommended minimum of at least \$10,000. Districts are welcome to pay more than the recommendation.
- B. If the district is utilizing grant funds to support teacher resident stipends in the 2026-2027 school year, the applicant must assure that teacher resident stipends meet the minimum of

\$10,000 per year. The LEA must locally fund at least \$3,000 of this stipend in the 2026-2027 school year. If the district is not utilizing grant funds to support teacher resident stipends in the 2026-2027 school year, the applicant should make a good faith effort to meet the \$10,000 minimum stipend requirement.

- C. The applicant must assure that they will make a good-faith effort to provide a stipend to each host teacher that is supporting a teacher resident. The recommended stipend amount per host teacher is \$1,000-\$3,000 per year, but can vary widely depending on amount of residents in the district, additional leadership duties of the host teacher, etc.
- D. If the district is utilizing grant funds to support host teacher stipends in the 2026-2027 school year, the applicant must assure that host teacher stipends meet a minimum of \$2,000 per year. The LEA must locally fund at least \$1,000 of this stipend in the 2026-2027 school year. Districts are welcome to pay more than the minimum recommendation.

3. Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) Technical Assistance for Design and Implementation and Shared District/Charter and EPP Assurances

- A. The applicant and their EPP partner(s) assure they will sign a letter of commitment or an established memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the regional Texas Strategic Staffing technical assistance provider or, where necessary, TEA appointed technical assistance provider.
- B. The applicant must assure that the lead point-person would be engaged in all the strategic staffing responsibilities during the design and implementation year, including coordinating with other key district/charter leadership at various points of the design process, and manage implementation year.
- C. The applicant must assure they will work closely with a technical assistance provider for the 25-26 and 26-27 school years to make key decisions and design structures that enable internal capacity to continue the strategic staffing models without the support of the technical assistance provider in SY 2027-2028 and beyond.
- D. The applicant and their partner EPP(s) must assure they will set shared goals for district/charter paid resident placements in mutually beneficial staffing model positions.
- E. The applicant and EPP partner must assure that they will adhere to all educator preparation program requirements for residency in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC).
- F. The applicant must assure that a designated team of district/charter, campus, and partner EPP-level leaders will actively participate in strategic staffing model training and technical assistance support activities beginning in SY 2025-2026.
- G. The applicant and EPP must attend sustainability meetings with their technical assistance provider each semester of SY 2026-2027 implementation year to determine sustainable strategic staffing model and funding sources after the life of the grant.

- H. The applicant must assure that they will design and implement a strategic staffing model plan that will ensure that the teacher residency model will be sustainable and fully-funded by district/charter dollars by SY 2027-2028. The plan must include sustainable funding for teacher resident stipends/salaries.

Program Elements

Description of Program

The Texas Strategic Staffing for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Programs Grant is a two-year grant to Districts and Charters, designed to provide direct technical assistance and other supports to Districts/Charters and educator preparation program (EPP) partnerships to design and implement paid, year-long high-quality, sustainable teacher residencies across SY 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. For context, Texas Administrative Code currently defines a teacher residency as: “A supervised educator assignment for an entire school year through a partnership between an EPP and a public school accredited by the TEA or other school approved by the TEA for this purpose that may lead to completion of an enhanced standard certificate (TAC §228.2). With strategic staffing design supports for sustainably funded paid residencies, pre-service teacher residents are paid as they complete the year-long clinical teaching experience while also fulfilling other identified instructional responsibilities to support local instructional needs. High quality, sustainable teacher residencies create the foundation for meaningful educator pipelines with the goal of recruiting, supporting, and retaining high quality, diverse teachers.

Education Service Centers through the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) will be providing Strategic Staffing supports through technical assistance service. Through this two-year service, districts/charters and EPPs with residency programs approved to offer an enhanced residency certificate through the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route (TTRPR) will make informed decisions to develop paid teacher residencies that leverage reallocation and reinvestment of local funds to support teacher residents’ wages while they engage in other instructional responsibilities such as: substitute teaching, paraprofessional roles, tutoring, and more.

During the first year, the district/charter and the EPP partner will undergo a design year, where they will conduct a needs assessment, set goals for resident placement, determine the best fit model(s) to meet instructional needs, identify funding sources for resident wages, and design parameters, communication, and training to support implementation. During the implementation year, the district/charter and EPP will walk side by side with the strategic staffing technical assistance provider to ensure strong implementation of the staffing model and adjust practices as needed to ensure sustainability of the model. The table below outlines supports awarded LEAs in this grant:

Overview of Included Supports

Support Name	Description
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Program Guidelines

Part I: Strategic Staffing Technical Assistance	These are in-kind (no cost to the district) technical assistance services to design and implement a strategic staffing model that allows for long-term, sustainable funding of teacher resident salaries. This training and technical assistance support will be provided in SY 2025-2026 and SY 2026-2027. Districts/Charters will be matched with a technical assistance provider.
Part II: Funding for contracted services with the partner EPP(s)	A minimum of \$10,000 of funds must be used for contracted services with the EPP partner(s) providing residency. Specifically, these contracted services must support the work of EPP field supervisors overseeing the residency candidates during the 2026-2027 Implementation Year.
Part III: Funding for strategic staffing project management and optional use of funds for 2026-2027 stipends	The remainder of funds (up to \$70,000) are provided to co-fund the salary of the district employee(s) leading the strategic staffing work (at least \$30,000 for the two years of the grant, or \$15,000 per year) as well as supplies and materials directly related to strategic staffing design and implementation. Optionally, the district may also utilize up to \$40,000 to support teacher resident salaries/stipends or host teacher stipends in SY 26-27 only.

In order to assist the applicant in determining their plans for the district strategic staffing lead(s), the estimated time commitment to strategic staffing has been outlined in the table below:

Design Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 full day face to face sessions • Regular virtual meetings with technical assistance provider (estimated frequency: 1-3x month from October to May, 1 hour each) • Review of key deliverables in between sessions (varies) • Support for delivery of summer training for teacher residents and host teachers (varies) • Manage grants program requirement submissions with TEA <p>Note: The district/charter’s design and implementation lead would be engaged in all these responsibilities, though the design team would include other district/charter leadership as well as EPP faculty and staff at various points of the design process.</p>
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<p>Implementation Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going monitoring of staffing model implementation (weekly) • Management of communication across the district/charter and EPP (varies) • Manage job embedded training as necessary (varies) • In coordination with technical assistance provider, regularly collect data on progress towards Strategic Staffing goals (varies) • Co-lead and prepare for implementation site visits with technical assistance provider and EPP partner (2-3 times/year) • Attend and contribute to quarterly governance meetings with EPP partner(s) • Attend and contribute to recruitment and sustainability meetings • Manage grants program requirement submissions with TEA <p>Note: The district/charter’s design and implementation lead would manage implementation year and would be responsible for coordinating with other key leadership roles where appropriate.</p>
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Please note that funding of resident or host teacher salaries/stipends is an *optional* use of funds through this grant that can only be budgeted for SY 26-27. The inclusion of this option is intended to provide additional support to districts in their first year of implementing a paid residency program and also includes a cost matching requirement of \$3,000 per teacher resident or \$1,000 per host teacher.

Qualifications and Experience

The applicant agrees to provide data on the qualifications and experience of the existing or future staff members, as required per the program guidelines as follows:

The district/charter role supported by grant funding should have enough authority or autonomy to communicate and engage with senior leadership regarding programmatic decisions made during strategic staffing design and implementation.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

Program Guidelines

1. Maintain a time and effort activity log of engagement in strategic staffing model training and technical assistance support activities during the duration of the grant.
2. In SY 2025-2026, provide regular (at least quarterly and as requested) report(s), documenting progress towards strategic staffing design milestones, including examples of key deliverables
3. In SY 2026-2027, provide regular (at least quarterly and as requested) report(s), documenting implementation year monitoring and related implementation data.
4. Conduct other program evaluation as requested by TEA, including submission of resident placement data and host teacher data during SY 2025-2026 (if applicable) and SY 2026-2027.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

Applicants should make every effort to ensure that contracted evaluators be independent and objective.

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

1. Contracted services with an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) partner to support resident field supervisor work
 - Awarded LEAs must budget at least \$10,000 total from this grant for contracted services with each EPP. If the LEA/EPP partnership is unable to place at least one resident during the 2026-2027 school year, the LEA will be exempt from this requirement and a budget amendment may be submitted.
2. Salary or time and effort of selected staff member that supports grant program implementation
 - Awarded LEAs must budget at least \$30,000 total from this grant to support salary/time & effort for the district employee(s) leading strategic staffing work
3. Salary/stipends for teacher residents and/or host teachers
 - Awarded LEAs may optionally budget a maximum of \$40,000 for teacher resident or host teacher stipends in the Implementation Year. These funds may only be utilized for residents and/or host teachers placed during SY 26-27.
4. In-state travel, supplies and materials, and costs for conferences or trainings directly related to design and implementation of the sustainable teacher residency may also be allowable.

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

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:

- Travel to conferences, trainings, or Design or Implementation Year activities directly related to strategic staffing for paid residency

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.

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are not allowable.

Travel for Students to Conferences (Does Not Include Field Trips)

Costs for travel for students to conferences may not be funded under the grant program (does not include field trips).

Field Trips

Field trips may not be funded under the grant program.

Stipends for Non-Employees Other Than Those Included in 6419

Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may not be funded under the grant program.

Non-Employee Costs for Conferences

Non-employee costs for conferences may not be funded under the grant program.

Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization

The cost of membership in any civic or community organization may not be funded under the grant program.

Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences

Conferences may not be hosted or sponsored under the grant program.

Advisory Council

An advisory council may not be funded under the grant program.

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

1. Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — unallowable costs include:
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)
 - Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
 - Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
2. Capital outlay
3. Operating transfers out
4. Other uses of funds (8949)
 - Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
5. Audit services
6. Software or information technology services
7. Stipends/payroll costs for teacher residents or host teachers during the 2025-2026 school year (Design Year)
8. Any activity not specified above in the Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section

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

Program Guidelines

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.

The applicant must submit with the application in eGrants the following required program-related attachments.

1. EPP Partner Verification and Commitment Form: This form is linked on the TEA Grant Opportunities page. The form must be filled out and signed by a representative from the EPP partner(s).

Reminder: Do not submit unsolicited attachments. Unsolicited attachments will not be reviewed.

Inclusion of the required attachment is necessary to determine applicant eligibility. Failure to include this required attachment could result in an application being disqualified or being deemed ineligible.

Adding Attachments

The instructions in the following sections describe how to attach files to an eGrants application, if applicable.

General Instructions

The size of each attachment cannot exceed 10MB. If you have a larger file, use a different scanning setting or zip the file to make it take up less space.

The only supported browser is Google Chrome. If you are using another browser, please change to Google Chrome before attaching files.

Documents only need to be attached once. Do not attach duplicate documents when completing an amendment. Remove an existing attached document prior to attaching a new version.

Naming Attachments

Name the files you are going to attach with no spaces (for example, 501C3letter.doc or 5013C_letter.doc) and no special characters. Use a meaningful name that identifies the specific document.

Make sure that each attachment has a valid extension (.pdf, .doc, .rtf, .xls, .bmp, .txt, .docx, .xlsx).

Note that attachments with very long names may not be able to be uploaded. If you have difficulty, try renaming the file and starting over.

Scanning Documents

If a document must be scanned to create an electronic copy, use the following hints to ensure that the document size is as small as possible:

Program Guidelines

9. Use an OCR or DPI setting of 200 DPI.
10. Scanned files must be in PDF format.

Zippping Files

If your files are too large, add them to a zip file to save space (download a free version of [WinZip](#) and find instructions on creating zip files).

Attaching Files to an eGrants Application

1. Ensure that the document is saved on your computer, using the naming instructions above.
2. On the grant application's Table of Contents page, select Attach File.
3. Select the appropriate radio button for a TEA Defined Attachment or an Optional Attachment.
4. Select the Browse button. A standard Windows browser appears. Find the file.
5. Select Attach.
6. Confirm the document title appears under Documents Submitted in This Version; refresh the page if necessary. If the attachment does not appear, you may have to rename your document with a shorter name and start over.
7. Repeat this process to attach all your documents.

IDC Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of IDC applications.

IDC Review and Funding Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *LOI Review Criteria*

Standard IDC Review Criteria	Description	Maximum Points Available
Summary of Program (2)	Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific instructional, teacher development, and/or teacher recruitment and retention needs of the organization. If your district currently HAS a yearlong teacher residency program, describe its connection to your district's mission and how participating in the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) technical assistance service will benefit your residency program. If your district does NOT currently have a	10

Program Guidelines

	<p>yearlong teacher residency program, describe how a paid residency program will benefit your district's mission and needs.</p> <p>This question will be scored based on a clear, specific description of the district's mission connected to at least two of the three needs listed (5 points). For districts who already host yearlong residents, the applicant must provide an explanation of why the district will still benefit from going through the two-year TSS program. For districts who do not yet have a yearlong residency, the applicant should describe the district's motivation for applying and how the paid residency will benefit the district's mission. (5 points)</p>	
<p>Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel (1)</p>	<p>Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the district strategic staffing lead position that would be supported by this grant is existing or proposed. Include at least one role from the LEA and one role from the partner EPP(s).</p> <p>This question will be scored holistically. Responses will only receive the full 5 points if a role from both the LEA and partner EPP is named.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (2)</p>	<p>Review the objectives of the Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) service found on our website at http://tss.tea.texas.gov. Describe the alignment between TSS goals/objectives and your district's decision to pursue participation in the two-year Texas Strategic Staffing program, including any additional or unique district goals/objectives. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet TSS and/or district objectives?</p> <p>This question will be scored holistically based on the description of the district's alignment to TSS objectives as well as any additional district objectives.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Performance and Evaluation Measures (1)</p>	<p>Describe the performance measures identified for this program related to student outcomes and consistent with the purpose of the program. Which key performances measures have you identified for the</p>	<p>5</p>

Program Guidelines

	<p>program? What tools do you use to measure and analyze the data to ensure the effectiveness of talent project objectives and strategies?</p> <p>This question will be scored holistically. Responses will only receive the full 5 points if multiple, specific examples of performance measures are described.</p>	
Budget Narrative (2)	<p>Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including contracted services with the EPP, district-level staffing, and supplies and materials. If applicable, include a high-level snapshot of funds currently allocated to similar programs. Please note that this budget should encompass two years (Summer 2025 through April 2027). Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.</p> <p>This question will be scored holistically based on alignment to program goals, Application Funding guidelines, and Allowable Activities and Use of Funds guidelines.</p>	5
Specific IDC Review Criteria	Description	Maximum Points Available
Talent and Instructional Needs (2)	<p>This question has three parts related to how Texas Strategic Staffing fits into the LEA’s current needs and talent strategy. Responses to each part are worth 5 points each.</p> <p>A: Applicant describes connection between vacancy and hiring needs and paid residencies. B: Applicant describes connection between instructional needs and paid residencies, including HQIM implementation if applicable. C: Applicant describes connection between district’s long-term talent strategy and paid residencies.</p>	15
Commitment of Local Resources (2)	<p>This question has 3 parts related to the district lead’s role and the role of executive leadership in strategic staffing for paid residency. The applicant must respond to all parts.</p> <p>A: Applicant responds to all parts of question and describes the connection between the district lead’s</p>	10

Program Guidelines

	<p>role and broader talent strategy at the district. (4 points)</p> <p>B: Applicant provides a clear plan for managing the district lead’s time and effort, and sustaining the role beyond the life of the grant. (3 points)</p> <p>C: Applicant describes how executive leadership will be involved in the paid residency initiative. (3 points)</p>	
Partnership Foundations (2)	<p>This question has 3 parts. The applicant must respond to either part A or B, and must respond to Part C. Responses to all parts are scored holistically.</p> <p>A: Existing partnerships: Applicant provides a detailed response to all questions detailing the existing partnership. If the applicant already hosts paid residents at the LEA, they provide a compelling rationale for needing to engage in the strategic staffing process.</p> <p>B: New partnerships: Applicant provides a detailed response explaining how they decided to partner with this EPP.</p> <p>C: Other features: Applicant describes other features of the LEA-EPP partnership that will help lead to successful design and implementation of the paid residency.</p>	10
Commitment to Shared Communication (2)	<p>This question has 3 parts. The applicant must respond to either part A or B (7 points), and may respond to part C (3 points).</p> <p>A: Existing partnerships: Applicant provides a detailed explanation of current practices.</p> <p>B: New partnerships: Applicant provides a detailed plan for communication.</p> <p>C: Other external partnerships: Applicant describes how they maintain strong communication with the ESC or other external provider, if applicable.</p>	10
Total Standard and Specific Review Points Possible		75

Priority Points

Program Guidelines

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Priorities for Funding. In addition to the factors considered in awarding competitive grants as outlined in the previous sections above, TEA will award grants per the priorities listed below. TEA will only review applications for priority points that receive a minimum score of 60% from the standard and specific criteria.

Priority Points Criteria	Points Added
District is in an ESC region that has NOT previously had a TSS partnership. (Eligible regions: Region 9, Region 14, and Region 16.)	5
District is partnered with an eligible EPP that has NOT previously had a TSS partnership.	5
District has an existing Grow Your Own program and/or has received a TEA Grow Your Own grant.	5
District enrollment in 2023-2024 was 3,000 students or fewer.	5

Oral Interviews for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *LOI Oral Interviews for Funding*.

Oral interviews will not be conducted for this grant.