

Request for Application

Program Guidelines

2025-2026 Career and Technical Education, ESC Leadership Application

Authorized by Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the
21st Century Act (PL 115-224, Enacted July 31, 2018)

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers federal¹ and state grant awards to its subgrantees² to carry out a program. Such entities include primarily school systems (referred to as local educational agencies [LEAs] in statutes), including independent school districts and charter schools; education service centers (ESCs); and, to a lesser degree, institutions of higher education (IHEs), nonprofit organizations (NPOs), and other statutorily allowable organizations. The following Program Guidelines apply to all eligible subgrantees for the designated grant program.

The Program Guidelines, as part of the request for application (RFA), are to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions or other RFA requirements, as listed for the grant on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of Application Part 1 (PDF narrative schedules) and Application Part 2 (Excel budget schedules). An eligible applicant must submit both parts of the SAS to apply for funding, unless specifically delineated in these guidelines.

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 cross-referenced sections when preparing your application.

Errata Notices

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

¹ TEA is the grantee and pass-through entity for federal education funding awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). *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 pursuant to a subgrant or contract. (34 CFR §77.1) *Pass-through entity* is defined as a recipient or subrecipient that provides a subaward to a subrecipient (including lower tier subrecipients) to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR §200.1)

² *Subgrantee* is defined by TEA to be the same as a *subrecipient*, which is defined in 2 CFR §200.1 as an entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal award. The term does not include an individual that is a beneficiary or participant of the program. *Subgrantee* is defined in 34 CFR §77.1 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided. For purposes of the request for application (RFA), TEA may use the terms *subgrantee*, *grantee*, *subrecipient*, and *applicant* synonymously.

Contact for Clarifying Information

Grant Program Contact

Erica Bates, Statewide Career Technical Education Coordinator
College, Career and Military Preparation Division
erica.bates@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-9510

Additional Program Contact

Marcette Kilgore, State Director of Career and Technical Education
College, Career and Military Preparation Division
marcette.kilgore@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 936-6358

Funding Contact

Lisa Gonzales, Grant Manager
Grants Administration Division
lisa.gonzales@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-9491

U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with federal appropriations acts:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$2,200,000
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	\$2,200,000
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	0%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$0

Grant Timeline

Due dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, are available in the Critical Events section listed on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. Grantees are responsible for regularly monitoring the webpage for updated grant information and for meeting all due dates and other grant requirements.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

The ESC CTE Leadership program is designed to provide professional development and technical assistance to school systems in developing and implementing high quality CTE programs of study, providing quality work-based learning opportunities for students, and aligning CTE programs to the labor market.

The goals of the program are as follows:

- To provide school systems the professional development needed to ensure the successful implementation of CTE programs of study that meet all requirements of Texas Education Code (TEC) §28, Subchapter A; §29, Subchapter F; §42, Subchapter 42.154; Part II Title 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapters 74, 75 BB, 127, and 130; The Carl D. Perkins Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act of 2018, Public Law (P.L.) 115-224; and 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 400 and 403.
- To provide school systems support for CTE programs in grades 5 and above.
- To act as liaison between the CTE team of the College, Career, and Military Preparation Division of the TEA and school systems, disseminating information and training on statewide initiatives developed by TEA.

Eligible Applicants

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

All 20 regional ESCs are eligible for this grant.

Eligibility List

An eligibility list is posted by regional ESC 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.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

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

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this 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 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.

The statute limits the amount of funds that may be budgeted to administer the program, including direct administrative costs and indirect costs, to no more than 5% of the total grant awarded.

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 September 1, 2025, to stamp-in date.

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. P.L. 115-224 Section 124 General Authority—From amounts reserved under section 112(a)(2), each eligible agency shall conduct leadership activities.
2. P.L. 115-224, Section 112(a) In General. —From the amount allotted to each state under section 111 for a fiscal year, the eligible agency shall make available an amount equal to not more than 5 percent, or \$250,000, whichever is greater, for administration of the state plan, which may be used for the costs of: Statutory requirement.
 - a. Monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness
 - b. Assuring compliance with all applicable federal laws
 - c. Providing technical assistance
3. At least one full time equivalent (FTE) position dedicated to CTE. Please email the following information to Erica Bates – erica.bates@tea.texas.gov ; applicant must name the person(s) holding the FTE position and designate percentage of time allotted to the following workstreams:
 - a. Monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness
 - b. Providing technical assistance
 - c. Providing professional development
 - d. Delivering quarterly CTE Update meetings for all CTE administrators within the region
 - e. Assisting school systems with partnership development with local workforce boards and institutions of higher education
 - f. Reviewing 50% of CLNA submissions
 - g. Assisting TEA staff with the formation of and support for CTE courses, TEKS review committees, focus groups and program of study review committees

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. Participate in at least 9 TEA CTE regularly scheduled meetings. See the dates below;
 - a. September 17, 2025
 - b. October 15, 2025
 - c. November 19, 2025
 - d. December 17, 2025
 - e. January 21, 2026
 - f. February 18, 2026
 - g. April 15, 2026
 - h. May 20, 2026
 - i. June 9-12, 2026 College and Career Readiness School Models Conference
 - j. August 19, 2026
2. Schedule, facilitate, and deliver a quarterly CTE update meeting for all CTE administrators within the region.
3. Assist school systems with partnerships development with local workforce boards and institutions of higher education to strengthen programs of study, align with labor market information and promote college and career success.
4. Provide at least one professional development training to school systems on the following topics and provide evaluations for each training.
 - a. Perkins V review for school systems CTE staff
 - b. Comprehensive Local Needs
 - c. Perkins Local Application
 - d. Statewide and regional programs of study implementation
 - e. Non-traditional and equal access training
5. Provide names(s) and number of grant-funded ESC CTE specialists providing CTE technical assistance to TEA (TEA requires a minimum of **one** full-time employee).
6. Provide assistance on CTE initiatives to school systems.
7. Facilitate the work of school systems in the disaggregation and analysis of data on CTE program access for special populations.

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8. Collect and review labor market information to provide school systems guidance for CTE program improvement, support with school systems Perkins indicator data, and revised Perkins budgets.
9. Assist TEA CCMP and Curriculum staff with the formation of and support for CTE courses, TEKS review committees, focus groups and program of study review committees.
10. Review 50% of ESC Region's CLNA submissions.
11. 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](#). The grantee is required to regularly request payment for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out.
12. Provide and support TEA sponsored professional development programs, both statewide and regionally. See the table below for specific responsibilities.

ESC CTE SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The first delivery of each to PD should be free to school systems. Subsequent trainings can be charged to school systems at cost.

CONTACT INFORMATION	PD TRAINING	EXPECTATIONS
Lacy Freeman Lacy.freeman@tea.texas.gov	Administrator PD	*Publicize trainings *Registration *Conduct face-to-face trainings of each module series (New and Experienced) at least once by 8/31/26. *Award CPEs for module attendance
Lacy Freeman Lacy.freeman@tea.texas.gov	Counselor PD	*Publicize trainings *Registration *Conduct face-to-face trainings of each module (New and Experienced) series at least once by 8/31/26. *Award CPEs for module attendance

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.

Note regarding travel costs, if allowable per guidance below: Any personnel approved in this grant must be reimbursed for travel according to the applicant's written policies and procedures; however, reimbursement may not exceed State of Texas mileage allowance, General Services Administration (GSA) hotel rate, and per diem rate existing in the current Texas State Appropriations Act. The state travel guidelines require only reimbursement of actual costs paid and, therefore, prohibit per diem payments to travelers without reconciliation to actual costs expended. Note: Contractor travel is paid as it is described in the individual contract, not to exceed the State rates, and may or may not be delineated out specifically in the contract.

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

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Payroll costs
- Professional and contracted services
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials
- Capital outlay
- In-state travel as necessary to meet the program requirements of this grant. Travel costs must follow the travel guidance provided at the beginning of this Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section.
- To support the implementation and sustainability of statewide and approved regional programs of study
- To involve parents, businesses, and labor organizations as appropriate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of career and technical education programs by participating in the completion of the required comprehensive local needs assessment.
- To provide career guidance and academic counseling.
- To provide work-related experiences for students, such as internships, cooperative education, school-based enterprises, entrepreneurship, and job shadowing that are related to career and technical education programs.
- To provide industry experience for teachers and faculty.
- To provide programs for special populations.

- For mentoring and support services.
- For leasing, purchasing, upgrading, or adapting equipment, including instructional aids and publications (including support for library resources) designed to strengthen and support academic and technical skill achievement.
- For teacher preparation programs that address the integration of academic and career and technical education and that assist individuals who are interested in becoming career and technical education teachers and faculty, including individuals with experience in business and industry.
- For improving or developing new CTE courses, including new proposed CTE innovative courses and programs of study for consideration by TEA; courses that prepare individuals academically and technically for high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations; and dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities by which CTE students at the secondary level could obtain postsecondary credit to count towards an associate or baccalaureate degree.
- For improving the initial preparation and professional development of CTE teachers, faculty, administrators, counselors, and support personnel.
- For establishing, enhancing, or supporting systems for the following:
 - Accountability data collection for Perkins; and
 - Reporting data required by Perkins.
- To implement career and technical programs of study.
- To support other CTE activities that are consistent with the purpose of the Perkins V Act
- Professional development trainers or speakers.
- College and career readiness resources or materials.
- Printing charges for materials related to CTE training.

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. Travel cost reimbursement must follow the travel guidance provided at the beginning of this Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section.

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.

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) — unallowable costs include:
 - Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - Capital Lease Liability — Interest Costs (6522)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) — Principal Costs (6514)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) — Interest Costs (6526)
 - Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
- Audit services for federally funded grants, unless the subrecipient meets the Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) threshold and is required to conduct the federal audit
- Travel for students to conferences
- Field trips
- Stipends for non-employees
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Travel costs for officials such as executive director, superintendent, or board members
- Cost of membership in any civic or community organization
- Hosting or sponsoring of conferences
- Advisory council
- 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. Proof of attendance at TEA CCRSM Conference.
2. Number of TEA/ESC regularly scheduled meetings attended.

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3. Brief summary of how the ESC CTE specialist delivered quarterly CTE updates for all stakeholders within the region.
4. Brief summary on how the ESC CTE specialist supported school systems on building partnerships with local workforce boards and institutions of higher education.
5. Number of participants and number of school systems receiving training on each required training topic.
6. Number and title of occasions the ESC specialist provided or supported TEA sponsored professional development events for CTE stakeholders.
7. Number of CLNA submissions reviewed.
8. Name(s) and number of grant-funded ESC CTE specialists providing CTE technical assistance to TEA (TEA requires a minimum of one full-time employee).
9. Number and percentage of districts served in ESC CTE technical assistance activities disaggregated by activity provided.
10. Number of occasions during which the ESC CTE specialist facilitated the work of school systems in the disaggregation and analysis of data on CTE program access for special populations.
11. Number of school systems assisted with the collection and review of labor market information to provide for CTE program improvement, support with school systems Perkins indicator data, and revised Perkins budgets.
12. Number of occasions the ESC CTE specialist assisted TEA with the formation of and support for CTE course, TEKS review committees, focus groups and program of study review committees.

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.