Request for Application

Program Guidelines

2026-2027 Title V, Part B Rural and Low-Income School Program Grant Application

Authorized by Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title V, Part B, Subpart 2

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Texas Education Agency

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers federal[1] and state grant awards to its subgrantees[2] 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.

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 or other RFA requirements. 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, the grantee 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.

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[1] TEA is the grantee and pass-through entity for federal education funding. *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. For purposes of the request for application (RFA), TEA may use the terms *subgrantee, grantee, subrecipient,* and *applicant* synonymously.

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 school districts must be signed electronically by the superintendent of the school district or a designee.
- Applications submitted by regional ESCs must be signed electronically by the executive director or a designee.
- Applications submitted by open-enrollment charter schools must be signed electronically by the chief operating officer of the school or a designee.
- Campuses and campus charter schools must apply through their public school district, and the application must be signed electronically by the superintendent or designee.

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 the grantee review all cross-referenced sections when preparing the application.

Errata Notices

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Errata Notices.

Email Bulletins

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Email Bulletins (GovDelivery).

Contact for Clarifying Information

Grant Program Contact

LaNetra Guess, Deputy Program Management Director
Federal Program Compliance Division
LaNetra.Guess@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-6939

Funding Contact

Kayla Potter, Grant Manager
Grants Administration Division
Kayla.Potter@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-8525

Federal and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with federal appropriations acts:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	$11,172,930
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	$11,172,930
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

This program is designed to address the unique needs of rural school districts that frequently (1) lack the personnel and resources needed to compete effectively for federal competitive grants, and (2) receive formula allocations in amounts too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes.

Title V, Part B, Subpart 2 Rural and Low-Income School Program assists eligible school systems in addressing local academic needs more effectively by giving them greater flexibility in the use of limited federal resources.

The intended program beneficiaries are all students and teachers at eligible school systems.

Eligible Applicants

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Eligibility for Funding.

- Organizations in Texas eligible to apply for a grant under Rural and Low-Income Schools are the following:
  - School systems in which 20% or more of the children served, ages 5 through 17 years, are from families with incomes below the poverty line.
  - All of the schools served by the school system are designated with a School Locale Code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by USDE, or the state educational agency (SEA) determines the school system is located in an area defined as rural by the state.
- The following eligibility requirements also apply:
  - TEA reserves the right not to award a grant to a district or charter school that is identified by TEA as a high-risk grantee.
  - An open-enrollment charter school shall become ineligible for grant funding (or, if a campus has applied for and received funding for this grant, will have its grant funding placed on hold) if the Commissioner notifies the campus's charter holder of his intent to (1) revoke or non-renew the charter under TEC Chapter 12, or (2) close the campus under TEC Chapter 39, for any of the reasons set forth in either statutory provision. If the Commissioner ultimately revokes or denies renewal of an open-enrollment charter of a charter holder or closes a campus that has been awarded funds under this grant program, grant funding shall be discontinued.
  - The applicant must be in compliance with submitting the annual audit to TEA, as described in the General and Fiscal Guidelines.

Eligibility List

Entitlement amounts are available on TEA's Entitlements and Allocations Dashboards. See the Grant Allocations and Award Balances page for additional information.

Shared Services Arrangements (SSAs)

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Shared Services Arrangements (SSAs).

Shared services arrangements are allowed.

Regional ESCs may serve as fiscal agents for an SSA for this grant.

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, Classification of Direct and Indirect Costs.

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

Direct Administrative Costs

The authorizing statute does not limit the amount of direct administrative costs for this grant program.

Indirect Costs

For this grant program, the grantee may claim a maximum for allowable indirect costs equal to its current approved restricted indirect cost rate.

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

Pre-Award Costs

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

Application Requirements and Assurances

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

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

Statutory Requirements

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Statutory Requirements.

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

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

1. Establish program objectives and outcomes for activities conducted under the grant, including how the LEA will use funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards.
2. Ensure that activities conducted under the grant are allowable for any of the following programs:
    a. Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
    b. Title II, Part A – Supporting Effective Instruction
    c. Title III – Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
    d. Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment
    e. Parental and Family Engagement

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. Establish program objectives and outcomes for activities conducted under the grant to increase student academic achievement or decrease the dropout rate

Program-Specific Assurances

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Provisions, Assurances, and Certifications.

The program-specific assurances for this grant program are listed in the SAS. Refer to Schedule CS7000—Provisions, Assurances, and Certifications.

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

  - An Advisory Council is allowed under Title I, Part A, Parent and Family Engagement. The school system may establish a school system-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement.

- Activities allowable under any of the following programs
  - Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
  - Title II, Part A – Supporting Effective Instruction
  - Title III – Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
  - Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment
  - Parental and Family Engagement
- When determining allowability, the grantee should be able to respond appropriately to and maintain documentation for each of the following:
  - How is the expenditure reasonable and necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of the grant program?
  - Provide the description, as identified in the comprehensive needs assessment, the expenditure addresses.
  - Explain how the expenditure addresses this need.
  - How will the expenditure be evaluated to measure a positive impact on student achievement?
  - How is the expenditure supplemental to other nonfederal programs?

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.

Educational Field Trips

Educational field trips may be funded under the grant program. Specific field trip costs must have a documented programmatic purpose. Only the following types of field trips may be allowable:

- Is identified in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA).
- Is included in the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Is allocable, reasonable, and necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of the grant program.
- Includes an instructional activity or activities that cannot be conducted through interactive activities in the classroom or on campus.
- Will result in a positive impact on student achievement.
- Includes instruction that addresses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Includes an evaluation of the field trip that measures the impact on student academic achievement.

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

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:
  - 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)
- 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 (does not include field trips)
- Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419

- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Travel costs for officials such as the executive director, superintendent, or board members
- Cost of membership in any civic or community organization
- Hosting or sponsoring conferences
- Any activity not specified above in the Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section

Expenditure Reporting (ER)

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Cash Management, as well as the Expenditure Reporting webpage.

The grant program will be funded by reimbursement once the NOGA has been issued and the grantee submits payment (drawdown) requests through the Expenditure Reporting (ER) system. The grantee is required to request payment regularly, at minimum quarterly, for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out. However, it is best practice to request funds monthly to support program implementation.

Note: Not requesting payments at least quarterly may cause noncompliance findings on improper program implementation in TEA subrecipient monitoring.

Performance Measures

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

1. Expenditures for each activity conducted under the grant to meet the program objectives and outcomes, and to increase student academic achievement or decrease the dropout rate

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 (MOE).

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with the 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.

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:

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

Zipping Files

If your files are too large, add them to a zip file to save space (free zip software may be available online).

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.

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