



**2025-2026 Effective Advising Framework District Planning Grant
Informal Discretionary Grant (IDC) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, June 17, 2023**

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation

This IDC application must be submitted via email to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

The IDC application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, June 17, 2025**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Pre-Award Costs Are Not Permitted**

Required Attachments (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)

Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules

Attachment 1: 2025-2026 Effective Advising Framework District Planning Grant Program Agreement

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

Applicant Information

Organization **Belton ISD** CDN **014903** Campus **District** ESC **12** UEI **DMH1RXLG7967**
Address **400 N Wall St** City **Belton** ZIP **76513** Vendor ID **1746000354**
Primary Contact **Tiffany Sommerfeld** Email **tiffany.sommerfeld@bisd.net** Phone **2542152040**
Secondary Contact **Deanna Lovesmith** Email **deanna.lovesmith@bisd.net** Phone **2542152640**

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the IDC application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the IDC application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- ☒ IDC application, guidelines, and instructions ☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification
☒ General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances ☒ Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name **Jacklynn Nino** Title **Assistant Superintendent**

Email **jacklynn.nino@bisd.net** Phone **2542152028**

Signature  Date **June 17, 2025**

Shared Services Arrangements

☐ Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are NOT permitted for this grant. .

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- ☒ 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this LOI will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- ☒ 2. The applicant provides assurance 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.
- ☒ 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2025-2026 Effective Advising Framework District Planning Grant Program Guidelines.
- ☒ 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2025-2026 Effective Advising Framework District Planning Grant Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- ☒ 5. 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.

Summary of Program

What is the district's vision for the student experience of the individual student planning system? What is the current state of advising practices and what improvements does the district want to make through this grant process? How will this program foster innovation in CTE programming and/or promote careers pathways aligned to high-skill, high-wage careers or industries?

The district vision is to: "Empower each and every learner to pursue their dreams and enrich their communities." Providing individual planning is essential for ensuring this vision is a reality. Therefore, it is imperative we equip our counselors with the right tools for providing individual guidance to students to inspire their dreams and empower their futures. The Belton ISD's Counseling Department vision for the student experience of the individual student planning system is centered around empowering every student to become the architect of their own future, with robust support and resources to guide them. This vision goes beyond simply selecting courses; it's about fostering self-awareness, goal-setting, and informed decision-making for lifelong success.

Advising practices often struggle with high student-to-counselor ratios, leading to reactive and transactional interactions primarily focused on course selection and graduation requirements rather than proactive, holistic guidance. This fragmented approach often lacks a cohesive, systemic framework across grade levels, limiting early intervention and consistent quality of support. The counseling department aims to transform this by implementing a comprehensive K-12 advising framework that leverages a robust individual student planning system to empower student agency, facilitate personalized guidance, and enable data-driven decision-making, ultimately fostering stronger collaboration among educators, families, and community partners to prepare every student for post-secondary success. This past year, high school students were surveyed regarding the academic advising received. From the survey data results, gaps in the advising and areas for needed improvement were identified. This grant would specifically address those areas, and the professional learning and resources counselors want and need. This implemented system will significantly foster innovation in CTE programming and promote pathways to high-skill, high-wage careers by establishing a data-driven, holistic student-centric approach. Through the individual student planning system, the district will gain insights into student interests and aspirations, enabling the development of new CTE programs or the enhancement of existing ones to directly align with the evolving demands of the industries, such as healthcare, IT, and advanced manufacturing. Furthermore, the K-12 advising framework will ensure early and continuous exposure to these relevant career options, offering students personalized roadmaps to acquire necessary skills, industry certifications, and work-based learning experiences, thereby transforming CTE into a dynamic and a highly effective journey for preparing students for

Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel

1. Who is the identified EAF Project Lead and what are their qualifications? What experience do they have leading and managing change at the district level? What percentage of their time is allocated to this project? How will the district ensure the EAF Project Lead has the appropriate time and capacity to lead this project? How will the district ensure the EAF Project Lead has the appropriate authority to convene a steering committee across the district? 2. Who are the steering committee members and how do they meet the required criteria outlines in the Program Elements below? How will the district ensure the steering committee provides the necessary support to the EAF Project Lead? Include the stipend amounts allocated for the EAF Project Lead and each steering committee member. (Total stipend amounts for the EAF Project Lead and steering committee members are not to exceed 75% of the total grant budget.)

The Project Lead will be the Director of Counseling & Academic Advising, Tiffany Sommerfeld, with 12 years of experience leading counselors in Belton ISD and other surrounding districts. She has been with the district for six years and has a commitment to leading work aligned with the District vision to empower each and every student to pursue their dreams. This position works in close collaboration with the Director of PK-12 Career Readiness, and secondary principals, which is essential in fulfilling the expectations within the grant. Because the role is dedicated 100% to the oversight of the counseling program, the time is already allotted to meet bi-weekly with secondary counselors. In addition, partnerships have been established with ESC 12, and local secondary education entities including Temple College and the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor. She is also a member of the ESC 12 Counseling Advisory Council.

The Director possesses significant experience in leading and managing change, often acting as a critical bridge between district-wide vision and school-level implementation. This role inherently involves systemic leadership and the ability to influence various stakeholders.

This framework, a key part of 2025-2026 department goals, will consume 90% of the project lead's time. The remaining 10% is for homeless education program oversight. Ms. Sommerfeld will conduct bi-weekly counselor meetings. This project provides essential resources for current district initiatives. Funds will be used for professional development and contracted services.

Members:

Project Lead: Tiffany Sommerfeld - Director of Counseling & Academic Advising

Special Populations, Gifted Education: Dr. Deanna Lovesmith - Director of Gifted & Talented

Special Populations, Advanced Academics: Jennifer Hollingsworth - Advanced Academics Coordinator

Special Populations, CTE: Carolyn Poulter - Career & Technical Education Coordinator

Counselor's: Amanda Curylo (Elem), Megan Cannon (Middle), Susan Badgett (High), Ilse Brindley (High), CaRhonda Parham (High)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

1. Describe the district's commitment to improving the individual student planning system. 2. Reference the District Commitments in the Effective Advising Framework. Provide evidence for how district administrators and campus administrators will fulfill the District Commitments in Lever 1: Strong Program Leadership and Planning, Lever 2: Effective, Well-Supported School Counselors and Advisors, Lever 3: Internal School Culture of Advising, Lever 4: Effective External Partnerships, and Lever 5: High Quality Advising Materials and Assessments. 3. How does the district encourage students to own their individual career and academic planning? How does the district engage families/caregivers in students' postsecondary planning?

The District has already made a great commitment to students by incorporation into the District vision. This vision cannot be fulfilled without a deep commitment to advising each and every student to pursue coursework and educational opportunities directly aligned to their future. There is a commitment to ensure that high school campuses have the number of counselors needed to fulfill the vision and support students with their futures. Therefore, it is imperative the District implement the program to provide the professional learning and resources needed to effectively fulfill the vision. The proposed program aims to enhance the effectiveness of school counseling and advising services. This initiative focuses on building capacity through professional development, strategic planning, and the utilization of tools/assessments to improve student advising. The program will involve key stakeholders, including Project Leads and Steering Committee members, who will collaborate to implement comprehensive advising practices.

The major goals and objectives are:

1. Improve Advising Practices: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of school counseling and advising services to empower each and every student to fulfill their dreams.
2. Capacity Building: Strengthen the skills and knowledge of counselors, district and campus administrators, and support staff through targeted professional learning.
3. Data-Driven Decision Making: Utilize data collection tools to inform advising practices and track student progress.
4. Collaboration and Networking: Foster a network of advisors and educators to share best practices and resources.
5. Sustainable Implementation: Develop a sustainable framework for ongoing improvement in advising services.

The activities and strategies are:

1. Contracted Services: CCMR tracking system, redesign of the course catalog, and ESC 12 as appropriate.
2. Professional Development: Allocate funds to enable participation in professional development opportunities that will provide training and exposure to best practices in school counseling and advising.

Reference the District Commitments in the Effective Advising Framework:

Lever 1: Strong Program Leadership and Planning: Align the program with the vision and ensure the initiatives are data-driven for continuous improvement. The Program Lead and Steering Committee will be provided with the necessary resources, professional development, and decision-making autonomy, while fostering a culture of collaboration and accountability. Finally, there will be an emphasis on prioritizing transparent communication and inclusive stakeholder engagement in all planning processes.

Lever 2: Effective, Well-Supported School Counselors and Advisors: Specialized roles will be recognize and value by ensuring a focus on direct student services (academic, career, social-emotional development) rather than administrative or non-counseling duties. This will be demonstrated through appropriate staffing ratios, providing ongoing, relevant professional development tailored to counseling practices, and allocating sufficient resources (funding, facilities, tools). Furthermore, administrators will foster collaboration between counselors and other staff, actively involve counselors in strategic planning and data-driven decision-making, and implement evaluation systems specific to counseling effectiveness.

Lever 3: Internal School Culture of Advising: Explicitly embed advising into the strategies of the district's mission and goals, communicating that advising is a shared responsibility for all staff. This support will further be demonstrated through ensuring equitable advising services for all students. Ultimately, it means fostering an environment where every staff member is equipped and expected to contribute to students' holistic academic, career, and social-emotional development.

Lever 4: Effective External Partnerships: Create formalized agreements like Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or contracts with community organizations, mental health agencies, higher education institutions, and local businesses to provide a strategic approach to filling service gaps and leveraging external expertise for student needs. Additionally, resource allocation, active involvement of external partners in program planning and evaluation, and clear communication channels will be established by the Project Lead to ensure seamless collaboration and shared goals that directly benefit student academic, career, and social-emotional development. Families and caregivers will also be a part of this through clear communication channels such as a website, newsletters, and district contact options.

Lever 5: High Quality Advising Materials and Assessments: Dedicate the budget for purchasing up-to-date career exploration tools as needed, college application resources, social-emotional learning curricula as necessary, and standardized assessments. Learning will be provided for counselors on how to effectively use and interpret data, ensuring consistency and fidelity across the district. Support will also be by integrating advising and assessment data into district-wide decision-making, using it to identify student needs, evaluate program effectiveness, and track post-secondary outcomes, promoting continuous

Performance and Evaluation Measures

How does the district currently monitor progress on the individual student planning system? What are the current performance measures and data collection tools used by the district to track progress toward academic and career planning?

Currently, the District meets with all fifth grade students and teachers to choose the appropriate courses for the transition to the sixth grade level. Parent input is sought at this time. Data driven decisions are made by using previous 3rd and 4th grade STAAR scores, and incremental testing for BOY, MOY, and EOY test results for success and mastery to determine placement in advanced courses in middle school. Through the middle school years, counselors meet with students to review their progress and ensure they are on track to move to the high school level. In eighth grade, a Career Interest Inventory is conducted and reviewed prior to course choice completion for ninth grade and the subsequent years for high school. Additionally, in eighth grade, students participate in the PSAT 8/9 and the results of that test are reviewed for the AP Potential score report and placement in advanced courses once students enter high school. There are also opportunities in middle school for students to begin high school coursework and meet several graduation requirements to include Math, Fine Arts, PE, LOTE, and CTE. Once in high school, as ninth grade students, counselors meet individually with each student and their parents to discuss the completion of the Four Year Plan. These conversations incorporate the Career Interest Inventory results, data from previous state testing scores, and future students aspirations. Monitoring every year by the counselors is conducted to track success toward meeting graduation requirements. During the senior year, counselors again meet with the students to ensure all graduation requirements have been met to include credits and end-of-course exams.

Current Performance Measures:

STAAR Interim Assessments, STAAR, District Benchmarks, STAR Renaissance, TELPAS, Career Interest Inventory, PSAT 8/9, PSAT NMSQT, SAT School Day, TSIA2, Advanced Placement testing, Industry Based Certifications CCMR Tracking, STAAR EOC's

Budget Justification

Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the proposed program. Include justification for the specific funding allocations in the proposed budget and provide detail on stipends and hours expected for services rendered.

The Project Lead will be dedicated to this work alongside the Steering Committee to facilitate the goals and objectives of the Effective Advising Framework.

Professional Contracted Services \$15,000: Contracted services will allow the district steering committee to identify gaps early in their planning process and determine the right change for the greatest impact and improved student outcomes by leveraging real-time, student-level data to provide targeted interventions and support.

Materials \$10,000: Funds for a data collection tool that will enable the steering committee to plan, create, and initiate the implementation of the individual planning system. This resource will bring strategic value to developing clear, data-driven goals for the effective advising plan to graduate all students to be ready for college, career, and military.

Professional Learning \$25,000: Travel and registration funds to allow the steering committee members to attend in-state training and/or conferences that will provide invaluable opportunities to identify tools and resources that bolster leadership and planning of the individual planning system and exposure to a diverse range of trending topics and experts in career and technical education and effective advising that will significantly enhance knowledge and expertise, particularly in ensuring equal access, examining and mitigating unconscious bias, and deepening advising skills to support students' academic, career, and personal and social growth.

Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this program.

- ☒ The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this program.
- ☐ Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the program?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

5A: Assurances

- ☐ The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- ☐ The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

5B: Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	
4. Total current-year program allocation	
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the program's defined limit	
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	

Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the [Administering a Grant](#) page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page

Amended Section**Reason for Amendment**