

# Welcome

Welcome to the Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) 25-26 Cycle 4 application.

This consolidated application streamlines school system's access to grant funding, allotments, and in-kind supports and services across 15 opportunities.

## Introduction

This application includes 15 initiatives available for school systems to apply for in LASO Cycle 4.

To ensure an informed selection, please follow these steps:

- **Review Program Guidelines:** Examine the program guidelines and resources for each initiative to understand its purpose, eligibility requirements, and assurances.
- **Engage Internal Teams:** Consult with key stakeholders (e.g., board, superintendent, district leaders, campus leaders etc.) to determine which initiatives best align with your school system's needs and capacity.
- **Select Initiatives:** Identify the initiatives that best support your local priorities.
- **Complete the Application:** Submit responses only for the initiatives your school system chooses to apply for.

Review each initiative by clicking the links to its program guidelines below:

### Curriculum & Instruction Serving Grants

- [Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas \(LIFT\)](#)
  - *LIFT merges programs formerly known as Strong Foundations- SF, Texas Instructional Leadership- TIL, and Texas Lesson Study- TXLS*
- [LIFT Add-On: School Improvement PLC Support \(LIFT SI PLC\)](#)
  - *(available only for Title I Comprehensive, Targeted, and Addtl Targeted)*
- [School Improvement Curriculum and Instruction Support Grant \(SI CISG\)](#)
  - *(available only for Title I Comprehensive, Targeted, and Addtl Targeted)*
- [Blended Learning Grant \(BLG\)](#)
  - *Two Cohorts: Academic – Math or RLA cohort and Strategic Operations Cohort*
- [AP Computer Science Principles \(APCSP\)](#)

### Education and Training

- [PREP Program Allotment](#)
  - [PREP Residency Preservice Program](#)
  - [PREP Grow Your Own \(GYO\) Program](#)
  - [PREP Mentorship Program](#)
- [Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies \(TSS\) Grant](#)

### More Time

- [Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program \(ADSY PEP\)](#)
  - *Two Cohorts: Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning*

### Innovative School Models - Launch Grants

- [School Action Fund \(SAF\)](#)
- [Navigating Excellence through Targeted Supports \(NEXT\)](#)
- [Early College High School \(ECHS\)](#)
- [Pathways in Technology Early College High School \(P-TECH\)](#)
- [Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator \(VHPA\)](#)

## Additional Resources and Considerations

### Additional Resources

- [Initiative One-Pagers](#): Provides school systems with a concise summary of each initiative in LASO Cycle 4.
- [Eligibility & Prioritization Matrix](#): Provides eligibility and prioritization criteria that will enable a school system to predict the likelihood of receiving an award.
- [Initiative Selection Tool](#): Provides a Scenario map to guide selection of the right fitting initiative based on need.
- [Role and Responsibilities Insight Tool](#): Identifies the types of responsibilities for each role and show where roles overlap across initiatives.

### Key Considerations for Submission

- Each school system may submit only one application. If multiple applications are submitted, only the most recent submission (based on timestamp) will be accepted.
- The application must be signed by the superintendent to be considered formally submitted. Only signed applications will be scored and considered for award. If the superintendent is unavailable to sign by the deadline, email [LASO@texas.tea.gov](mailto:LASO@texas.tea.gov) for guidance.
- School systems have 60 days to complete the application. The application opens on October 3, 2025, and must be submitted by December 3, 2025, at 5:00 PM CT.

## Overview

### General School System Information

Select the ESC region that serves the school system.

ESC Region:	<input type="text" value="ESC 02: Corpus Christi"/>
School System:	<input type="text" value="FREER ISD-(066903)"/>

### School System Contact Information

Enter the contact information for the employee who is completing this application.

*Note: There may be multiple roles at the school system completing different sections of this application - this entry is for the primary contact.*

School System Employee Name:	<input type="text" value="Conrad Cantu"/>
School System Employee Title:	<input type="text" value="Superintendent"/>
School System Employee Email:	<input type="text" value="ccantu@freerisd.net"/>

### Superintendent Contact Information

Enter the school system superintendent's contact information.

Superintendent Name:	<input type="text" value="Conrad Cantu"/>
Superintendent Email:	<input type="text" value="ccantu@freerisd.net"/>

### School System Calendar

For the 2026–27 school year, select the option that best describes your school system’s instructional calendar:

- 165 or more instructional days
- Fewer than 165 instructional days
- Fewer than 165 instructional days in 2026–27, but planning to transition to 165 or more days in a future year

### LASO Cycle 4 Assurances

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Commit to all assurances associated with the initiatives they intend to apply for.  
*Failure to agree to these assurances may prevent the school system from completing the application or being considered for awards.*

- Ensure the superintendent approves participation in all selected initiatives.

*If assurances are not met or the school system disengages from the supports/initiatives provided, TEA may impose conditions on the award, including terminating participation or reducing awarded funds.*

- Meet the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#).

The school system certifies its commitment to all assurances listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## Initiative Selection

Below is the list of initiatives available in LASO Cycle 4. Review the [program guidelines](#) and [one-pagers](#) with key information for each initiative. Then select the set of initiatives that best meet your school system’s local needs and priorities.

### Curriculum & Instruction Grants

- Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)
- LIFT Add-On: School Improvement PLC Support (LIFT SI PLC)
- School Improvement Curriculum and Instruction Support Grant (SI CISG)
- Blended Learning Grant (BLG)
- Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles (APCSP)

### Education & Training Allotments and Grant

- PREP Residency Preservice Program
- PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program
- PREP Mentorship Program
- Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grant

### More Time Grants

- Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP) Grant

### Innovative School Models - Launch Grants

- School Action Fund (SAF)
- Navigating Excellence through Targeted Supports (NEXT)
- Early College High School (ECHS)
- Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH)
- Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA)

## Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)

### Initiative Description:

LIFT (Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas) is a three-year program designed to support Texas school systems in building the instructional and systems-level capacity needed to deliver high-quality learning experiences for all students. LIFT brings together the highest leverage components of Strong Foundations, Texas Instructional Leadership, and Texas Lesson Study, providing comprehensive support for school systems to adopt **high-quality instructional material (HQIM)** and implement **Bluebonnet Learning (BL)** over multiple years.

Review the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed below and indicate the school system’s acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Commit to selecting and implementing a [State Board of Education \(SBOE\)](#)-approved high-quality instructional material (HQIM) in the 2027–28 school year.

OR

- Commit to implementing a Bluebonnet Learning (BL) product in the 2026–27 school year.

*Note: Participation in other grant programs does not disqualify applicants but may be considered during prioritization.*

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Commit to (with Board approval) implementing a Bluebonnet Learning (BL) product in the 2026–27 school year (if applying to the “Implementation Phase”) OR committing to selecting and implementing a State Board of Education (SBOE)-approved high-quality instructional material (HQIM) in the 2027–28 school year (if applying to the “Planning Phase”).
- Contract with an Approved Provider from the LASO Cycle 4 State Approved Provider List for LIFT.
- Submit Approved Provider contracts and required funding summary reports to TEA.
- Secure approval from the Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer (or equivalent leader) to participate in the program.
- Appoint a designated LIFT lead as the primary point of contact and identify at least two additional contacts.  
*Note: The primary point of contact should be the equivalent of a senior academic team member or principal manager.*
- Participate in required TEA-led activities, including a grant kick-off and communities of practice.
- Engage relevant school system and campus leaders, including special programs leadership, as well as teachers, instructional coaches, and special population educators in upfront training, implementation support, and coaching.
- Participate in a needs assessment of current instructional practices and materials.
- Establish or refine systems for instructional leadership, schoolwide routines, and observation and feedback.
- Submit all required grant deliverables, including instructional framework artifacts, implementation plans, school system-level instructional materials transition plan, campus-level implementation action plans, classroom, campus, and school system-level observation data and student outcomes data and progress updates as requested by the Approved Provider or the TEA.
- Participate in TEA-administered surveys and/or focus groups, as requested.
- Use grant funds in alignment with the required allocation structure and ensuring all expenditures support the goals of the LIFT program.
- Permit Approved Providers access to campuses to provide in-person support.
- Ensure teachers have sufficient planning time and use the required protocols.
- Provide print materials for all participating teachers and students.
- Follow the year-long scope and sequence for the instructional materials.
- Meet the minimum number of instructional minutes for the instructional materials.
- Ensure that a number of instructional leaders, aligned with the school system size, will actively participate in monthly implementation support and coaching provided by the Approved Provider.
- Ensure that the school system cabinet regularly engages in data reflection/performance management routines.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) Grant

For each content area below, please indicate your district’s current intention regarding the implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

*You may select different options for each content area.*

#### K–5 English or Spanish Language Arts and Reading (ELAR/SLAR)

1. For which activity are you seeking LIFT technical assistance support in K-5 ELAR or SLAR?

- Implement **Bluebonnet Learning K–5 ELAR** in 2026–27 and/or **Bluebonnet Learning K-5 SLAR** if approved by SBOE  
 Select an **SBOE-approved HQIM** during the planning year in 2026-27 and implement that HQIM in 2027-28  
 Neither of the above

#### K–5 Mathematics

2. For which activity are you seeking LIFT technical assistance support in K-5 Math?

- Implement **Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Math** in 2026–27 and/or **Bluebonnet Learning K-5 Math (Spanish)** if SBOE approved

- Select an **SBOE-approved HQIM** in 2026-27 during the planning year in 2026-27 and implement that HQIM in 2027-28
- Neither of the above

**Secondary Mathematics**

3. For which activity are you seeking LIFT technical assistance support in 6-8 and/or Algebra I Mathematics, or Geometry or Algebra II if approved by SBOE?

- Implement **Bluebonnet Learning Secondary Math** in 2026–27
- Select an **SBOE-approved HQIM** during the planning year in 2026-27 and implement that HQIM in 2027-28
- Neither of the above

## Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) Grant

For each content area below, please indicate your school system’s current intention regarding the implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

The LIFT grant provides monthly implementation support and coaching from a State-Approved Provider. By applying for this grant, your organization is committing to active participation in this support, specifically for instructional leaders – both at the campus and school system levels. Each participating campus must have one leader receiving coaching. Each of the participating campus and school system leaders must be directly involved in supporting teachers with the implementation of selected instructional materials. Additionally, the school system leader must be directly involved in supporting the campus leaders.

4. How many campus principals will the school system commit to receiving monthly implementation support and coaching visits from the Approved Provider?

Total number of principals to be coached :

5. How many school system-based instructional leaders (e.g. principal managers, executive director of instruction, associate superintendent) will the school system commit to receiving monthly implementation support and coaching visits from the Approved Provider?

Total number of leaders to be coached:

6. Does the school system commit to having, or working towards having, 165+ instructional days in the 2026-2027 academic year?

- Yes
- No

7. Has the school system implemented a CER OER product in previous academic years?

- Yes
- No

8. Enter the contact information for the school system’s primary point of contact for the LIFT grant.

Name:	<input style="width: 250px;" type="text" value="Conrad Cantu"/>
Email:	<input style="width: 250px;" type="text" value="ccantu@freerisd.net"/>
Phone:	<input style="width: 250px;" type="text" value="361-394-6025"/>

9. Enter the contact information for the school system’s secondary points of contact for the LIFT grant.

Name:

Email: lhinojosa@freerisd.net

Phone: 361-394-6025

Name: Russel Buhidar

Email: rbuhidar@freerisd.net

Phone: 361-394-6025

## LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC)

### Initiative Description:

The LIFT School Improvement PLC Support grant is a targeted, Title I-funded initiative designed to enhance implementation support for campuses participating in the Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) program that are also identified for School Improvement. This grant provides additional resources, such as expanded PLC facilitation, increased observation and feedback, and individualized coaching to strengthen instructional systems and ensure effective use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). The goal is to deepen and sustain effective instructional practices by reinforcing the conditions necessary for strong HQIM implementation, ultimately improving student outcomes on federally identified campuses.

Review the Eligibility Criteria, Initiative Assurances, and Initiative Requirements listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Eligible campuses include campuses that are Title I served with a 2025 federal accountability identification, including Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), or Additional Targeted Support (ATS). Comprehensive campuses in their second year of identification (Comprehensive Reidentified or Comprehensive Progress) are also eligible. Campuses must remain in operation during the grant cycle and remain Title I served for the 2026-27 school year.

*Note: A school system is eligible to apply to both Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT) and LIFT SI PLC Support grants, but if both are awarded, the school system must select the same Approved Provider for both LIFT and the LIFT SI PLC Support grant.*

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Implement a Bluebonnet Learning (BL) product in the 2026–27 school year.
- Secure approval from the Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer (or equivalent leader) to participate in the program.
- Contract with the same provider from the LASO Cycle 4 State Approved Provider list that is providing technical assistance for the LIFT program for PLC supports.
- Engage relevant school system and campus leaders, as well as teachers and instructional coaches, in upfront training, implementation support, and coaching.

*Note: These individuals must be in addition to and distinct from leaders receiving coaching through the LIFT program.*

- Submit all required grant deliverables for each school year for the life of the grant.
- Submit provider contracts and required funding summary reports to TEA.
- Appoint a designated lead as the primary point of contact and identify at least two additional contacts.
- Permit Approved Providers access to campuses to provide in-person support.
- Ensure teachers have sufficient planning time and use the required protocols.
- Provide print materials for all participating teachers and students.
- Follow the year-long scope and sequence for instructional materials.
- Meet the minimum number of instructional minutes for the instructional materials.
- Use grant funds in alignment with the required allocation structure and ensure all expenditures support the goals of the LIFT program.
- Participate in required TEA-led activities, including a grant kick-off.

### Initiative Requirements:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Provide an additional campus leader—distinct from those supported through the LIFT Program—who will directly support teachers or campus leaders implementing the selected instructional materials.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria, Initiative Assurances, and Initiative Requirements listed above?

- Yes
- No

## LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) (cont.)

### Activity Selection for the LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) Initiative

Select the activities for which the school system is seeking LIFT SI PLC Support technical assistance for.

- Bluebonnet Learning K–5 ELAR** or **Bluebonnet Learning K–5 SLAR** if SBOE approved in 2026–27
- Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Math** or **Bluebonnet Learning K-5 Math (Spanish)** if SBOE approved in 2026–27
- Bluebonnet Learning Secondary Math** in 2026–27

## LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Bluebonnet Learning K–5 ELAR and/or SLAR Activity

1. Select the 2025 Federally Identified and Title-I serving campus(es) that will be implementing the Bluebonnet Learning K–5 ELAR and/or SLAR Activity.

*Note: This list contains all campuses in your district (that may or may not be Federally Identified and Title-I serving).*

NORMAN M THOMAS EL-(066903102)

2. Indicate the number of campus leaders that will be receiving PLC support, 1-2 per campus.

*Note: Each individual must be directly supporting teachers or campus leaders implementing the selected instructional material.*

**These individuals must be in addition to and distinct from leaders receiving coaching through the LIFT program.**

NORMAN M THOMAS EL-(066903102): 2

## LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Math and/or K-5 Math (Spanish) Activity

1. Select the 2025 Federally Identified and Title-I serving campus(es) that will be implementing the Bluebonnet Learning K–5 Math and/or K-5 Math (Spanish) Activity.

*Note: This list contains all campuses in your district (that may or may not be Federally Identified and Title-I serving).*

NORMAN M THOMAS EL-(066903102)

2. Indicate the number of campus leaders that will be receiving PLC support, 1-2 per campus.

*Note: Each individual must be directly supporting teachers or campus leaders implementing the selected instructional material.*

**These individuals must be in addition to and distinct from leaders receiving coaching through the LIFT program.**

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## LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the LIFT School Improvement PLC (LIFT SI PLC) Grant

For each content area below, please indicate your school system's current intention regarding the implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

1. Enter contact information for your school system's primary point of contact for the LIFT SI PLC Support grant.

Name:	Conrad Cantu
Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

2. Enter contact information for your school system's secondary points of contact for the LIFT SI PLC Support grant.

Name:	Amanda Salinas
Email:	asalinas@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

Name:	Jacki Canales
Email:	jcanales@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG)

### Initiative Description:

The Blended Learning Grant opportunity has two distinct cohorts and associated purposes that applicants will select from, as described below.

The **Blended Learning Academic Cohort** will support school systems and open-enrollment charter schools through a planning stage to design and subsequently implement a high-quality blended learning model in math (through Math Innovation Zones - MIZ) and Reading Language-Arts (RLA) aligned with Bluebonnet Math or Reading as their Tier 1 instruction.

The **Blended Learning Strategic Operations Cohort** will support school systems and open-enrollment charter schools in leveraging a blended learning model to make a strategic operational shift to scheduling, staffing and/or budgets. This shift will seek to make robust operational changes to optimize campus staffing models for teachers while maximizing academic impact for students. The grant is available to school system that have successfully completed a planning phase of either Math Innovation Zones or RLA Blended Learning grants. Applicants will select a blended model that will require significant operational and staffing shifts to rethink time in a teacher-centric way at the participating campus(es).

*Note: Both cohorts must choose a specific blended model, integrating a tier one curriculum with a digital supplemental product, from the options [here](#). A participating campus's master schedule may need to be adjusted to accommodate the time blocks required.*

For which **Blended Learning Grant Cohort** is the school system applying?

- Academic Cohort (School systems new to Blended Learning Grants)
- Strategic Operations Cohort (School systems from previous TEA Blended Learning Grants, including both math and non-math programs)

Review the Eligibility Criteria listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

- **Blended Learning Academic Cohort:** School Systems who have previously participated or are currently participating in a strong Tier 1 math and/or reading curriculum planning through a TEA initiative (i.e. LASO 2 Strong Foundations and LASO 1 Strong Foundations).
- **Blended Learning Strategic Operations Cohort:** School Systems who have previously participated in TEA Blended Learning Grants. Applicants must have shown high usage in approved supplemental products in math and/or reading language arts for grades K-8 in spring of 2025.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG) (cont.)

### Initiative Assurances for the Blended Learning Grant (BLG):

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Designate and provide a school system level project manager who will be available to dedicate approximately 50% of their time to designing and implementing the blended learning plan and who has decision making authority to act on developed plan.
- Designate and share with both the TEA and vendors a school system level lead/sponsor for communications, logistics, and usage monitoring. They also agree that this information is updated and maintained throughout the grant.
- Designate and share with TEA and vendors a campus level lead/sponsor for communications, logistics, and usage monitoring. They also agree this is updated and maintained throughout the grant.
- Work with a third-party vendor to complete a technology audit for a landscape analysis of supplemental products currently purchased and/or used at campuses.
- Implement, with fidelity, a digital adaptive software program in grade levels selected to participate in the Blended Learning Grant.
- Submit fidelity of planning deliverables prior to the beginning of the first school year, including but not limited to the following:
  - Master Schedule
  - Assessment Calendar
  - Stakeholder Engagement Plan
  - Professional Learning Calendars
- Complete execution deliverables in program implementation during the grant period, including but not limited to the following:
  - Student usage progress towards the selected adaptive software program recommended metrics.
  - Sharing student TSDS unique IDs with select software product vendor for TEA quarterly reports.
  - Sharing unit assessment data from core curriculum.
  - Complete all required training(s) to build competency with the adaptive software product.
  - Completing all required research surveys throughout the grant program period.
- Participate in required communities of practice and any additional grant program meetings.
- Use a digital supplemental program, approved through the IMRA and/or Ratio Wavier List (RWL), and Bluebonnet Math and/or Reading for Tier 1 instruction.
- Complete all required training(s) to build competency in the online curriculum.
- Complete annual reflection and revision plans in implementation years to continuously improve upon blended learning and/or strategic operations planning.
- Adhere to all statutory requirements in TEC Sections 28.020 and 29.924 including, but not limited to:
  - Develop a plan to implement a blended learning model according to statute requirements.
  - Implement the model across at least one full grade level at the campus and expand to other grade levels and/or campuses.
  - Require teachers to differentiate instruction for all students in a grade level using a research-backed blended learning model.
  - Provide teachers and other relevant personnel with professional development opportunities regarding blended learning.
  - Require the use of a proficiency-based assessment.

### Initiative Specific Assurances for the Blended Learning Strategic Operations Cohort:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Establish a cross-departmental steering committee, which includes a representative from the finance team, to facilitate strong planning and implementation.

- Select one of the following three operational models to plan for and implement:
  - Large Scale Rotational Model
  - Flex Model
  - District Proposed Model

*Note: These operational models will require significant adjustments to staffing models (e.g., one master teacher leading a large group of students with the support of paraprofessionals or teacher aides). See Description of Program section for full definition of each model.*

- Develop and submit strategic planning deliverables, between March and August of 2026, tailored to the operational model selected.
- Pilot the proposed model in the 2026-2027 school year with at least one full grade level at the participating campus(es).
- Fully implement the selected model in the 2027-2028 school year in all proposed grade levels at the participating campus(es).

1. Does the school system agree to meet all Initiative Specific Assurances listed above?

- Yes
- No

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG) (cont.)

### Initiative Requirements for the Blended Learning Grant (BLG):

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Agree that your participating campuses will serve all grade levels within the K-8 Math or K-5 RLA grade bands by the end of the grant period.
- Agree to complete all required training(s) to build competency in the online curriculum.
- Agree to complete annual reflection and revision plans in implementation years to continuously improve upon blended learning and/or strategic operations planning.
- Agree to implement the digital adaptive software program in grade levels selected to participate in the Blended Learning grant.
- Agree to adhere to all statutory requirements in TEC Sections 28.020 and 29.924 including, but not limited to:
  - Develop a plan to implement a blended learning model according to statute requirements.
  - Implement the model across at least one full grade level at the campus and expand to other grade levels and/or campuses.
  - Require teachers to differentiate instruction for all students in a grade level using a research-backed blended learning model.
  - Provide teachers and other relevant personnel with professional development opportunities regarding blended learning.
  - Require the use of a proficiency-based assessment.

### Initiative Specific Requirements for the Blended Learning Strategic Operations Cohort:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Agree to implement an SBOE-approved Tier 1 product. (see full list at [Instructional Materials Review and Approval](#))
- Implement the above Tier 1 curriculum and supplemental products for their selected grade-levels and student population with participating campus(es).
- Establish a cross-departmental steering committee, which includes a representative from the finance team, to facilitate strong planning and implementation.
- Develop and submit strategic planning deliverables in the six months of the grant (March 2026 - August 2026) tailored to the operational model selected.
- Pilot the proposed model in the 2026-2027 school year with at least one full grade level at the participating campus(es).
- Fully implement the selected model in the 2027-2028 school year in all proposed grade levels at the participating campus(es), if awarded a continuation grant.
- Agree to download, complete, and upload the following scoring template linked [here](#) to submit with calculations for the questions below:
  - How many supplemental products were implemented for each blended model(s) at the applicant campus(es)?
  - Name of supplemental product implemented for each blended model(s) at the applicant campus(es).
  - List the recommended supplemental product usage target. (e.g., '30 minutes per week', '2 lessons per week', etc.)
  - Identify campuses and grade-levels implementing the above supplemental product in the Spring of 2025.
  - How many Total K-8 students are enrolled at the participating campuses above?
  - How many K-8 students participating in blended learning at participating campuses in the Spring of 2025?
  - What is the percentage of K-8 students participating in blended learning at participating campuses (questions f and e)?
  - Of the participating students in question f, how many of them are meeting the recommended supplemental product usage target (question c)?
  - What percentage of participating K-8 students met the supplemental product usage target, from the above two questions?

- Include a screenshot of the software dashboard as evidence of the calculations for each included software product?

2. Does the school system agree to meet the Initiative Specific Requirements listed above?

- Yes
- No

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Blended Learning Grant (BLG)

1. How many K-5 campuses is the school system applying to? (*Min: 1, Max: Not to exceed the number of available campuses*)

2. How many 6-8 campuses is the school system applying to? (*Min: 1, Max: Not to exceed the number of available campuses*)

3. Select the blended model subjects the school system is interested in implementating:

- Math
- Reading Language Arts

3a. What SBOE approved Tier 1 curriculum math product and supplemental math product do participating campuses plan on using in the 26-27 school year?

- K-5 Math | Bluebonnet with ***[IMRA supplemental approved product]***
- K-5 Math | ***[IMRA T1 product]*** with ***[approved product]***
- 6-8 Math | Bluebonnet with ***[IMRA supplemental approved product]***
- 6-8 Math | ***[IMRA T1 product]*** with ***[approved product]***

3b. How many students (K-8) school system wide will be participating in math blended learning through this grant?

3c. What SBOE approved Tier 1 curriculum reading product and supplemental reading product do participating campuses plan on using in the 26-27 school year?

- K-5 Reading | Bluebonnet with ***[approved product]***
- 6-8 Reading | ***[approved product]*** with ***[approved product]***
- K-5 Reading | Bluebonnet with ***[approved product]***
- 6-8 Reading | ***[approved product]*** with ***[approved product]***

3d. How many students (K-8) district wide will be participating in reading language arts blended learning through this grant?

4. What is the school system's total student enrollment in grades K-8?

5. Please provide the contact information for the project manager designee or immediate contact for the BLG program.

Name:	Jacki Canales
Role:	Blended Learning Project Manager
Email:	jcanales@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

### Initiative Specific Questions for the Blended Learning Strategic Operations Cohort:

1. Which Strategic Operations cohort model does the school system anticipate planning for and implementing through the grant? (Select all that apply)

- Rotation Model
- Student-Driven Flex Model
- District-Proposed Model

2. How many supplemental products were implemented in the school system's blended learning models at the applicant campus(es) for the Spring of 2025. (Enter Supplemental Product Count between 1 - 3)

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG) (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the First Supplemental Product:

1. Enter the name of the first supplemental product.

2. Enter the recommended supplemental product usage target (e.g., '30 minutes per week', '2 lessons per week', etc.).

3. Select the campuses implementing the above supplemental product in spring of 2024-2025 school year.

4. Grade-level(s) that were implemented in a blended learning model during the Spring of the 2024-2025 school year (Select all that apply).

- Kindergarten
- 1st Grade
- 2nd Grade
- 3rd Grade
- 4th Grade
- 5th Grade
- 6th Grade
- 7th Grade

8th Grade

5. What is the total number of K-8 students enrolled at participating campuses?

391

6. What is the total number of K-8 students participating in blended learning and supplemental product implementation at participating campuses?

391

7. What is the total number K-8 blended learning students meeting supplemental product usage target?

391

## Blended Learning Grant (BLG) (cont.)

### Blended Learning Grant (BLG) Strategic Operations Cohort Scoring Template

Upload the completed [scoring template](#) as agreed in the program requirements.

*Note: Upload a PDF file using the following naming convention - [School System or Campus Name].BLG.ScoringTemplate.pdf*

[blended-learning-grant-strategic-operations-cohort-software-usage-calculation-template \(1\).xlsx - MATH Software Data.pdf](#)

76KB

application/pdf

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts

### Initiative Description:

The Additional Days School Year (ADSY) Grant is a voluntary, three-year grant initiative designed to support school systems and open-enrollment charter schools in developing and sustaining high-quality ADSY programs.

The ADSY grant provides participating local education agencies (LEAs) with comprehensive support to design programs that are grounded in research and aligned with evidence-based practices that improve student outcomes. The program structure includes:

- Year 1: Planning - School systems engage in a year-long planning process with TEA-approved technical assistance providers to design a strategic, research-aligned ADSY model tailored to their local context.
- Years 2-3: Implementation Refinement and Continuous Improvement - School systems receive ongoing support to strengthen program quality, monitor outcomes, and make data-informed adjustments to ensure long-term success and sustainability.

This structured approach builds school system capacity in program design, strategic planning, and change management. It ensures that additional instructional days are effectively implemented and aligned with school system priorities to maximize academic impact.

School systems participating in the Grade 6- 8 Expansion opportunity pilot will follow a slightly shorter timeline, with grant support lasting for two years.

School systems will be able to select between two ADSY models, Full Year and Summer, to receive planning and implementation support aligned with research-based best practices.

Review the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Participating campuses must operate on a 175-day instructional calendar or have a board-approved plan to implement such a calendar by the 2026–2027 school year.
- Campus must be implementing an IMRA-approved product as their Tier 1 during the regular school year.

*Note: For Campuses That Have Not Previously Accessed ADSY Funding Under the ADSY Planning and Execution Program (PEP)*

- The participating campus must serve students in one or more grade levels within PK–5.

*Note: Previously Participated in ADSY PEP and Seek to Expand to Grades 6–8*

- The participating campus(es) must serve students in one or more grade levels within 6-8.

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Assign a qualified and experienced project manager with district-level decision-making authority who can align campus-based actions with district goals, and who will:
  - Attend all Learning Community professional development workshops.
  - Participate in calls with the designated approved provider.
  - Lead the District’s ADSY PEP steering committee.
  - Ensure timely and high-quality completion of the LEA’s ADSY PEP strategic plan and deliverables.
- Form a cross-departmental Steering Committee that meets at least monthly and includes representatives from both the Finance and Curriculum & Instruction teams to guide strategic planning.
- Attend and actively participate in all required grant orientation meetings, Professional Development sessions, Technical Assistance (TA) meetings, and maintain open, responsive communication with the assigned TA provider throughout the grant period.
- Complete the comprehensive ADSY PEP Strategic Plan using the provided planning resources and templates, and submit it by the designated deadlines.
- Understand that continuation in the ADSY PEP grant is contingent upon demonstrated effort to implement feedback, adherence to all grant requirements, and evidence of yearly progress.
- Failure to secure board approval of an ADSY-eligible calendar (defined as a 175-day base instructional calendar with 75,600 operational minutes) for the 2026–2027 school year at participating campuses will result in ineligibility to continue in ADSY PEP.
- Maintain the annual ADSY-eligible calendar approval process at participating campuses for the full duration of the grant, and acknowledge that failure to secure board approval in future years during the ADSY PEP grant cycle will result in ineligibility for continued funding, if available.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed above?

- Yes
- No

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### ADSY Calendar Requirement:

Additional Days School Year funding is the foundation of the ADSY grant and includes an eligibility requirement of conducting a minimum of 175-day instructional calendar at the participating campuses.

1. Does the school system agree to the ADSY grant requirement of implementing and maintaining a base academic calendar of 175 instructional days and 75,600 operational minutes, and adding at least 25 Additional Days (aligned to the approved model) to the calendar at the eligible campuses for the full duration of the grant?

- Yes
- No

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### ADSY Pathway:

1. Has the school system previously participated in the ADSY Full Year or Summer Cohort?

- Yes
- No

1a. Please select the option that best represents your school system’s current ADSY implementation status. This will help route to the correct application sections:

*Note: The school system has previously participated in the ADSY Full Year or ADSY Summer program with grant support. For this application cycle, the school system may apply for ADSY grant with up to three new-to-ADSY campuses.*

Category 1 – New PK–5 Campus Participation

Applying for one or more campuses serving grades PK–5 that have never received ADSY formula funding under any prior ADSY grant.

Category 2 – Expansion to Grades 6–8

Previously participated in ADSY (Summer or Full Year) and is now seeking to expand ADSY implementation to include grades 6–8

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### School systems interested in Category 2 –Expansion to Grades 6–8

*Note: The school system has previously participated in the ADSY Full Year or Summer cohort with grant support. For this application cycle, the school system may apply to ADSY with up to three new campuses.*

Enter the number of ADSY eligible campuses the school system is applying for. (Min: 1, Max: 3 but not to exceed the number of available campuses)

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### ADSY school systems who are interested in Category 2 –Expansion to Grades 6–8

1. Please select the first ADSY-eligible campuses

2. Please indicate which ADSY cohort the school system is applying for:

ADSY Summer

ADSY Full Year

3. Does the selected campus currently operate on a 175+ instructional day calendar (not including staff development waivers) for the 2025-2026 school year?

Yes

No

3a. Upload the board-approved calendar.

*Note: Upload a PDF file using the following naming convention - [School System or Campus Name].[Initiative Acronym].[Document Name].pdf*

[Updated Academic 2025-26 Calendar.pdf](#)

158KB

application/pdf

4. Is the school system currently implementing an IMRA-approved, full-subject HQIM for Math at ALL the campuses anticipated to participate in ADSY PEP?

- Yes
- No

5. What is the full name of the Math instructional material(s)

Bluebonnet 6-8

6. Is the school system currently implementing an IMRA-approved, full-subject HQIM for RLA at ALL the campuses anticipated to participate in ADSY PEP?

- Yes
- No

7. What is the full name of the RLA instructional material(s)

Amplify

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Requirements for the ADSY Summer Cohort

*Note: School systems that agree with program specific requirements will be prioritized.*

1. Does the school system agree to implement an ADSY summer program lasting between 25 and 30 days, with each day including at least 360 minutes (6 hours) of total programming, which must include::

- A minimum of 180 minutes (3 hours) dedicated to math and reading instruction.
- At least 60 minutes (1 hour) of TEKS-based enrichment activities aligned with core subjects, based on local needs and STAAR data.
- The remaining 120 minutes (2 hours) should include:
  1. 60 minutes (1 hour) of traditional enrichment activities, such as arts, science exploration, or sports.
  2. 60 minutes (1 hour) can be dedicated to transitions, lunch, and other flexible needs.

- Yes
- No

2. Does the school system agree to implement a summer academic strategy that is data-driven and that aligns with both the regular-year HQIM and regular-year academic strategy?

- Yes
- No

3. Does the school system agree to implement a staffing model that ensures teachers are assigned to students in the same grade level they taught in the previous year or will teach in the following year?

- Yes
- No

4. Does the school system understand that teachers who meet the school system's certification requirements must provide at least three hours of academic instruction focused on math and reading and one hour of enrichment aligned to core subjects on dedicated ADSY summer program days?

- Yes
- No

5. Does the school system agree to develop a Summer Program Impact Report each year using the tools and templates provided by the grant program and share the Impact Report with TEA and stakeholders?

- Yes
- No

## Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP): Full Year Redesign and Summer Learning Cohorts (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for both Cohorts

1. Does the school system currently have a formal partnership in a written agreement with an SBEC-approved educator preparation program (EPP)?

- Yes
- No

2. Are any of the campuses in this ADSY application currently on the [Resource Campus Eligibility List](#)?

- Yes
- No

## PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment

### Allotment Opportunity:

The PREP Residency Preservice Program empowers school systems to play a central role in cultivating a pipeline of well-prepared, highly qualified teachers by embedding paid preservice teacher residency candidates directly into classrooms of highly qualified host teachers. Through close collaboration with educator preparation programs, participating school systems support teacher residents in earning an enhanced standard teaching certificate while gaining hands-on experience on campuses across the school system. By expanding the reach and effectiveness of residency models, the PREP Residency Preservice Program enhances instructional capacity and increases student access to skilled educators—ultimately advancing educational outcomes.

1. Does the school system wish to be considered for this Allotment Opportunity?

- Yes
- No

## PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment

### Initiative Description:

The PREP Residency Preservice Program empowers school systems to play a central role in cultivating a pipeline of well-prepared, highly qualified teachers by embedding paid preservice teacher residency candidates directly into classrooms of highly qualified host teachers. Through close collaboration with educator preparation programs, participating school systems support teacher residents in earning an enhanced standard teaching certificate while gaining hands-on experience in school systems schools. By expanding the reach and effectiveness of residency models, the PREP Residency Preservice Program enhances instructional capacity and increases student access to skilled educators—ultimately advancing educational outcomes.

Review the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Any school system, which includes open-enrollment charter schools, and SB 1882 Operating Partners who read and agree to the requirements in relevant sections of the Texas Education and Texas Administrative codes cited in these guidelines is eligible for the PREP Allotment.
- School systems who are partnered with an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) approved by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) to offer the teacher residency route must have formal written partnership agreement(s) with the EPP(s). School systems will have residents for SY 26-27.

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Read and abide by TEC §21.902 (PREP Preservice Program).
- Read and abide by TEC §21.904 (PREP Residency Preservice Program).
- Read and abide by TEC §48.157 (PREP Program Allotment).
- Read and abide by TAC related to the PREP Residency Preservice Program, which will be posted in the Texas Register for public comment during the 2025-26 school year and become effective prior to the start of the 2026-27 school year.

*Note: TEA anticipates sharing specific dates related to rulemaking in Fall 2025.*

For more details regarding Texas Education Code TEC §21.904 (PREP Residency Preservice Program) and TEC §§21.902, 48.157 see: [PREP RESIDENCY LASO 4 Pop Out Document](#).

- Appoint a representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment & PREP Residency Preservice Program communications.
- Have a written agreement with an educator preparation program for PREP Residency Preservice Program implementation by the 2026-2027 school year.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment

1. How many teacher residents does the school system anticipate participating during SY 2026-27?

*(Min: 1, Max: 40 as per TEC §48.157 PREP Program Allotment)*

5

2. Enter the contact information for the school systems representative appointed as the primary point of contact for all PREP Residency Preservice Program-related activities.

Name:	Conrad Cantu
Title:	Superintendent
Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

3. Enter the contact information for an additional point of contact for all PREP Residency Preservice Program-related activities.

Name:	Russel Buhidar
Title:	Chief Financial Officer
Email:	rbuhidar@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

5. Select the SBEC approved residency program partnership which the school system is currently working to finalize.

*Note: The school system must submit a formal written partnership agreement in the spring as part of the process to verify acceptance of the award.*

Region 02 Education Service Center

6. Enter the contact information for the Educator Preparation Program point of contact for the PREP Residency Preservice program.

Name:	Dr Rochelle Cortino
Title:	Administrator for Education Preparation Program
Email:	rochelle.cortino@esc2.us
Phone:	361-561-8520

The applicant must agree to train its resident cooperating teachers via the Texas Mentorship Training.

TEA anticipates proposing rule to further defining cooperating teachers for the purpose of PREP Residency Preservice Program by adopting the definition of host teacher currently in TAC §228.95.

#### Roles

- **Resident Cooperating (Host) Teacher:** For the PREP Preservice Residency Program, statute defines a cooperating teacher as a classroom teacher who is a school system employee; has at least three full school years of teaching experience with a superior record of assisting students in achieving improvement in student performance; and is paired with one or more teacher candidates (new TEC §21.902).
- **PREP Mentorship Training Requirements:** Summer 2026, Fall 2026, Winter 2026-27 and Spring 2027 (24-30 total hours)

School systems must self-report the estimated number of resident cooperating teachers that would attend training for SY 2026-27.

7. How many host teachers does the school system estimate will attend the training? (*Min: 1, Max: 40*).

*Note: This should correlate to the anticipated number of residents the school system will have in SY 2026-27.*

## PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program Allotment

### Allotment Opportunity:

Review the program descriptions for both PREP GYO and PREP Residency Preservice Program and choose your answer below:

*Note: Per TEC §21.906(c), school systems may participate in the PREP GYO Program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program (PREP Residency Preservice Program). School systems must apply for the PREP Residency Preservice Program*

1. Does the school system wish to be considered for this Allotment Opportunity?

- Yes  
 No

## PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program Allotment

### Initiative Description:

The PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program enables school systems, through partnering with qualified institutions of higher education and educator preparation programs, to establish innovative staffing pipelines that prepare and retain educators and thereby, increase student access to high-quality classroom teachers. The PREP GYO program provides funding through which participating school systems support (A) school system employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor's degree and enrolling in a preparation program to ultimately become a certified teacher while employed by the school system and (B) high school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers. Funding may be used to implement the PREP Grow Your Own Program and pay tuition and fees for participating students or employees.

Review the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Any school system, which includes open-enrollment charter schools, and SB 1882 Operating Partners who read and agree to the requirements in relevant sections of the Texas Education and Texas Administrative codes cited in these guidelines is eligible for the PREP

Allotment.

- School systems may participate in the PREP GYO Program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program. For the LASO 4 application cycle, school systems must apply for and also participate in the PREP Residency Preservice Program.

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Read and abide by TEC §21.906 (PREP Grow Your Own Program).
- Read and abide by TEC §48.157 (PREP Program Allotment).
- Read and abide by TAC sections related to the PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program, which will be posted to the Texas Register for public comment during the 2025-26 school year and become effective prior to the start of the 2026-27 school year.

**Note:** TEA anticipates sharing specific dates related to rulemaking in fall 2025.

For more details regarding Texas Education Code TEC §21.906 (PREP Grow Your Own Program) and TEC §48.157 (PREP Program Allotment) see: [PREP GYO LASO 4 Pop Out Document](#).

- Appoint a representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment & PREP Grow Your Own Program communications.
- Form a written agreement partnership with an institution of higher education and educator preparation program, as applicable, to support PREP GYO Program implementation. The partnership to adhere to program assurances and submit information to the agency upon request by August 2026:
  - School system employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor’s degree to enable the person to enroll in an educator preparation program and become a certified teacher while employed by the school system, and if applicable.
  - High-school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers.
- Form a written agreement partnership with an institution of higher education or educator preparation program by the SY 2026-27 that supports (A) school system employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor’s degree to enable the person to enroll in an educator preparation program and become a certified teacher while employed by the school system, and if applicable (B) high school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program Allotment (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program.

1. Enter the contact information for the school system representative appointed as the primary point of contact for all PREP GYO Program-related activities.

Name:	Conrad Cantu
Title:	Superintendent
Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

2. Enter the contact information for an additional point of contact for all PREP GYO Program-related activities.

Name:	Russel Buhidar
Title:	Chief Financial Officer
Email:	rbuhidar@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

The PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program is designed to form partnerships that support the following:

- High school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers.

- School system employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor’s degree to enable the person to enroll in an educator preparation program and become a certified teacher while employed by the school system.

*Note: Funding will be determined by each participating employee (TEC §48.157(b)(4)) and can be used to pay tuition and fees for high school students and employees participating in the program.*

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3. Which programming is the school system aiming to support through the PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program?

- Supporting school system employees with completing their bachelor’s degree and earning teacher certification
- Supporting employees and high school education & training

4. How many employees does the school system anticipate participating in the PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program?

*(Min: 1, Max: 40 as per TEC §48.157 PREP Program Allotment)*

5. The TEA may provide in-kind technical support for PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program planning and implementation. If these supports were made available, would the school system be interested in joining a webinar to learn more about them?

*Note: If selecting yes, the primary and additional points of contact will be contacted with more information.*

- Yes
- No

## PREP Mentorship Program Allotment

### Allotment Opportunity:

The Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Program Allotment aims to strengthen the quality of teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship, leading to increased educator effectiveness and retention. The PREP Program Allotment provides funding for various partnerships and school systems may apply for funding for the PREP Residency Preservice Program, Grow Your Own Program, and the Mentorship Program through this LASO IV Application. Through this allotment, school systems may also apply for Strategic Staffing funding to support the implementation and reach of the PREP Program Allotment. The 89th Texas Legislature established the PREP Program Allotment via House Bill 2, which was signed into law by Governor Abbott on June 20, 2025.

1. Does the school system wish to be considered for this Allotment Opportunity?

- Yes
- No

## PREP Mentorship Program Allotment

### Initiative Description:

The Preparing and Retaining Educators Through Partnership (PREP) Mentorship Program provides school systems interested in implementing high-quality new teacher mentorship programs with funding to 1) provide, at minimum, a \$1,000 stipend to the mentor teacher (per beginning teacher), 2) train all required school system mentorship staff via the Texas Mentorship Training, and 3) provide release time for mentor teacher and beginning teacher mentoring activities. Any remaining funds may be used on strategic staffing training. The overarching purpose of this allotment is to increase the effectiveness and retention of beginning teachers across Texas.

Review the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed below and indicate the school system’s acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Any school system, which includes open-enrollment charter schools, and SB 1882 Operating Partners who read and agree to the requirements in relevant sections of the Texas Education and Texas Administrative codes cited in these guidelines is eligible for the PREP Allotment.

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Read and abide by TEC §21.907 (PREP Mentorship Program).

- Read and abide by TEC §48.157 (PREP Program Allotment).
- Read and abide by TAC sections related to the PREP Mentorship Program, which will be posted to the Texas Register for public comment during the 2025-26 school year and become effective prior to the start of the 2026-27 school year.  
*Note: The TEA anticipates sharing specific dates related to rulemaking in fall 2025.*  
 For more details regarding Texas Education Code TEC §21.907 (PREP Mentorship Program) and TEC §48.157 (PREP Program Allotment) see: [PREP MENTORSHIP LASO 4 Pop-Out Document](#).
- Appoint a representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment & PREP Mentorship Program communications.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria and Initiative Assurances listed above?

- Yes  
 No

## PREP Mentorship Program Allotment (cont.)

### Initiative Specific Questions for the PREP Mentorship Program Allotment

1. Enter the contact information for the school system representative appointed as the primary point of contact for all PREP Mentorship Program-related activities:

Name:	Conrad Cantu
Title:	Superintendent
Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

2. Enter the contact information for the school system representative appointed as the secondary point of contact for all PREP Mentorship Program-related activities:

Name:	Russel Buhidar
Title:	Chief Financial Officer
Email:	rbuhidar@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

3. Prior to submitting this application, school systems must commit to communicating and partnering with an approved Texas Mentorship Training (TMT) Provider. The list of approved TMT Providers can be found in the PREP Mentorship Program Guidelines. Please indicate the approved TMT Provider the school system has communicated with regarding training partnership for PREP Mentorship Program in SY26-27.

ESC 02: Corpus Christi

4. Enter the school system’s approved TMT Provider contact information:

Name:	Dr Rochelle Cortino
Title:	Director of Education Preparation Program
Email:	rochelle.cortino@esc2.us
Phone:	361-561-8520

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## Roles

- **Mentor Teacher:** A teacher who, to the extent practicable, teaches in the same school, subject, and/or grade level of the beginning teachers they mentor, completes a mentor teacher training program established by TEA, has at least three years of teaching experience, and demonstrates instructional and leadership skills under TEC §21.458 and §21.907.
- **School system and/or Campus Leader:** Any appropriate district and campus employees who work with the classroom teacher or supervise the classroom teacher under TEC, §21.458

## PREP Mentorship Training Requirements

- **Pathway 1 (Mentoring Educator) Training:**

- This pathway is intended for mentoring educators, such as mentor teachers, who provide direct mentoring to beginning teachers.
- Pathway 1 training will occur in Summer 2026, Fall 2026, Winter 2026-27, and Spring 2027 for a total of 24-30 hours.

- **Pathway 2 (School system & Campus Leader) Design Sessions:**

- This pathway is intended for school system and campus leaders who will be planning & implementing mentorship programs (*e.g., program managers, district mentoring staff, campus principals, etc.*).
- Pathway 2 design sessions will occur in Spring 2026, Summer 2026, Fall 2026, and Spring 2027 for a total of 15-16 hours.

\* **Note:** Per TEC §21.458, appropriate school system and campus employees who work with the beginning teachers or supervise beginning teachers are required to attend mentorship training. This requirement may be fulfilled by either Texas Mentorship Training Pathway 1 or Pathway 2; these individuals may attend both Pathways 1 and 2, if desired.

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5. School systems must self-report the estimated number of mentor teachers and school system & campus leaders that would attend Pathway 1 training for Year 1 implementation (SY 2026-27). See **'Roles'** definition above.

Estimated number of mentor teachers:	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Estimated number of school system & campus leaders for Pathway 1:	<input type="text" value="2"/>

6. School systems must self-report the estimated number of school system & campus leaders that would attend Pathway 2 training for Year 1 implementation (SY 2026-27). See **'Roles'** definition above.

Estimated number of school system & campus leaders for Pathway 2:	<input type="text" value="2"/>
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7. School systems must self-report the estimated number of beginning teachers for Year 1 implementation (SY26-27). Beginning teachers (BTs) are defined as classroom teachers who have less than two years of teaching experience under TEC, §21.907. School systems will enter the total estimated number of beginning teachers below; however, school systems will receive funding for up to 40 beginning teachers.

Estimated total number of beginning teachers for SY26-27:	<input type="text" value="5"/>
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## Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grant

### Initiative Description:

The Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant focuses on making staffing and scheduling decisions driven by immediate and long-term instructional needs. This is a two-year grant designed to provide in-kind technical assistance and other support to school systems and educator preparation program (EPP) partnerships to design and implement paid, year-long, high-quality, and sustainable teacher residencies across SY 2026-27 and SY 2027-28. The grant provides partial funding for at least one school system staff member to oversee the program, including coordination between the school system, technical assistance provider, and EPP.

Review the Eligibility Criteria, Initiative Assurances, and Initiative Requirements listed below and indicate the school system's acceptance.

### Eligibility Criteria:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- Have a signed [EPP Verification Form](#) (template posted with the application) from each EPP partner that has a State Board of Educator

Certification (SBEC)-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route ([TTRPR](#)).

- Not a recipient of the SY 2024-25 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant (see award list [here](#)).
- Not a recipient of the SY 2025-27 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable Paid Teacher Residency Program (see award list [here](#)).

### Initiative Assurances:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

#### • General Initiative Assurances

- Appoint a School System Strategic Staffing Lead who will serve at least 20% of their time and effort to oversee the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant and as the point of contact for the ESC technical assistance provider? Note: School System Strategic Staffing Lead, in conjunction with the ESC, will coordinate with other school system staff on the design and implementation teams to schedule grant activities and complete program deliverables.
- Develop clear companion guides, which include parameters for the selected strategic staffing model and communication plans, and share them with all stakeholders involved with resident placement in the school system and educator preparation programs (EPPs).
- Share data, such as historic teacher vacancies or student characteristic data, with the ESC technical assistance provider to inform design and implementation year decisions.
- Submit data to TEA on grant implementation and outcomes including, but not limited to the following:
  - Number of teacher residents participating in the year-long paid teacher residency.
  - School placement of residents during their residency year.
  - Selected strategic staffing models.
  - Resident and host teacher compensation.
  - Characteristics of teacher residents participating in the program.
  - Number and type of teacher certifications awarded to teacher residents.

#### • Sustainable Funding for Residencies

- Design and implement a strategic staffing model plan that will ensure that the teacher residency model will be sustainably funded by the school system by school year (SY) 2028-29.

*Note: the plan must include sustainable funding for teacher residents and host teacher stipends/salaries.*

#### • School System and EPP Partnerships

- Establish a partnership with at least one EPP that has been approved by the SBEC to offer the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route (TTRPR).
- Sign a letter of commitment or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the ESC technical assistance provider. The EPP(s) must also confirm their commitment to the strategic staffing design and implementation process with the applicant.
- Set shared goals for school system paid resident placements in mutually beneficial staffing model positions.
- Hold structured governance meetings at least quarterly to analyze teacher resident data and develop plans for teacher residency continuous improvement during the SY 2027-28 residency implementation year.
- Work collaboratively with your EPP partner(s) to design a strategic staffing model and corresponding stipend amounts.
- Adhere to all educator preparation program requirements for residency in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 228.
- Provide preferential hiring, to the greatest extent possible, to teacher residents who have successfully completed the teacher residency program and received enhanced standard certification.

#### • Technical Assistance for Design and Implementation

- Work with an ESC technical assistance provider for the SY 2026-27 and 2027-28 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 2028-29 and beyond.
- Ensure that a designated team of leaders from the school system, campuses, and EPP(s) will actively participate in strategic staffing model training and technical assistance support activities beginning in SY 2026-27.
- Attend sustainability meetings with their technical assistance provider each semester of SY 2027-28 (implementation year) to determine sustainable strategic staffing model and funding sources, as applicable, after the life of the grant.
- Manages or directly supports the school system's PREP Residency Preservice Program if awarded the PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment.

### Initiative Requirements:

As the applicant, the school system hereby agrees to:

- The school system has **NOT** participated in either the 2024-2025 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant or the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Program.

1. Does the school system agree to meet the Eligibility Criteria, Initiative Assurances, and Initiative Requirements listed above?

- Yes  
 No
-

# Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grant (cont.)

## Initiative Specific Questions for the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grant

1. Enter the contact information for the school system representative appointed as the primary point of contact for all Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies grant-related activities.

Name:	Conrad Cantu
Title:	Superintendent
Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

1a. Top three responsibilities in their role:

Operations, Staffing, & Curriculum

1b. How often does this person meet with school system executive leadership (e.g., superintendent, assistant superintendent, chief financial officer)?

Once per week

1c. How will this person help sustain paid residencies in the school system after the conclusion of this grant?

The district will incorporate the paid residencies in the district budget by reallocating staffing positions. Through strategic staffing and the potential implementation of master teachers overseeing residents the district could maximize their personnel budget to compensate the paid residencies.

1d. How will the school system support this role in the event of turnover? Who else will have knowledge and skills for this work?

Campus Principals and the Chief Financial Officer will be part of the discussions to staffing. Additionally documentation will be kept and clearly defined staffing patterns to ensure the staffing allocations remain constant regardless of the school system leaders.

2. Enter the contact information for an additional school system representative appointed as the secondary point of contact for all Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies grant-related activities.

Name:	Russel Buhidar
Title:	Chief Financial Officer
Email:	rbuhidar@freerisd.net
Phone:	361-394-6025

3. Who are the school system's currently established Texas Strategic Staffing SBEC-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Educator Preparation Program ([TTRPR](#)) EPP partner(s)?

*Note: When Educator Preparation Programs are approved for the Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Program (TTRPR), they attest in their application and through the amendment process their school system partnerships.*

Region 02 Education Service Center

4. Who are the **NEW** SBEC-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Educator Preparation Program ([TTRPR](#)) partnerships you are working with or have worked with to finalize a formal agreement for SYs 2025-2026 and/or 2026-2027?

*Note: Select only the **NEW** partnerships for SY 2025-26 and/or SY 2026-27.*

Region 02 Education Service Center

5. Attach a signed [EPP Verification Form](#) from each of the school system’s EPP partners with a State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC)-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route (TTRPR).

*Note: Upload a PDF file using the following naming convention - [School System or Campus Name].[Initiative Acronym].[Document Name].pdf*

[Freer ISD LASO Verification Form for Strategic Staffing.pdf](#)

177KB  
application/pdf

## Closing

### Signature

Official submission of this application requires the Superintendent's signature. The Application cannot be considered submitted without the formal signature from the Superintendent.

If the Superintendent is unable to sign because they are on leave or in role transition, please email at [LASO@tea.texas.gov](mailto:LASO@tea.texas.gov).

If you are the Superintendent, click **Yes** and proceed to submitting the application.

If you are not the Superintendent, pause on submitting this application and email [LASO@tea.texas.gov](mailto:LASO@tea.texas.gov) to identify the school system's grantee official who can submit the application in the Superintendent's absence. Once the name of the grantee official has been identified, return back to this page, select **No**, then proceed to submitting the application.

Are you the Superintendent?

- Yes
- No

Please provide the following:

Superintendent Name :	Conrad Cantu
Superintendent Email:	ccantu@freerisd.net

## Review & Sign

**The LASO Cycle 4 Grant has closed.**

**The closing date was December 3, 2025 at 05:00 PM.  
This application can no longer be submitted.**

**Please close your browser window.**



## Review & Sign

Before you sign and submit, click the **Review** button to review the completed application, revise as needed, and then sign to submit your final application.

You may only review one time. If you need to review the application again or make any additional revisions, please complete the Request for a Retake link- located on our LASO 4 webpage.

- Review
- Sign and Submit

## Signature


### Confirmation of Application

I have reviewed and acknowledge that the LASO 4 application I am submitting today is for the following Initiatives:

- Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)
- LIFT Add-On: School Improvement PLC Support (LIFT SI PLC)
- Blended Learning Grant (BLG)
- PREP Residency Preservice Program
- PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program
- PREP Mentorship Program
- Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grant
- Additional Days School Year Planning & Execution Program (ADSY PEP)

*Note: Only last submitted application will be accepted as the Final LASO 4 application.*

Signed On: December 2, 2025 at 05:56 PM



clear