

PROGRAM GUIDELINES:
2023–2024
NITA M. LOWEY 21ST CENTURY
COMMUNITY LEARNING
CENTERS, CYCLE 12, YEAR 1

Application Due Date

11:59 p.m. Central Time, January 23, 2023

Program Authority

Public Law 114-95, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV, Part B (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176)

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA). Program Guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and the specific program instructions. The Adobe Acrobat Standard Application System (SAS) consists of all forms to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding.

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

Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs.. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). **It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.**

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² Grantee is defined as the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the federal government for the use of the funds provided. The term "grantee" does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors that may receive funds from a grantee. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

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

The following is provided in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education Appropriations Act:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$56,688,672*
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	\$56,688,672*
Percentage to be financed from non-federal sources	0%
Amount of non-federal funds	\$0

Grant Timeline

All of these dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Date	Event
November 14, 2022	RFA available; notice of the RFA published in the <i>Texas Register</i>
November 21, 2022	Last date to submit questions to be addressed in the applicant's Conference/Webinar See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference/Webinar
November 29, 2022	Applicants' Conference/Webinar (register here)
December 5, 2022	Last date to submit FAQs to TEA contact person See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions
December 5, 2022	Due date for the Notice of Intent to Apply
December 13, 2022	FAQs posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page
January 23, 2023	Due date for the application in the TEA Document Control Center, 11:59 p.m., Central Time. TEA will only accept applications by email to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov . See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Competitive Application Due Date and Time
January 23, 2023 - May 26, 2023	Competitive review period See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Competitive Review Process
August 1, 2023	Beginning date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
May 02, 2024	Final date to submit an amendment
July 31, 2024	Ending date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant program is authorized by the Public Law 114-95, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV, Part B (20 U.S.C. 7171-7176).

Where to Submit the Application

See the Where to Submit the Competitive Application section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#).

Number of Copies

See the Copies and Signature for Competitive Grants section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#).

Purpose of Program

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The federal [Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC program](#) supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic and enrichment opportunities, during non-school hours for students, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children. Title IV, Part B, specifies that 21st CCLC funds are to be used to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities in community learning centers that do the following:

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet the challenging state academic standards.
- Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, service learning, nutrition and health education, drug- and violence-prevention programs, counseling programs, arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs; technology education programs, financial literacy programs, environmental literacy programs, mathematics, science, career and technical programs, internship or apprenticeship programs, and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.
- Offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

21st CCLC program activities must meet the following federal measures of effectiveness.

- Be based upon an assessment of objective data regarding the need for before and

afterschool (or summer recess) programs and activities in the schools and communities.

- Be based upon an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability of high-quality academic enrichment opportunities.
- Be based upon evidence-based research that the program or activity will help students meet the challenging State academic standards and any local academic standards.
- Ensure that measures of student success align with the regular academic program of the school and the academic needs of participating students.

Texas ACE

The Texas 21st CCLC program operates as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education, or Texas ACE. When referencing the federal program, 21st CCLC will be the naming convention, but in other circumstances, the state's program will be referred to as either Texas 21st CCLC or Texas ACE. Texas ACE programs are required to participate in state activities that support continuous improvement, including quality and compliance monitoring, state and local evaluation, training, and technical assistance.

This RFA is grounded in current guidance for high-quality programming, which can be found in the [Texas ACE Blueprint \(the Blueprint\)](#) and is supplemented by the [Texas ACE Project Plan](#). Both documents are currently reflective of Cycle 10 and 11 program requirements. Local programs funded by the 21st CCLC, Cycle 12 grant must include in the following activities, strategies, and measurable goals.

ACTIVITIES:

1. **Targeted academic support** using high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), high-impact tutoring (HIT), and/or school-day aligned academic activities.
2. **Student interest-based enrichment** that is both academic and enriching, including but not limited to, college and career readiness, service learning, physical fitness, health and wellness, and fine arts activities.
3. **Family engagement** in learning through ongoing activities that connect parents to the school and community.

STRATEGIES:

1. **Strong program operations** that ensure a safe, supportive, and educationally enriching environment for all students, staff, and families.
2. **Alignment with the school-day** through ongoing collaboration with school-day staff, attendance at professional development, and connections to school-day systems.
3. **Community partnerships** and/or community engagement that support local needs, grant requirements, and program sustainability.

MEASURABLE GOALS:

1. Improve Academic Performance in Reading and Math
2. Improve School Attendance
3. Improve Student Engagement in Learning
4. Improve Family Engagement

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility To Apply for Competitive Grants.

The following types of organizations are eligible to apply for a Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC, Cycle 12 Year 2 grant:

- Local educational agencies (LEAs), including independent school districts (ISDs), open-enrollment charter schools, and regional education service centers (ESCs)
- Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Indian tribe or tribal organization (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (25 U.S.C. 450b))
- Other public or private entities
- A consortium of two or more eligible organizations

Eligible Campuses

Applications must propose to serve campuses that are eligible for schoolwide programs under ESSA, Title I, Part A, Section 1114, and the families of such students. The 2021-2022 Title I, Part A campus listing sorted by LEA and by education service center region are posted with this RFA (see Reference 1 and Reference 2). All campuses in the grant application must have an economically disadvantaged (low-income) rate of at least 40% or be on the 2021-2022 Title I, Part A campus listing provided (see Reference 1 and Reference 2) to be eligible for grant funds. Private schools included in grant applications must reside within the attendance zones of qualified campuses.

A campus is **ineligible** if it meets either of the following conditions:

- The campus or school was newly opened in the school year 2022-2023
- The campus is an active center or center feeder in Texas Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC, Cycle 11 grant program. A listing of current Cycle 11 campuses served is posted with this RFA (see Reference 3).

Applications that propose one or more ineligible campuses will be deemed ineligible for peer review.

Eligible Participants

Programs may serve students enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Students served must primarily attend a campus that meets the campus eligibility criteria. Grantees must, based on a comprehensive campus-based needs assessment process, identify and serve students that would most benefit from assistance in meeting student standards in reading and math and participation in enrichment activities that complement the regular academic program. The grant program must also provide the families of the students served in the grant program with opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Expenditures for Prekindergarten-only centers are not allowed. Prekindergarten students may be served only on a limited and targeted basis and when the evidence is compelling that expenditures on these students would be the most beneficial use of funds toward achieving goals of the program.

Eligibility List

Eligibility lists (Reference 1 and Reference 2) are posted on the [TEA Grant Opportunities page](#), with all documents pertaining to the RFA.

Shared Services Arrangement

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

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are allowed for this grant program.

More Than One Application

Eligible applicants may apply for the grant on behalf of more than one campus. Each application is limited to no more than 10 eligible campuses. Applicants **may not** submit more than one application.

Application Funding

See the following sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) :

- Grant Funding
- Continuation Funding
- Fund Management
- Use of Funds

It is anticipated that approximately 40 grants will be awarded ranging in amounts from \$250,000 to \$2,000,000 each year of the five-year project period.

Annual funding after Year 1 (“continuation funding”) is contingent on satisfactory progress of prior year compliance with requirements, achievement of stated service and performance targets, general budget approval by the commissioner of education, and appropriations by the United States Congress. Continuation funding requires grantees to submit a noncompetitive continuation grant application each year of the total subgrant period. The noncompetitive continuation grant process requires grantees to conduct an annual needs assessment and use the results of the assessment, TEA monitoring and evaluation, and other relevant data to propose specific improvement strategies designed to increase student outcomes.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Peer reviewed applications will be selected in rank order of averaged peer reviewer scoring results and priority points earned. TEA reserves the right to remove any application from scoring if any portion of the application does not meet requirements stated herein.

Funding Methodology

It is TEA's intent to fund applications at a level that allows grantees to meet all requirements and provide high-quality services to students and families. Funding for any one grant application **will not exceed \$2,000,000**. The total amount requested must be in alignment with the required budgeted items, number of centers, and number of students to be served in afterschool and summer programs. Applications requesting a budget that is unreasonable in size for the proposed program may be deemed ineligible for peer review. Applicants must submit an overall budget that is appropriate for the number of students and centers the grantee proposes to

serve, ensuring that sufficient attention is provided to student activities at the center level. Examples of center-level costs include:

- Salary and benefits for instructional staff who directly service students with activities and instruction at each center
- Transportation for students to the center from feeder schools and adjunct sites, from the center home
- Fees for contracted services
- Technology that is reasonable and necessary to operate centers
- Nutritional snacks
- Supplies, equipment, and resources for center-level academic support, enrichment, and family engagement activities

Required Staffing

To fully support the program and align with best practices, grantees must budget salary for the following required staff positions. Lead teachers or administrators acting in other capacities during the school day cannot satisfy the requirements of these full-time positions.

Exceptions: For grants that operate only one center, one person may be responsible for both the project director and site coordinator responsibilities. In addition, grants operating fewer than six centers may employ one half-time program specialist.

1. **One dedicated full-time Project Director** qualified to oversee cycles of continuous improvement at the grant-level, including but not limited to:
 - **Annual Strategic Planning** - conduct annual strategic planning across the grant to ensure programming is high-quality, data-driven, student-focused, and grant compliant.
 - **Program Compliance** - ensure adherence to TEA systems and reporting requirements for compliance and quality monitoring, technical assistance and training, and state and local evaluation.
 - **Operations Management** - ensure a high-quality, safe, and supportive environment for program participants, staff, and partners.
 - **Budget Management** - ensure fiscal compliance.
 - **Staff Management** - supervise the program specialist and site coordinators, train staff, and maintain productive working relationships with the state office, contractors, district and school staff, program staff, partners, and vendors.
 - **Internal Monitoring** - conduct and document ongoing internal monitoring to ensure quality and compliance and provide feedback to each center through site observations, data reviews, stakeholder surveys, and related activities.
2. **One dedicated full-time Program Specialist** qualified to provide subject matter expertise and support in **one or more** of the following areas depending on the needs of the local program.

- **Family Engagement** - oversee professional development, and selection, design and implementation of family engagement activities that increase family literacy and meaningful connections to school-day learning.
 - **Community Engagement** - build connections between the school, the community learning centers, and community partners to support implementation of high-quality academic and enrichment activities, family engagement opportunities, and program sustainability. Support or lead the voluntary Texas ACE steering committee.
 - **Accelerated Learning** - oversee implementation of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), High-Impact Tutoring (HIT) and other school-day aligned academic support. Aid in aligning enrichment and family engagement with academic support. This may include selecting, designing, and evaluating academic and enrichment activities for students; leading ongoing professional development, program observations, and coaching to improve program quality.
 - **Summer Learning** - oversee design and implementation of a robust and rigorous summer program that includes High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), High-Impact Tutoring (HIT) or other school-day aligned academic support, high-quality enrichment, and aligned family engagement.
3. **One dedicated full-time Site Coordinator per center** qualified to implement cycles of continuous improvement at the center-level, including but not limited to:
- Coordination and implementation of high-quality programming aligned to local needs and resources, HQIM/HIT and school-day aligned academic support, high-quality enrichment, and family engagement.
 - Recruitment, retention, and management of program staff.
 - Recruitment, retention, and ongoing support for program participants.
 - Daily operations management to ensure a safe, supportive, and educationally enriching environment.
 - Daily relationship building and professional communication with school staff, program staff, community partners, and adult family members.
 - Data entry and reporting as required by TEA systems and grant requirements.

Recommended Staffing

1. Certified teachers – supplemental pay for teachers leading tutoring or other academic support activities, enrichment, or family engagement. Supplemental pay issued through the 21st CCLC grant must be 100% dedicated to the 21st CCLC program.
2. Support roles – teaching assistance, youth workers, nurses, security officers and other hourly or extra-duty roles necessary for implementation of a safe, high-quality program. Extra-duty or hourly pay issued through the 21st CCLC grant must be 100% dedicated to the 21st CCLC program.

3. Additional program specialists to serve as subject matter experts and offer grant-level support in family engagement, community engagement, accelerated learning, or summer learning.

Funding Reduction Policy: Baseline Student Attendance and Engagement Targets

Research has been consistent in finding that positive student outcomes are related to duration of participation in a high-quality 21st CCLC program (i.e., dosage). Given that multiple studies have found that attendance is correlated with positive student outcomes, only those students who meet the [student attendance and participation benchmarks](#) will contribute to the “total students served” for grant performance monitoring purposes.

Funding levels will be reduced by a function of the number of targeted students not served and the awarded per student budget. The reduction will be taken from the subsequent continuation grant period when a grantee serves fewer than the number of targeted students approved by TEA.

If the grantee leaves funds unexpended, TEA will assess whether reductions are required for future years based on actual capacity/demand and whether interventions are required to improve operations and meet agreed-upon service levels. Grantees are required to provide the same level of comprehensive services approved in the original application throughout all continuation award periods, even when funding is reduced for not reaching service targets.

During the needs assessment and budget development process conducted for this RFA, applicants should work with stakeholders to develop realistic and attainable targeted student numbers in relation to the number of students enrolled at the campuses to be served by the centers. **Requests to reduce the target students during the grant cycle will not be approved except in very limited circumstances.**

TEA reserves the right to reduce funding when service targets are unreasonably low, the cost per student is unreasonably high, projections in the grant application are not achieved, federal award amounts are less than the amounts anticipated, and under other reasonable or necessary circumstances.

Renewability Policy

During the final year of continuation funding, TEA may renew a subgrant based on the eligible entity’s performance during the preceding subgrant period. If TEA renews existing grants, the agency will use a standard set of criteria to determine whether a grant is eligible to be renewed. Criteria may include risk scores and findings for TEA monitoring and local evaluations, improvements in quality over time, compliance with grant requirements, engagement in state-supported opportunities, needs assessment results, and performance on outcomes. The renewal period will not exceed the total grant period of the original award.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

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

There is no cost share of matching requirements for this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

Direct Administrative Costs

TEA limits the amount of direct administrative costs for this grant program to no more than 5% of the total grant award.

Indirect Administrative Costs

The grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to their current approved restricted indirect cost rate for this grant program. However, please note that IHEs that only have an approved unrestricted indirect cost rate will be capped at 8% for indirect administrative costs. To calculate the maximum indirect costs that can be claimed for a grant, complete the [Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet](#), posted on the Administering a Grant page, under the Handbooks and Other Guidance section.

Pre-Award Costs

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs **are not** permitted for this grant.

Applicant Assistance

The following types of assistance are available to applicants for this grant program.

Contact for Clarifying Information

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

The following TEA staff member should be contacted with questions about the RFA, the grant program, or for assistance with the applicants' webinar:

Sarah Daly
Expanded Learning and Afterschool Project Manager
Division of Expanded Learning Models
21stcentury@tea.texas.gov
(512) 463-8282

Frequently Asked Questions

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Frequently Asked Questions.

The FAQs for this grant program will be posted to the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) site no later than the date listed on the Grant Timeline. Applicants may email their questions to the TEA staff member listed in the Contact for Clarifying Information section.

Applicants' Conference/Webinar

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) Applicants' Conference/Webinar.

Questions that applicants wish to have addressed during the applicants' webinar must be submitted no later than the date given in the grant timeline. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Date of Webinar	Time	Registration Link	Type
November 29, 2022	1:00 PM CT	Register here	Live

Errata Notices

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

GovDelivery Email Bulletins

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

Program Elements

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Description

Cycle 12 Texas ACE programs will operate for 155 days afterschool and 25 days in the summer. After this requirement is met, programs may be offered in the morning, during intersession, and on weekends.

Programs must include:

- Targeted academic support activities
- Family engagement activities
- Student interest-based enrichment activities
- Strong program operations
- Alignment with the school-day
- Community partnerships or community engagement

Community Learning Center (“Center”)

Applicants may propose to operate up to 10 centers.

A center must assist students to meet the challenging state academic standards by providing them with academic and enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities programs and activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before and afterschool or during summer recess). The activities provided reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students and are targeted to the students’ academic needs. Centers must also offer families of students served opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children’s education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

A center is the program’s approved physical host site where the daily activities are provided for students and family members. A center is characterized by an appropriate, safe, and equipped physical facility; defined hours of operation; a routine and consistent schedule of activities for a well-defined student group; and program-dedicated staff operating under an organized administrative structure. A center may be in a facility other than a campus only when it will be at least as accessible to the students as a campus location.

Each center will operate on a TEA-approved schedule that meets or exceeds program service requirements and provides a consistent and dependable schedule of weekly activities for all students enrolled.

Requests to change approved center locations or operating hours during the grant cycle will not be approved except in very limited circumstances.

Program Feeder Schools

For the Texas ACE program, a feeder school is an eligible campus from which students are routinely transported to the approved center for regular participation in the Texas ACE program. The school at which a center is located may also be considered a feeder for certain program purposes.

The number of program feeder schools is limited to no more than 2 per center.

The learning environments in a center's feeder pattern must be appropriate to the needs of the grade levels served. For example, centers for elementary students work best on elementary campuses and secondary students are most appropriately served on secondary campuses.

Feeder schools must be within reasonable geographic proximity to the host center. Total transportation time shall not exceed 30 minutes from school dismissal to center arrival using bus transportation. Grantees must provide transportation for participating students from the feeder school(s). Transportation must be operated in compliance with all related local, state, and federal statute and guidance.

Adjunct Sites

An adjunct site is a physical location hosting specialized activities that cannot take place at the designated center – usually because of facility limitations or the need for specialized equipment. Typical examples include a local community college or university, public library, science center, nature center, park, museum, or community center. Adjunct sites are not required to be listed in the application but must be reviewed and approved prior to serving students.

Activities taking place at adjunct sites must meet all the same requirements as those offered at centers. Typical examples of activities that occur at adjunct sites include field science, lab experiments, large art projects, cultural exploration projects, research projects, and structured physical activity.

The time spent on activities at adjunct sites must not replace or exceed the time spent on activities offered at the designated center. Activities must be reasonable in duration for meeting the purpose of the program.

Program Schedule Minimum Requirements

Program Schedule Minimum Requirements		
	K-5	6-12
Afterschool	155 days from school dismissal until 6pm 5 days per week	155 days from school dismissal until 6pm 5 days per week

Summer	25 days 6 hours per day 4 days per week	25 days 6 hours per day 4 days per week
Family Engagement	at least monthly	at least monthly

All programs must meet the minimum requirements in the table above. Program must operate five days per week (Monday-Friday). It is acceptable to operate less than five days per week when the school is closed, for example for holidays or due to bad weather. However, programs must operate an afterschool program for a total of 155 days per school year. Programs must operate afterschool from school dismissal until at least 6:00PM. Programs are also required to operate a summer program for 25 days.

Districts operating on a four-day-per-week calendar must provide the Texas ACE program five days per week and all program days must run until 6:00PM. Districts may not use the Texas 21st CCLC to fund the traditional school-day. All activities funded by 21st CCLC must align with the all grant assurances.

All center schedules in the Texas 21st Century Student Tracking (TX21st) system data will be set to the program schedule minimum requirements. Morning and weekend activities, intersession activities, and additional afterschool or summer hours are allowable. However, programs should be realistic about program capacity to go beyond the required program schedule. Transportation time cannot be counted towards the program schedule minimum requirements.

Summer Learning

Texas ACE summer learning programs are required to provide access to opportunities and to help address summer learning loss, which can have a profound effect on the program's eligible students. The cumulative impact of summer learning loss has been shown to create a gap of up to three grade levels for low income students by fifth grade.⁵ In addition, research from RAND has shown that the impact of summer learning loss can be eliminated if academic instruction is offered for three to four hours a day for five to six weeks.⁶ It is with this information in mind that the Texas ACE program requires grantees to provide at least 25 days of academic and enrichment, and family engagement programming during the summer with each week consisting of at least six hours per day and at least four days per week.

Programs implementing summer programs under the Additional Days School Year program may propose plans that adjust this requirement to effectively coordinate fund sources to serve students in need. This includes offering four hours of Texas ACE summer programming or shifting some of the summer program days to additional days of afterschool or intersession programming.

⁵ Cooper, H., Borman, G., and Fairchild, R. (2010). "School Calendars and Academic Achievement" In. J. Meece and J. Eccles (Eds.), Handbook of research on schools, schooling and human development (pp. 342-355). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum

⁶ https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR366.html

For the purposes of program operations, summer begins the day following the last day of the spring term for the regular school day program on that campus and summer ends once the regular school day program on that campus is open for students in the fall. The 25 day summer minimum can be met by using funds from the next planned continuation grant period, if awarded, when summer activities take place on or after August 1 but before the first day of school.

Targeted Student Attendance Requirements

Required - Targeted Student Attendance		
	K-5	6-12
Afterschool	60 days 120 minutes per day	60 days 90 minutes per day
Summer	15 days 240 minutes per day	15 days 240 minutes per day

The Texas ACE Program is not intended to be a drop-in program. Given that positive academic achievement is gained through sustained program attendance, the Texas ACE Program is designed to serve students and families over time. Program evaluation findings have been consistent in finding that positive student outcomes are related to the extent of participation in the program (i.e., dosage). Given that studies have found that attendance has the most impact at levels past 30 days, **only students with documented program attendance that meet the thresholds in the table above will be counted toward Texas ACE targeted student attendance requirements.**

Eligible students should be intentionally targeted for program enrollment and retained over fall, spring and summer. Summer is also an appropriate time to recruit new students with the intention of retaining the students the following school year. Therefore, students will count toward Texas ACE targeted student attendance requirements for afterschool programming if they attend 60 days over fall, spring, and summer. They will also count towards targeted student attendance for summer if they attend 15 days in the summer.

Texas ACE programs are encouraged to implement High Impact Tutoring (HIT) using High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Applicants can request additional funds to support HIT implementation as outlined in the Center Budget Worksheet. Programs that request additional funding to support HIT must meet the requirements outlined in the Optional Targeted HIT Student Attendance table above.

Optional - Targeted HIT Student Attendance		
	K-5	6-12
Afterschool	30 days 3 days per week 30 minutes per day	30 days 3 days per week 30 minutes per day

Partnerships

A partnership is a formal agreement between two or more entities that expands the capacity of those organizations to achieve shared goals. The partnership increases the scope or quality of services that could be provided by the grantee alone and may increase likelihood of sustainability. Partnerships often include in-kind contributions that support the objectives of the program, such as, but not limited to, participation on the Texas ACE steering committee, offering activities to students and families for free at a reduced cost, participating in school-day events or other community outreach opportunities, and supporting program sustainability,

Contractors are not necessarily partners. A contractor provides services on behalf of the grantee, such as tutoring services or enrichment activities, but does not participate with the grantee as an active partner in the objectives of the program.

Family Engagement

Family engagement opportunities are a vital component of Texas ACE intended to strengthen the connection between school and home. Therefore, programs are required to set targeted participation goals for adult family members and offer family engagement opportunities at least once per month.

Family engagement in Texas ACE offers families of students served by the program opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education and offers families opportunities for literacy and related educational development. Meeting the needs of students' families with engaging and relevant activities is an essential component for successful programs. Higher performing centers have been found to be those that have capacity to offer educational development and career-oriented training to family members. To meet the needs of working families, virtual family engagement activities are allowed.

Considerations for family engagement components include the following:

- Providing services, classes, referrals, and resources such as high school equivalency courses, English language, workforce skills, parenting, and life skills classes
- Providing opportunities for parents to foster the overall academic success of their students.
- Establishing cooperative agreements with other programs and community resources such as other federal programs on campus, parent teacher organizations, health and mental health services, foster care resources, local colleges, financial aid offices, adult education programs, law enforcement, major employers, local funders, and local workforce development
- Resourcing materials for centrally located physical family resource centers and accessible virtual resource centers, including resources for academics and other services
- Coordinating events, group activities, classes, and presentations for parents
- Providing outreach and services that are culturally and linguistically responsive
- Connecting family, community, and school needs
- Facilitating input and involvement in program planning
- Referring families to services that address barriers to students' academic success

State Activities for Continuous Improvement

To support grantees in meeting program requirements and building local capacity to implement and sustain high-quality programs, TEA provides a suite of state activities and resources. Participation in the state activities listed below is required. Failure to participate in state activities may lead to funding reductions or disqualify programs from annual continuation. Grantees choosing to contract for services with external consultants for program planning, implementation, training, and technical assistance may do so only if the services will supplement the services being provided by TEA.

In an effort to continually improve program support, TEA may redesign or modify state activities and resources throughout the grant cycle. Current services include, and are not limited to, the following.

1. Data Collection and Reporting System

TEA developed the Texas 21st CCLC Student Tracking system (TX21st) to collect data required to monitor progress, conduct program evaluation, and provide required reports to the federal program. Grantees use the system to enter daily activity attendance and outcomes data. Grantees have access to reports to monitor adherence to grant requirements in real time.

2. State and Local Evaluation

Grantees are required to participate in data collection, surveys, interviews, and related activities as part of the state and local evaluations. TEA conducts an annual **statewide evaluation** that includes extensive research on what factors lead to high-quality programming and improved program outcomes for students. The statewide evaluation for Cycle 12 programs will include an analysis of statewide performance on federal GPRA and statewide SMART goals.

In alignment with the annual statewide evaluation, TEA will provide grantees with **local evaluation** reports that include:

- Outcomes on federal GPRA and statewide SMART goals.
- Quality risk scores as measured by ongoing program monitoring and observations.
- Compliance risk scores as measured by ongoing program monitoring and observations.
- Recommendations for improvement, targeted training and technical assistance.
- Other items as determined by TEA.

Grantees are required to respond to the findings of the local evaluation reports and create action plans for continuous improvement. Programs may choose to complete this process with program staff and other stakeholders, or with the assistance of a local evaluator. Programs choosing to work with a local evaluator may reference the Texas ACE [Local Evaluation Guide and Toolkit](#) and recorded webinars posted on My Texas ACE.

3. Program Monitoring and Risk Assessment

TEA conducts ongoing monitoring of program quality and compliance with federal and state requirements. Grantees must participate in required data collection, desk audits, and on-site visits as requested by TEA. The current monitoring process consists of two

primary elements, the grant-level strategic planning process and the center-level Quality Assurance Process.

4. Technical Assistance

TEA contracts with a team of highly specialized education specialists that are experts in key program areas and are available to consult with the program on a variety of topics including grant-level strategic planning, program implementation, operations, and program quality improvement. Education specialists manage the Texas ACE Help Desk where grantees can request support on any program-related topic and response is provided within 24 hours or the next business day.

5. Training and Resources

TEA offers a robust annual calendar of in-person and online training opportunities built on grantee needs. Offerings include, but are not limited to:

- **Out of School Time Initiatives Conference (OSTI-CON)**, a low-cost annual statewide conference for grantees that includes in-depth pre-conference learning opportunities, engaging keynote speakers, a robust schedule of workshop sessions, networking opportunities, vendors, and fun interactive activities. The annual conference is also an opportunity for grantees to showcase best practices and program success by leading sessions or participating panel discussions.
- **High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and High Impact Tutoring (HIT)** training and support for selecting, implementing, and monitoring product use in alignment with school day accelerated learning efforts.

My Texas ACE website - Texas ACE grantees have continuous access to a variety of federal and state resources including an extensive library of training resources including webinars, resources, research links, and sample templates.

Texas ACE Brand - TEA requires use of this dynamic tool to communicate the nature and characteristics of the statewide program, create statewide awareness of services, and identify Texas ACE centers. Grantees may adopt their own branding but are also required to include the Texas ACE branding in their local program materials and promotions. A host of marketing materials are available to subrecipients, many in both English and Spanish. Grantees will also receive customizable electronic outreach materials and resources.

Texas ACE Blueprint - The Blueprint guides Texas ACE grantees through implementing high-quality programming. Each component is supported by program design elements as well as statutory and program requirements. The elements and requirements in the blueprint are supported by the elements and requirements in the Program Guidelines.

Texas ACE Resource Network (ARN) - TEA facilitates sub-groups of grantees to participate in providing input on trends and best practices across the state in order to increase professional interaction of local program leadership and respond to local needs.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Grants Administration Division's [Administering a Grant](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision applies to this grant program.

SMART Goal

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), SMART Goals, Additional SMART Goal Guidance from TEA, and Measurable Goals and Progress.

Measurable Progress

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), SMART Goals, Additional SMART Goal Guidance from TEA, and Measurable Goals and Progress.

Application Assurances and Requirements

This section describes the two types of responses that applicants must address in the application to be eligible to be considered for funding:

1. **Assurances** - A list of agreements to adhere with federal statutory (defined in authorizing statute) and TEA program-specific (defined by TEA program staff) requirements.
2. **Requirements** - Descriptions or demonstrations that must be provided in the application or on the *Grant-Level Strategic Plan (Pre-Award)* to adhere with federal statutory (defined in authorizing statute) and TEA program-specific (defined by TEA program staff) requirements.

Federal Statutory and TEA Program-Specific Assurances

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

The following assurances address federal and other requirements and must be addressed in Application Part 1, Section 7: Statutory/Program Assurances:

Applicants assure that:

1. The proposed program was developed, and will be carried out, in active collaboration with the schools that participating students attend, including through the sharing of relevant data among the schools, all participants of the eligible entity, and any partnership entities in compliance with applicable laws relating to privacy and confidentiality and in alignment with the challenging state academic standards and any local academic standards.
2. The community has been given notice of an intent to apply and the application and any waiver request will be available for public review after submission of the application.
3. Complete the Title IV, Part B Affirmation of Consultation form with Private Nonprofit School (PNP) Officials and submit the signed Affirmation to *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Reports* Application, accessible through TEAL on the same date as this grant application. If awarded, Affirmations are due annually on the same date as the 21st CCLC continuation application.

If awarded the program will:

4. Take place in a safe facility that is properly equipped and easily accessible.
5. Supervise activities at all times with qualified staff at adult to student ratios of 1:15 or better. If including HIT tutoring in the program, the adult to student ratio will be 1:3.

6. Begin services for students and families no earlier than the grant start date of August 1, 2023 and no later than September 5, 2023, unless specifically approved by TEA.
7. Will target students who primarily attend schools eligible for schoolwide programs under ESEA as amended, Section 1114 and the families of such students.
8. Use funds to increase the level of state, local, and other non-federal funds that would, in the absence of funds under this part, be made available for programs and activities authorized under this part, and in no case, supplant federal, state, local, or non-federal funds.
9. Provide all services at no cost to participants or their families.
10. Comply with the prohibition on generating program income described herein.
11. Comply with TEA orders to cease all or partial grant operations at any center when unsafe conditions are reasonably documented or observed.
12. Comply with limits on contracted services described herein.
13. Intentionally design programs based on the needs and resources of each community learning center and will offer three types of activities: 1) targeted academic support through the use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), high-impact tutoring (HIT), and/or school-day aligned academic activities; 2) student interest-based enrichment that is both academic and enriching, including but not limited to; college and career readiness, service learning, physical fitness, health and wellness, and fine arts activities; and 3) family engagement in learning through ongoing activities that connect parents to the school and community.
14. Intentionally design programs in adherence with three key strategies: 1) strong program operations that ensure a safe, supportive, and educationally enriching environment for all students, staff, and families; 2) alignment with the school-day through ongoing collaboration with school-day staff, attendance at professional development, and connections to school-day systems and 3) community partnerships or community engagement that support local needs, grant requirements, and program sustainability.
15. Adhere to the [targeted student and adult family member participation](#) requirements and meet the targeted participation numbers established in the Year 1 award. Applicants acknowledge that proposed amendments that reduce the level of services to below the Year 1 targeted participation numbers will be approved only in extreme or unusual circumstances and that failure to adhere to service targets will result in reduced funding during the subsequent continuation grant period.
16. Adhere to the [program schedule minimum requirements](#). Applicants acknowledge that failure to adhere to minimum requirements may result in reduced funding during the subsequent continuation grant period.
17. Applicants acknowledge that grant funds remaining unexpended at the end of the annual expenditure reporting period will remain with TEA.
18. Implement schedules that encourage consistent participation of students most in need and will not implement schedules that result in rotating student participation by day, restrict attendance on selected days, or alternate attendance days for students.
19. Offer all activities at an approved center or, on a limited and pre-approved basis, at an adjunct site or during an approved field trip. Activities at a non-approved location, such as a feeder school, are unallowable and will not be charged to the grant.
20. Adhere to the following Texas 21st Century Student Tracking (TX21st) system data reporting requirements:

- Grantee Profile, Funding, Contacts, Partner, Center Profiles, Center Contacts, Center Operations, Feeder Schools, Activities, and Schedule data will be entered in August and will be updated as changes in any of the data occur.
 - Center Operations data will be updated at the beginning of each term. Data entered in the system must represent the approved application and operating schedule.
 - Participant and enrollment data will be entered in August or September, depending on the center schedule.
 - Attendance data will be entered at least weekly, and preferably daily.
 - Exception reports and data corrections will be completed and reviewed by the project director.
 - Grantee will coordinate with the school district to collect and enter data required for federal GPRA, including GPA and engagement in learning surveys, school day attendance and grades data into TX21st.
 - Non-public education grantees must have a valid data sharing agreement with the local education agency attended by the students serving, providing for required data collection and addressing Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements.
21. Regularly engage a group of stakeholders to serve as the Texas ACE steering committee charged with providing feedback to increase program quality, build community awareness, evaluate program effectiveness, and inform operations and sustainability plans. Membership will be voluntary, diverse, and qualified to support efforts to increase quality and visibility of the program in the community.
22. Participate with TEA and its contractors in conducting state-required activities, including but not limited to program quality and compliance monitoring, statewide evaluation, technical assistance, and training. This includes submitting required data and documents in the format and timeline provided by TEA.
23. Ensure that all required staff positions regularly participate in training and other opportunities offered by the TEA and its contractors. In addition, the grantee will regularly provide program-specific in-person training to center-level staff and will document the content and attendance of training events.
24. Use the Texas ACE logo in all outreach and communication materials and the grantee will comply with Texas ACE branding guidelines.
25. Programs that receive priority points for Statutory Priority 1 – Targeted Services assure that 65% of the students served in the program will attend campuses that are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under ESEA as amended, Section 1111(d) and/or enroll students who may be at risk for academic failure, dropping out of school, involvement in criminal or delinquent activities, or who lack strong positive role models.
26. Programs that receive priority points for Statutory Priority 2 – Joint Partnerships assure that proposal the is submitted jointly by eligible entities consisting of not less than one LEA receiving funds under Part A of Title I and another eligible entity; and demonstrating that the activities proposed in the application are, as of the date of the submission of the application, not accessible to students who would be served; or would expand accessibility to high-quality services that may be available in the community.

27. Programs that receive priority points for Program Priority 1 - 21st CCLC Program Integration assure the program will be integrated with other TEA initiatives designed to accelerate learning and increase specific academic student outcomes.
28. Programs that receive priority points for Program Priority 2 - Accelerated Learning assure the program will implement supplemental High-Quality Instructional Materials and/or High Impact Tutoring products. A list of currently available products can be found at TEA Available Materials. The plan must demonstrate how the applicant would support centers in successful product implementation, including training and school-day alignment.
29. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to assurances #6-#28, all Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), Cycle 12, Year 1 Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.

Statutory and TEA Requirements

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

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

The following items that address federal statutory and TEA program requirements require a response in the application and/or on the *Grant-Level Strategic Plan (Pre-Award)*.

Section 4: Identify/Address Needs

Evaluate the community needs and available resources for the community learning center by completing the community needs and community resource tables on the *Grant-Level Strategic Plan (Pre-Award)*. Then provide a narrative response describing the following:

- The multiple data sources used, and stakeholder feedback provided when conducting the need assessment.
- Why the needs assessment indicates the need for afterschool and summer programs.
- How the proposed program will address those needs, including the needs of working families
- How the needs assessment informed the targeted participation numbers for students and adult family members.

Section 5: Measurable Goals and Progress

Establish a set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability and effectiveness of high-quality academic, enrichment, and family engagement opportunities by completing the Grant-Level Summative SMART goals on the *Grant-Level Strategic Plan (Pre-Award)*. Then provide a narrative response describing the benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward meeting the SMART goals. Include key strategies for recruiting and retaining students,

engaging with adult family members, recruiting staff, ensuring strong program operations, aligning with the school-day, and monitoring fidelity of program implementation.

Section 6: Project Evaluation and Modification

If the benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program. Include a description of how the state activities for continuous improvement will be utilized for project evaluation and modification.

Section 8: Statutory/Program Requirements

1. Describe the proposed program activities and how they are expected to improve student academic achievement and overall student success. Describe the proposed activities in each of the following areas: targeted academic support, student interest-based enrichment, and family engagement.
2. Demonstrate how the program will use best practices, including research or evidence-based practices, to provide educational and related activities that will complement and enhance academic performance, achievement, postsecondary and workforce preparation, and positive youth development of the students.
3. Describe the transportation needs of participating students and how those needs will be addressed. Specifically describe how students participating in the program will travel safely to and from each center and home.
4. If awarded, applicants must disseminate information about the community learning center, including its location, to the community in a manner that is understandable and accessible. Describe the applicant's plan to inform the community about the center and participating in the program.
5. If the program plans to use volunteers in activities carried out through the community learning center(s), describe how the program will encourage and use appropriately qualified persons to serve as the volunteers. Explain the policy for screening and placing volunteers. If the entity does not plan to use volunteers, please indicate that in the space provided. (Choosing not to use volunteers will not lower review scores)
6. Demonstrate how the proposed program will coordinate federal, state, and local programs and make the most effective use of public resources at each campus served and ensure an appropriate, safe, and equipped facility. This includes coordination with, but not limited to, food services, security, health services, and special education.
7. Describe a preliminary plan for how the community learning center will continue after funding under this grant ends. Include how the resources provided by this grant will assist the program in local sustainability efforts.

8. Describe the proposed partnership(s) between local educational agencies, community-based organizations, and any other public or private entities. Include how the partnership will contribute to achieving stated objectives and sustaining the program over time. To receive priority points, the applicant must provide information that demonstrates the activities proposed in the application are, as of the date of the submission of the application, not accessible to students who would be served; or that it would expand access to high-quality services available in the community.

TEA will provide the same priority to an application submitted by a local education agency (LEA) if the LEA demonstrates that it is unable to partner with a community-based organization in reasonable geographic proximity and of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of this grant. Check the box if applying for priority points under this special rule. If this box is checked, provide clear relevant evidence that the LEA is unable to partner with a community-based organization in reasonable geographic proximity and of sufficient quality to meet the requirements.

9. Describe how the program will coordinate with the school-day to ensure that measures of student success align with the regular academic program of the school and the academic needs of participating students.
- If applying for Program Priority 1- Program Integration, include a description of how the grant program will integrate with other TEA initiatives designed to accelerate learning and increase specific academic student outcomes.
 - If applying for Program Priority 2 - Accelerated Learning, include a description of how the grant program will integrate supplemental HQIM and HIT product use.

Activities and Use of Funds

See the [Administering a Grant](#) page for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds.

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Under ESSA, each eligible entity that receives an award may carry out activities designed to advance student academic achievement and support student success, including:

- academically aligned enrichment activities, structured mentoring programs, accelerated learning and tutoring services that are aligned with the challenging state academic standards, including the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and state-required assessments and end of course exams;
- well-rounded education activities, including credit recovery or attainment and dual credit programs for secondary students;
- literacy education, including financial literacy and environmental literacy.
- activities that support a healthy and active lifestyle, including nutritional education and regular, structured physical activity.
- services for individuals with disabilities.
- activities that emphasize language skills and academic achievement for students who are English learners.

- cultural programs.
- telecommunications and technology education programs.
- expanded library service hours.
- programs that assist students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled to improve their academic achievement.
- drug and violence prevention and counseling.
- activities that build skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) including computer science and that foster innovation in learning by supporting nontraditional STEM education teaching methods.
- programs that partner with in-demand fields of the state or local workforce or build career competencies and career readiness and ensure that career readiness skills are aligned with the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and
- providing parents and legal guardians of students participating in the grant program with active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Specific activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Salaries for the required ACE project director, site coordinators, program specialist, and instructional staff to implement and deliver the program.
- Hourly pay for high school students leading tutorials or other activities under the supervision of an adult staff member, if the student is not a Texas ACE participant at the center. Students working for the program may not be counted toward program attendance.
- Extra-duty pay for staff working beyond their normal contracted hours to provide activities/services that supplement the regular school day for the local Texas ACE program.
- Independent evaluation (internal or external) costs up to, but no more than \$3,000 per center for a full year of evaluation services. This is considered an administrative cost and must be budgeted within the Administrative Cost Calculation total in Schedule #6-Project Budget Summary.
- Supplies and materials for student and family engagement activities.
- Computer hardware and software required to implement the program.
- Nutritional snacks for students and parents during program offerings.
- Travel to required Texas ACE state and regional training, meetings, conferences, and workshops.
- Transportation for students from feeder schools to the program center and transportation for all program students from the center home.
- Virtual family engagement activities

Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

Field Trips

Field trips may be funded under the grant program. Only the following types of field trips are allowable:

Educational field trips are allowed when they consist of approvable, planned instructional activities that involve students in learning experiences that are difficult to duplicate in a classroom situation. Field trips must support Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), be reasonable in cost, and be necessary to accomplish the objectives of the local ACE program. Examples of educational field trips include the following:

- Laboratory and field investigation
- Supplemental curricular academic activities that are focused on science, technology, engineering, and/or math
- Educational tours and interactive activities with local science centers, arts centers, museums, zoos, horticultural centers, historic sites, archaeological sites, or nature preserves
- Intentionally directed time at public libraries to conduct research and access reading and study materials
- Organized visits to colleges and universities to encourage interest in and familiarity with the pursuit of higher education
- Unallowable types of field trips include those that:
 - are not reasonable in cost or are not necessary to accomplish the objectives of the grant program.
 - occur on a frequent basis.
 - primarily are for social, entertainment, or recreational purposes.
 - transport students to a location further than necessary when a similar experience is available closer to the center.
 - supplant and do not supplement local, state, or federal expenditures or activities, including those that expend funds on students who are not enrolled in the Texas ACE program.
 - are not properly documented.
 - or transport students to entertainment or recreational locations that have legitimate educational programs when more than 25 percent of the time spent at the location is used for entertainment or recreation of field trip participants.

Before budgeting for field trip expenses, applicants are encouraged to explore cost-saving opportunities to bring remote locations into the classroom by arranging for hands-on engaging presentations at the center or by accessing live and interactive virtual tours and educational experiences available online.

Field Trips will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Field Trips Justification form, refer to the [Administering a Grant page](#).

In-State Travel

In-state travel costs may be funded under this grant program. Applicants must budget funds for the project director, community engagement specialist, and designated site coordinators to attend required training events, conferences, workshops, and meetings. Final dates and exact locations for these events will be announced after grant award announcements are made available.

Grantees should budget for the following in-state travel:

- Two annual in-person meetings, project director attendance required.

- TEA's Out of School Time Conference (OSTI-CON), the annual statewide conference. Registration is open to all program staff including frontline staff, site coordinators, program specialists, evaluators, and project directors. Attendance is highly encouraged.
- Attendance at the annual Statewide Parental Involvement Conference for relevant staff members is also encouraged.

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs may be funded under this grant program. Out-of-state travel costs should be minimal. Travel costs are allowable if the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items are only incurred by employees on official business of the grantee and follow the grantee's regular business operations and written travel policy.

To avoid excessive out-of-state travel costs and to balance these expenditures with the needs of local communities, grantees may expend funds for a reasonable number of staff members to attend no more than two approved out-of-state conferences each year. **Grantees shall prioritize attending OSTI-CON, the annual TEA-sponsored in-state conference.** All out of state travel must benefit the program and the program must limit attendance to a reasonable level of staff representation at each conference. Subrecipients are encouraged to present best practices and share with their peers from Texas and other states. Pre-approved conferences are limited to:

- U.S. Department of Education's Summer Institute,
- National Afterschool Association,
- Foundations, Inc.'s Beyond School Hours Conference,
- National Summer Learning Conference,
- Best of Out of School Time (BOOST) Conference.

Unless specifically allowed by these Guidelines, out-of-State Travel will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Out-of-State Travel Justification form, refer to the [Administering a Grant page](#).

General Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

In general, refer to the Budgeting Cost Guidance Handbook on the [Administering a Grant](#) page for unallowable costs.

Program Income

Generating program income is not allowed. Program income is the gross income earned by the non-federal entity that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the federal award during the period of performance. (2 CFR §200.80) A simple definition is revenue generated as a direct result of the federal award and that is in addition to the federal funds provided by TEA through the competitive subgrant application process. Program income generated must be reported and will be deducted from the funds awarded to the subrecipient. (2 CFR §200.307(b)) Program income that the grantee did not anticipate at the time of the grant award must be used to reduce the grant award rather than to increase the funds committed to the project. Expenditures of program income must be for the purposes and under the conditions of the grant award. Donations are not considered program income.

Limits on Contracted Services

Applicants are not permitted to divest more than 49% of the total grant award to any single entity, including but not limited to partners, collaborators, or sub-grantees. At a minimum,

applicants must maintain direct control of 51% of the total grant award during the entire grant cycle. Additionally, applicants are not allowed to divest oversight of the program administration or implementation to another agency, this includes, but is not limited to, existing 21st CCLC programs and other agencies in a sub-grant process. These funds may not be used as a pass-through to another agency to operate a 21st CCLC program.

Grantees are prohibited from contracting or employing with the grant funds individuals or entities hired to prepare the grant application. Grant funds must not be used to pay for grant writing services.

Extended Day and Extended Year Programs

TEA will not fund programs that propose to extend the school day or school year.

Advisory Council

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

Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization

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

Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences

Hosting or sponsoring conferences may not be funded under this grant program

Travel Costs for Officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members

Travel costs for officials such as the executive director, superintendent, or board members may not be funded under the grant program.

Other Unallowable Activities

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

- Debt service (lease-purchase)
- Matching expenditures for any other federal, state, or local grant program
- Expenditures related to students not enrolled in, served by, or eligible for the program
- Stipends for students or family members to participate
- Payment or reimbursement to students for receiving tutoring or mentoring services
- Funding student participation in any University Interscholastic League (UIL) competition, activity, or event
- College tuition for students except for dual credit courses
- Religious instruction or provision of sectarian materials
- Infrastructure or installation of infrastructure needed for computer access
- Furniture, portable buildings, and vehicles
- Funds to invest in the stock market or savings or bank accounts

Project Evaluation and Modification

By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the required evaluation reports in the format and time requested by TEA. TEA will collect and analyze relevant data from PEIMS if it is available.

See the Program Description section for current evaluation and monitoring procedures.

Performance Measures

The state is required to report on the following mandatory federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures. Data collection for the GPRA will be collected from the PEIMS system with the exception of GPRA #3 and #6 which must be entered in the Texas 21st CCLC Student Tracking system (TX21st).

1. Percentage of students in Grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading/language arts on state assessments.
2. Percentage of students in Grades 4–8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in mathematics on state assessments.
3. Percentage of students in Grades 7–8 and 10–12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer with a prior-year unweighted grade point average (GPA) less than 3.0 who demonstrated an improved GPA.
4. Percentage of youth in Grades 1–12 participating in 21st CCLC during the school year and summer who:
 - a. had a school-day attendance rate at or below 90% in the prior school year; and
 - b. demonstrated an improved attendance rate in the current school year.
5. Percentage of students in Grades 1–12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experienced a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year.
6. Percentage of students in Grades 1–5 participating in 21st CCLC programming in the school year and summer who demonstrated an improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.

In addition to the federal GPRA, the state develops annual SMART goals. Below are draft SMART goals for the Cycle 12, Year 1. Finalized SMART goals will be shared in August of 2023.

Improve School-day Academic Performance in Reading and Math

- DRAFT - By July 2024, 65% of Texas ACE centers will implement TEA afterschool approved HQIM products for afterschool as measured by TX21 attendance.
- DRAFT - By July 2024, 65% of Texas ACE centers will implement High-Impact Tutoring as measured by TX21 attendance.

Improve School-day Attendance

- DRAFT - By July 2024, 100% Texas ACE grantees will meet or exceed targeted student attendance goals as measured by TX21 attendance.

Improve School-day Engagement in Learning

- DRAFT - By July 2024, 100% Texas ACE grantees will meet or exceed targeted student attendance goals as measured by TX21 attendance.

Increasing Family Engagement

- DRAFT - By July 2024, 100% Texas ACE grantees will meet or exceed targeted adult attendance goals as measured by TX21 attendance.

As part of this application, programs grant-level SMART in the same outcome areas. If awarded, programs will update grant-level SMART goals annually and develop center-level SMART goals through the technical assistance and monitoring process.

Grantees may also conduct additional monitoring or local program evaluation to assist in improving program quality and student academic outcomes. If the grantee chooses to conduct local program evaluation, the grantee must include these performance measures in the evaluation. In addition, the results of the local evaluation must be used to refine, improve, and strengthen the local program and be made available to TEA when published and the public upon request, with public notice of such availability provided.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

When a grantee chooses, or is required under a grant, to hire a contracted evaluator, TEA believes that the evaluator must have the capability to remain independent and objective in carrying out the evaluation. “Independent and objective” implies that there is no influence or control, real or perceived, exerted on the evaluator by any person who is involved in the provision of program services. Therefore, the only way in which a contracted evaluator can be truly independent and objective is not to be involved in any manner with the provision of program services or activities. Otherwise, the evaluator is, at least in part, evaluating its own services.

In addition, TEA is aware that some grant writers develop and design the grant program, write the entire grant application, and then wish to evaluate the grant program. TEA also believes that this scenario poses a conflict of interest for the evaluator, in that the evaluator is evaluating the grant program that he or she designed, developed, and wrote. Again, it is not possible for the evaluator to function independently and objectively if the evaluator performed in this capacity. It is certainly acceptable for the grant writer to receive some information from a potential evaluator to include in the evaluation section of the grant application with regard to an appropriate evaluation plan or design, but communication between the grant writer and evaluator should be limited to that specific topic.

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

Federal Grant Requirements

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement **does** apply to this federally funded grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Following the passage of ESSA, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education directed states to require all sub-grantees and applicants to consult with private schools on equitable access to federal programs under the Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV, Part B, Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC. All applicants seeking new or continuation funding must comply with the policy in this section and any subsequent policy published by TEA. The program's PNP policy is as follows:

Title IV, Part B Definitions of Terms

Eligible Students: Students must primarily attend a campus that is eligible for schoolwide programs under Section 1114 of Title I, Part A. Grantees must use needs assessment data to identify students that would most benefit from assistance in meeting student standards in reading and math and benefit from participating in enrichment activities that complement the regular academic program that students attend.

Eligible Private Schools: Private non-profit schools that reside in the attendance zones of a public school eligible for schoolwide programs under Section 1114 of Title I, Part A.

Center: The physical location at which the program takes place. This is usually a school campus, but it could also be a community center or privately-owned facility.

Guidance by Title IV, Part B Applicant Type

Services must be provided to students in the same grade levels as offered by the grant-funded program. For example, a private school wants Grade 2 students to participate, but the grant-funded program serves Grades 6-12. The grant-funded program is not obligated to serve students not in Grades 6-12 because the program was awarded based on a peer-reviewed competition and is not awarded based on the assumption it will serve all students in all grades. Student targets and related budgets must include costs for providing services to eligible private school students identified in consultation.

Public School Districts, Charter Districts, and Education Service Centers

- Districts and charter schools may consult on Title IV, Part B in the consolidated application on a contingent basis. That is, private school participation would be contingent on TEA awarding the entity a competitive grant under Title IV, Part B. This consultation may be reported in a competitive or continuation application for the applicable timeframe.
- Services must only be provided to eligible private school students in the attendance zones of the campuses and feeders served by the

“center.” That is, students must reside in or attend a public charter school in the attendance zone for a public school campus that is eligible for schoolwide programs under Section 1114 of Title I, Part A.

Charter Districts and Private School Campuses

Charters and private schools that operate or propose to operate a center under Title IV, Part B must determine the public school attendance zones in which the center physically resides and consult with the eligible private non-profit schools in those boundaries.

Non-profit and Community-Based Organizations (NPO/CBO), Institutes of Higher Education, Private Companies

Non-profit organizations generally propose serving one or more public or charter school campuses. These applicants must consult with the eligible private schools that are within the boundaries of the campuses proposed to be served by the program in the manner described in the sections above.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all eligible private schools are consulted. An offer of services without consultation does not meet the requirement of the law.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement **does** apply to this federally funded grant program.

Application Elements

This section describes the requirements and attachments that must be addressed in and included with the application.

Notice of Intent to Apply

For competitive grants, prospective applicants are requested to submit the Notice of Intent to Apply (NOI) by the date specified in the Grant Timeline. The NOI provides helpful information that allows TEA staff to plan for the management of the applications and review processes. Failure to notify TEA of the intent to apply will **not** disqualify the applicant from applying for grant funds.

The NOI is published along with the RFA on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Required Attachments

See the following section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#):

1. Required Program-Related Attachments

Required Program-Related Attachments

Applicants must provide the following program-related attachments:

- Completed *Grant-Level Strategic Plan (Pre-Award)* – submit to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov with the grant application.
- Completed Affirmation of Consultation with Private Nonprofit School (PNP) Officials – submit to *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Reports* Application, accessible through TEAL.

Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of applications for competitive grants.

Standard Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Standard Review Criteria.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
Section 4: Identify/Address Needs	
Quantifiable needs have been identified and strategies to address those needs have been clearly described.	10
Section 5: Measurable Goals and Progress	
The benchmarks and the summative Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Timely (SMART) goals are clearly described and related to either student outcomes or are consistent with the purpose of the grant program.	10
Section 6: Project Evaluation and Modification	
Applicant clearly describes how project evaluation data will be used to determine when and how to modify the project plan, including if progress or summative SMART goals do not show progress.	5
Section 8: Statutory/Program Requirements	
Strategies and activities are of sufficient quality and depth to ensure accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the grant program outlined in the Program Guidelines.	25
Section 12: Budget	
The budget, including personnel, materials, and other identified expenses, supports the activities outlined in the grant application.	10

Total Maximum Number of Standard Review Criteria Points	60
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Specific Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Specific Review Criteria.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>The application includes a realistic, research and data-driven plan for implementing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted academic support using high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), high-impact tutoring (HIT), and/or school-day aligned academic activities. • Student interest-based enrichment that is both academic and enriching, including but not limited to, college and career readiness, service learning, physical fitness, health and wellness, and fine arts activities. • Family engagement in learning through ongoing activities that connect parents to the school and community. <p><i>Section 4; Statutory/Program Requirements Questions 1 & 2</i></p>	3
<p>The application includes strategies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong program operations that ensure a safe, supportive, and educationally enriching environment for all students, staff, and families. • Alignment with the school-day through ongoing collaboration with school-day staff, attendance at professional development, and connections to school-day systems. <p><i>Section 5; Statutory/Program Requirements Questions 3, 6, 9</i></p>	2
<p>The application includes strategies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting and retaining qualified program staff to implement high-quality activities. • Recruiting and retaining students in need of the program. • Engaging with adult family members in an ongoing and meaningful way. <p><i>Section 5; Statutory/Program Requirements Question 4</i></p>	3
<p>The application includes strategies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal quality monitoring and continuous improvement. • Ongoing professional development and coaching. <p><i>Section 5; Statutory/Program Requirements Question 2</i></p>	2
Total Maximum Number of Grant Specific Criteria Points	10

Priorities for Funding

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

In addition to the factors considered in awarding competitive grants as outlined in the previous sections above, TEA will award grants per the priorities listed below. TEA will only review applications for priority points that receive a score of 75% from the peer review of the standard and specific criteria.

Statutory or TEA Priority	Maximum Points
<p>Statutory Priority 1 – Targeted Services. Applications proposing to target services to students and the families of students who primarily attend schools that are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under ESEA as amended, Section 1111(d) and enroll students who may be at risk for academic failure, dropping out of school, involvement in criminal or delinquent activities, or who lack strong positive role models. Therefore, priority points will be awarded to applications that propose that 65% or more of the students served will attend schools that meet one or both of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identified as a comprehensive or targeted support and improvement campus for 2021-2022 AND/OR 2. Has an “at risk” population greater than the state average as listed in the State Student Information portion of the <u>most recent published Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR)</u>. 	2
<p>Statutory Priority 2 – Joint Partnerships. Priority points will be awarded to proposals submitted jointly by eligible entities consisting of not less than one LEA receiving funds under Part A of Title I and another eligible entity; and demonstrating that the activities proposed in the application are, as of the date of the submission of the application, not accessible to students who would be served; or would expand accessibility to high-quality services that may be available in the community.</p> <p>Special rule: TEA will provide the same priority to an application submitted by an LEA if the LEA demonstrates that it is unable to partner with a community-based organization in reasonable geographic proximity and of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of this grant.</p>	2
<p>Program Priority 1 - 21st CCLC Program Integration. Priority points will be awarded to proposals that clearly describe the integration of the grant program with other TEA initiatives designed to accelerate learning and increase specific academic student outcomes. Examples of programs that integrate with 21st CCLC include, but are not limited to, the Additional Days School Year (ADSY) summer or full year redesign programs, TCLAS Decision 11: High-Quality Afterschool, Blended Learning Program, COVID Recovery Instructional Materials Support Initiative (CRIMSI), Early College High Schools (ECHS), Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH), Work Based Learning (WBL), and Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN).</p>	3
<p>Program Priority 2 - Accelerated Learning. Priority points will be awarded to proposals that clearly describe a plan to implement supplemental High-Quality</p>	3

Statutory or TEA Priority	Maximum Points
Instructional Materials and/or High Impact Tutoring products. A list of currently available products can be found at TEA Available Materials. The plan must demonstrate how the applicant would support centers in successful product implementation, including training and school-day alignment.	
Total maximum number of statutory/priority points	10

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