



**2023-2024 National Board Candidacy Cohort**  
**Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 31, 2022**

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation

This LOI application must be submitted via email to [loiapplications@tea.texas.gov](mailto:loiapplications@tea.texas.gov).

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

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, October 31, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from

Pre-award costs permitted from

**Required Attachments**

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)

**Amendment Number**

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

**Applicant Information**

Organization  CDN  Campus  ESC  UEI

Address  City  ZIP  Vendor ID

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

**Certification and Incorporation**

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

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

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

Authorized Official Name  Title

Email  Phone

Signature  Date

**Shared Services Arrangements**

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are **NOT PERMITTED** for this grant.

**Statutory/Program Assurances**

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

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this LOI will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- 2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2023-2024 National Board Candidacy Cohort Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 National Board Candidacy Cohort Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 5. The applicant provides assurance that they accept and will comply with [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#) requirements.
- 6. Candidate Eligibility, Recruitment, & Selection
  - a) The grantee will implement a rigorous recruitment and selection process for the National Board candidates. As part of this process, the grantee will vet the candidate's deep understanding and commitment to the rigors and time demands of pursuing National Board Certification.
  - b) The grantee will ensure that all National Board Candidates have at least 3 years of teaching experience upon completion of National Board certification.
  - c) If this is the grantee's first time running a National Board candidacy cohort, the grantee will use the grant funding to support no more than 15 National Board Candidates.
  - d) The grantee will monitor the outcomes and completion rate of candidate, mentor, and facilitator perception surveys provided by TEA and administered not more than three times per year

**Statutory/Program Assurances cont'd.**

7. National Board Cohort & Support Sessions
- a) The grantee will implement a National Board Candidate Cohort of current classroom teachers pursuing National Board Certification in 2023-24.
  - b) The grantee will publicize the National Board Cohort on its website and through other communication means. Communication must include, but is not limited to, details about National Board Certification and the Candidacy Cohort.
  - c) The grantee assures that it will identify its external partner, if applicable, during the negotiation process.
  - d) If partnering with an external entity, the grantee will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with that entity before engaging in work for which grant funds are used. The grantee will ensure that the MoU includes partnership costs and commitment to meeting program assurances. In addition, the MoU will include all major activities for which grant funding will be used and the dates for which those activities will occur, which will be within the start and end dates of the grant period.
  - e) The grantee will provide National Board Candidates at least 8 meeting sessions over the course of the year with a Board-Certified facilitator that provides guidance and feedback on the development and submission of National Board Components.
  - f) The grantee will track attendance of National Board Candidates at each of the 8 meeting sessions over the course of the year and retain the attendance tracking in case of an audit.
  - g) The grantee will create a scope and sequence of the 8 meeting sessions and submit it to TEA upon request.
  - h) The grantee will support National Board candidates in submitting two components for certification to National Board in the 2023-2024 school year. The scope and sequence for the meeting sessions must be aligned to the component submissions.
  - i) The grantee will support the administration of participant surveys, which may include candidates, mentors, and facilitators, administered by TEA up to three times per year.
8. Mentors, Facilitators, & Compensation
- a) The grantee will adhere to the [Policy Guidelines for Ethical Candidate Support](#) and other guidelines for supporting candidates provided by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
  - b) The grantee will provide each National Board Candidate a mentor who will meet with the candidate to provide mentorship and guidance on National Board Certification per the guidelines available through National Board.
  - c) The grantee assures that each of the mentors and facilitators hired with grant funds have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
  - d) The grantee will ensure all mentors and facilitators have received training for their positions prior to working with candidates.
  - e) The grantee will create a job description with the role and responsibilities of facilitators and mentors.
  - f) The grantee assures that each candidate will receive at least 10 hours of mentor support during the year focused on the National Board components.
  - g) The grantee will establish expectations for meeting time between mentors and candidates (e.g., cadence, types of check-ins, etc.). The grantee will set up a system to track mentor-candidate interactions, including the number, duration, and frequency of meetings. The grantee will retain this documentation in case of an audit.
  - h) Grantees that hire teachers within their organization to serve as facilitators or mentors will provide them with additional compensation.

**Summary of Program**

Describe the proposed National Board Candidacy Cohort to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization as they relate to teacher retention and effectiveness. Describe how the National Board Candidacy Cohort will address the organization's mission and needs.

Rio Grande City Grulla ISD plans to recruit and select a group of highly-effective teachers pursuing a National Board certification. If granted, the district will engage with an external entity to provide support for fifteen candidates who want to participate in the National Board Certified Teacher program during the 2023-2024 school year. The RGCGISD has formed a NBCT Leadership Team to support candidates' long-year effort along with the support of the external entity. All efforts will be exhausted to ensure that participating teachers receive guidance and support to complete at least two NBCT components during the 2023-2024 school year. RGCGISD will partner with Region One ESC to facilitate the process and will ensure that teachers participate in at least 8 meetings and 1-to-1 focused mentoring throughout the year. The RGCGISD NBCT program will establish goals, objectives, and strategies that are met through performance and evaluative measures to ensure the effectiveness of the National Board Candidacy Cohort.

**Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel**

Referring to the program-specific assurances, outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external partners projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the National Board Candidacy Cohort. These positions may include but are not limited to district grant manager, external partner (if applicable), Facilitator, mentor, and candidate. Include whether the position is existing or proposed. Consider any other key personnel not listed in the table below.

| Title and Responsibilities of Position   | Required Qualifications and Experience   |
|--|--|
| Nydia I. Benitez District Grant Manager (Existing)<br>Select a cohort group, establish eligibility requirements, support through cohort model.         | Grant Experience, Teacher Incentive Allotment Administrator;<br>T-TESS Certified; Ability to execute grant time-line; Track candidate attendance;<br>Monitor candidacy completion rate |
| Leonel T. Guzman, Candidate Recruitment (Existing)<br>Recruit, Support and retain candidates   | HR Liaison; Ability to provide program details, Answer questions about NBCT,<br>Assist candidates with eligibility   |
| Dr. Arcadio Salinas, III, Facilitator & Policy Manager/<br>HR Lead (Existing) Support candidates and ensure mentors/External partner adhere to program | HR District Lead<br>Policy Knowledge<br>Experience in MOUs   |
| Region One ESC, External Grant Partner (New)<br>Execute grant by following program-specific assurances   | Provide appropriate candidate support<br>Create scope and sequence of meeting sessions   |
| Curriculum Lead(Existing)<br>Retain "Highly-Effective Teachers" and improve instructional effectiveness  | Provide Content Support to Teachers; Support and Sustain Cohort;<br>Provide mentor curriculum support and feedback   |
| Candidates (Cohort) New  | Engage in NBCT cohort activities<br>Attend NBCT (8) meeting sessions   |
|  |  |

**Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

Referring to the program-specific assurances and performance and evaluation measures within the program guidelines, describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed National Board Candidacy Cohort. Describe activities/strategies that will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives.

The goal of Rio Grande City Grulla ISD is to provide support for teachers who want to participate in the National Board Certification program and to recruit effective teachers as well as retain designated teachers. The district strongly believes that the National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) grant will positively impact the district's retention and recruitment of effective teachers by providing a robust supply of highly-qualified teachers. Because the district has already established a steering committee to recruit cohort of teachers interested in pursuing the NBCT, these allotment funds would further strengthen the success of the district's program. RGCGISD has been approved to provide a pathway for teachers to earn up to six-figure salaries by participating in the Teacher Incentive Allotment Cohort E. Through district stake-holder engagements in TIA discussion and NBCT opportunities, teacher's interest led to the first board approved RGCGISD NBCT Cohort recruitment. This group will be composed of teachers interested from every grade-level and subject area. Additionally through board-approved local district policy, the district will reimburse candidates from district funds for the successful completion of each NBCT Component. The NBCT Grant funds will be utilized to fund the mentorship of a Professional Learning Facilitator (PLF) to ensure the successful completion of the requirements as stipulated by the National Board Certification requirements. The candidates will participate in high-quality teaching and learning professional growth essential to the success of their candidacy. Currently, RGCGISD, does not have any teachers who are certified through the National Board Certification program. Once the first cohort is successful, they can ensure and help future NBCT Cohorts in the district.

**Performance and Evaluation Measures**

Describe the plan for collecting, evaluating, and responding to data on performance measures identified for this grant. Include the descriptions of tools used to measure and evaluate performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of the National Board Candidacy Cohort objectives and strategies.

Rio Grande City Grulla ISD has launched its first steps to establish a cohort of educators seeking to become National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCTs). It is the district's objective to work with the first cohort of candidates' committed to become NBCTs. The success of this cohort will help strengthen and diversify leadership pipelines, improve student outcomes, ensure teacher retention in under-served areas, and most significantly, the NBCTs success will help shape the profession for future RGCGISD National Board-Certified Teachers. In order to support the RGCGISD NBCT cohort to meet the assurances, the district will align their evaluative performances to the goals of the NBCT grant. The following will therefore take effect:

1. Rio Grande City Grulla ISD will work with up to 15 candidates. These candidates will be recruited from a cohort of teachers with at least 3 years of teaching experience and T-TESS evaluation with Proficient and above in all domains. Evaluative Tool: Teacher application. Candidate submits 2021-2022 T-TESS Evaluation Summary Observation Report and SBEC Teacher Certificate.
2. RGCGISD NBCTs Cohort candidates will be assigned a NBCT mentor and engage in at least 8 high quality scope and sequence candidate support meetings. Mentors and candidates engage with goals and objectives aligned to the scope and sequence of the program to include exemplar NBCT archived library resources, coaching, and receive at least 10 hours of mentor support. Evaluative Tool: Attendance Logs, Agendas, and Reflective Exit Tickets.
3. National Board Certified Teacher grant candidate submits two components of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in school year 2023-24. The candidates will submit the first component by December 2023 and the second component by May 2024. Evaluative Tool: Candidate's proof of submitted components and portfolio maintained for conference and/or reviews by the NBCT Steering Committee.
4. National Board Certified Teachers grant candidates undergo quarterly reviews to ensure 100% completion rate of NBCT tasks aligned to National Board guidelines and grant requirements. Evaluative Tool: Time-line/ Checklist for progress review with recommendations and/or additional support or step backs to ensure success.
5. National Board-Certified candidates, mentors, and facilitators support TEAs administration of participation surveys, up to three times per year. Evaluative Tool: Survey submission.

The NBCT leadership team will collect and evaluate quarterly the program implementation. The data on the performance measures will be used to provide a corrective action and/or facilitate the candidates in attaining the assurances as stipulated in the grant. Adjustments will be determined and made appropriately to address the original needs of the program. Documentation will be maintained for audit purposes.

**Budget Narrative**

Refer to the lines from the Application Part 2 Budget Workbook to describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the National Board Candidacy Cohort grant program. Be sure to include why each item included in your budget (Application Part 2 Budget Workbook) is reasonable and necessary to achieving the goals of your National Board Candidacy Cohort. If applicable, include a high-level snapshot of funds currently allocated to similar programs. Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.

Rio Grande City Grulla ISD is determined to remain competitive by offering its educators ample opportunities to grow. The district recognizes that teachers have the knowledge and skill set to complete the NBCT program; however, if they are supported and guided through the process, they will likely be more successful. The district currently does not have any qualified mentors within the district, so RCGISD will be seeking the support of the ESC (Region I) to provide these NBCT services to the proposed mentor group. The district will seek an external partnership with the ESC (Region I) to help implement a National Board Candidate Cohort, and through an MOU process engage in required activities. The proposed cost of these services will be \$25,500, and the ESC will in turn provide 8-10 meeting sessions over the course of the year. The district will provide a grant manager that will oversee the entire process, and the grant facilitator will monitor attendance, participation and feedback development on a bi-weekly process. The district will assign the facilitator to serve as a liaison between the candidates and the external partner. In order to complete the outline tasks, the district would utilize grant funds to provide compensation for the grant manager and grant facilitator who will be working after hours and weekends to keep the candidate cohort on an appropriate time-line. The compensation for these individuals would be given in the form of stipends for the extra duties, and the proposed amounts would be \$5,000 for each of the two individuals. The district will be utilizing \$3,000 (15 candidates @\$200) for substitute coverage that may be necessary as the cohort candidates complete submissions, meet with mentors or other activities. The district will utilize \$6,000 for supplies and materials such as print media, booklets, paper, and content specific preparation materials. Lastly, the district will use \$3,000 for any travel expenses necessary for the candidates' goal completion. Rio Grande City Grulla ISD will contribute about \$3,000 of in-kind support to recruit, support and sustain the NBCT during and after the grant period. Additionally, the district through local funds, will reimburse cohort candidates for certification exam fees. The district will hopefully become a fully functioning TIA entity, and the National Board Candidacy Cohort will only help to expand the opportunities that are provided within the district.

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| External Partnership Region I ESC | \$25,500        |
| Substitute Coverage (15 @\$200)   | \$3,000         |
| Travel                            | \$3,000         |
| Grant Manager Stipend             | \$5,000         |
| Cohort Facilitators               | \$5,000         |
| Supplies                          | \$6,000         |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>\$47,500</b> |

**Equitable Access and Participation**

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

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

|       |                      |         |                      |
|-------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Group | <input type="text"/> | Barrier | <input type="text"/> |
| Group | <input type="text"/> | Barrier | <input type="text"/> |
| Group | <input type="text"/> | Barrier | <input type="text"/> |
| Group | <input type="text"/> | Barrier | <input type="text"/> |

**PNP Equitable Services**

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

- Yes
- No

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

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the program?

- Yes
- No

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

**5A: Assurances**

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

**5B: Equitable Services Calculation**

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. LEA's student enrollment   | <input type="text" value="9,647"/>  |
| 2. Enrollment of all participating private schools  | <input type="text" value="0"/>      |
| 3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)                      | <input type="text" value="9,647"/>  |
| 4. Total current-year program allocation  | <input type="text" value="3,000"/>  |
| 5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the program's defined limit   | <input type="text" value="47,500"/> |
| 6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)          | <input type="text" value="44,500"/> |
| 7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3) | <input type="text" value="5"/>      |
| <b>LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)</b>       | <input type="text" value="0"/>      |

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

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

*You may duplicate this page*

**Amended Section**

**Reason for Amendment**