



**2021-2023 Expansion of Dual Credit Faculty for CCRSM LOI**  
**Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 12, 2021**

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 49, 86 TX Legislature; TEC §29.908(b) & 102.1091**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **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, April 12, 2021**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **May 27, 2021 to June 15, 2023**

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this LOI.

**Required Attachments**

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Attachment 1: CCRSM Crosswalk
3. Attachment 2: Letter of Instructional Assurances
4. Attachment 3: Letter of Hiring Assurances from Higher Education Partner(s)
5. Attachment 4: Participant Roster
6. Attachment 5: Letter of Educators' Commitment

**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  DUNS

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 permitted for this grant. **Check the box below if applying as fiscal agent.**

- The LEA or ESC submitting this application is the fiscal agent of a planned SSA. All participating agencies will enter into a written SSA agreement describing the fiscal agent and SSA member responsibilities. All participants understand that the "Shared Services Arrangement Attachment" must be completed and signed by all SSA members and submitted to TEA before the NOGA is issued.

**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 assurances that a maximum of \$25,000 will be requested for reimbursement per educator for expenses related to tuition, fees, and travel during the life of the grant. Additional costs will be the responsibility of the LEA or participant upon a local agreement.
- 2. The applicant provides assurances that all participants serve within the eligible CCRSM in the 2021-2022 school year. Participating educators must each sign a Letter of Educator’s Commitment which will be collectively submitted as Attachment #5.
- 3. The applicant provides assurances that successful completion is defined as an average of 75% or higher in each course completed. All expenses related to participation in the accelerated credentialing program (e.g., tuition and fees, textbooks, travel expenses) are eligible for reimbursement by TEA upon successful completion of courses per term.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.
- 6. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2021-2023 CCRSM Expansion of Educators Eligible to Teach College Courses LOI Program Guidelines.
- 7. The CCRSM program leader(s) will submit a CCRSM designation (renewal) application for designation in 2022-2023 and for designation in 2023-2024.
- 8. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2021-2023 CCRSM Expansion of Educators Eligible to Teach College Courses Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 9. The applicant provides assurances that an academic year signed and dated memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the dual credit provider will be publicly posted by August 15, 2021. The MOU must address the following elements: Eligible courses; Student eligibility; Location of the class; Composition of students in the class; Faculty selection, supervision, and evaluation; Course Curriculum, Instructional Materials and calendar; Academic policies and student support services; Data-sharing policies and procedures; Courses of study that lead to an associate degree or up to 60 hours of college credit toward a 4-year degree; Administration of statewide assessments; Transcription of credit and Funding.



### **1. Identification of Needs:**

**Describe your plan for identifying dual credit faculty needs for this grant, as well as in the future. What systems will you put in place to ensure each CCRSM cohort is offered a sequence of coursework which will lead to a postsecondary credential?**

Sinton ISD proposes to thoroughly evaluate and identify needs to increase dual credit faculty in order to diversify and expand dual credit enrollment and improve high school completion of the 42 hour core requirements or an associate's degree. As aligned with the T-STEM Academy Blueprint, it is our goal to improve post-secondary readiness, particularly for underserved young people. In addition, it is imperative to develop systemic solutions to the staffing crisis. Instruction of college level coursework to high school students requires a unique set of skills, including content expertise, skills and training in the needs of adolescent learners, and application of engaging instructional strategies. Since the inception of our T-STEM Academy in 2010, we have worked to expand student enrollment in dual credit. We initially implemented an embedded English instructor, offering 6 hours of English instruction, and 3 online social studies courses. Subsequently, we have expanded our partnership with Del Mar College to offer extended dual credit course offerings, exclusively in an online format. The course completion data, failure rates, and overall success of our students in online courses has identified the need for qualified college accredited/high school instructors. Hiring and retaining qualified instructors is a challenge for both Sinton ISD and DMC, who report difficulties at times finding instructors willing to teach high school courses. Since 2010, we have been able to maintain an embedded English teacher, and in 2019-2020 Sinton ISD added dual credit BIOL 2401/2402, Anatomy and Physiology. Overall, students have been reluctant to take an online dual credit mathematics or science course due to the format rather than the content. An additional issue is that Biology 2401/2402 is not the required core science courses for students that intend to major in STEM fields other than human service pathways. The online college experience is well suited for self-motivated students. Unfortunately, the Academy students are NOT all self-motivated. To provide students with the best possible outcome, it is imperative that we offer more DC courses face to face on our campus. Face to face DC course offerings allow for the guidance, support, and coaching that many high school students need in order to achieve success. The embedded teachers can better support their students and provide the needed intervention in a quicker time frame. Face to face DC course offerings allow for the guidance, support, and coaching that many high school students need from professional staff in order to achieve success. In the past 2 years we have seen a rise of students dropping online classes. In comparison, the rate is much lower in our face to face classes.

Sinton ISD will strive to ensure that the sequence of coursework leading to postsecondary credential will continue and expand throughout the future. Sinton ISD will continue to give Master stipends and support as described in question 4: Recruitment and Retention. The students will be guided by career counselors and SISD faculty to pursue pathways that lead to postsecondary credentials. The students will also be screened to discover any learning gaps that might prevent them from being successful.

The established systems to ensure that each CCRSM cohort reaches a postsecondary credential ultimately impacts the success of our students. The shared goal for success rests collectively on the collaboration between the T-STEM, AVID, GEAR UP, RootEd and the faculty. As we make our way through the COVID pandemic, we realize that our new plan must include all of our resource teams working together. Representatives from the groups will meet regularly to review the student data in order to provide the desired pathways that meet high-wage, high-demand, and high-skill STEM fields in our area. The team will continually review data to identify student strengths and weaknesses and develop individual instructional support plans.

**TEA Program Requirements**

1. **Identification of Needs:** Describe your plan for identifying dual credit faculty needs for this grant, as well as in the future. What systems will you put in place to ensure each CCRSM cohort is offered a sequence of coursework which will lead to a postsecondary credential?

See attached since our answer would not fit in this box.

2. **Program Design:** Name the university partner(s) which will provide graduate level instruction to participating educators. Describe in detail how the LEA will coordinate with the university partner(s) to design an accelerated credentialing program. What are the university's roles and responsibilities in building a program to expand the number of educators credentialed to teacher college courses?

Sinton ISD has partnered with two universities to provide graduate level instruction for our applicants. The leadership team interviewed several universities to determine which options could fulfill the accelerated credentialing program necessary to meet the terms of this grant. Due to our rural location, the courses from the universities must be entirely online, or courses held at times in which our staff could attend face to face. Sam Houston State University and Texas A&M University Corpus Christi have committed to collaborate with our district to provide the appropriate graduate coursework necessary for the accelerated credentialing program.

Each of the universities have designed master degree programs that are ideal for individuals who currently hold a teaching certificate. For the individuals that already possess a graduate degree, they can earn a graduate certificate to supplement their existing graduate degree. These graduate certificates are designed to include the minimum of 18 semester credit hours of graduate coursework. The universities designed the plans to comply with the SAC's Guidelines on faculty credentials. For any applicant that already possesses a graduate degree, the universities have provided an option of completing the 18-hour graduate certificate concentrating in the teaching discipline needed for teaching DC.

Continued collaboration with the universities will produce the required roles and responsibilities to be finalized and delineated in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The signed MOUs will be in place by the Fall of 2021.

The universities that SISD has chosen to partner with, will be responsible for providing the appropriate coursework for each candidate to receive the necessary requirements to credential each teacher to fulfill the role of a dual credit adjunct educator. In addition, the universities will provide academic guidance and mentoring to ensure the success of each candidate.



**TEA Program Requirements (Cont'd)**

**3. Hiring:** Name the dual credit provider(s) who will hire educators. How will the applicant collaborate with the dual credit provider? What steps will take place to ensure that the courses taken by the educator will meet the accrediting standards of the hiring dual credit provider? What are the roles and responsibilities of the hiring dual credit provider?

Sinton ISD will continue to partner with Del Mar College to hire educators to provide face to face dual credit instruction for students at Sinton ISD. Del Mar College has provided a Letter of Hiring Assurances that details the roles and responsibilities of the hiring entity and the educator.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the required roles and responsibilities will be finalized and delineated by Fall of 2021. Ongoing collaboration and coordination between SISD/T-STEM Academy and Del Mar College will continue through regular meetings and progress monitoring. The educators within the cohort will actively participate in Del Mar College faculty learning communities and with their respective DMC academic advisors. The SISD T-STEM Academy Director will facilitate and provide oversight regarding the communication between all entities and cohort educators.

As detailed in the Letter of Hiring Assurances, Del Mar College Advisors will provide the necessary oversight and guidance to ensure that educators participating in the Expansion of Dual Credit Faculty Grant receive the appropriate accrediting standards to provide dual credit instruction as a Del Mar College Adjunct Faculty Member. Prior to beginning coursework, educators will submit a degree plan to Del Mar College. The appropriate advisor will review, make any necessary recommendations or adjustments, and approve the degree plan.

Each semester, the educator will submit coursework for approval. Del Mar College department chairs will monitor and advise the educator throughout the two-year process.

**4. Sustainability Plan:** Describe the sustainability plan to be implemented which can support the ongoing efforts of the CCRSM campus(es) to address capacity challenges for offering college-level courses beyond the life of the grant. How will the applicant build upon the success of this program to expand college course offerings for high school students in the future.

Sinton ISD has developed a sustainability plan designed to continue to expand the number of educators eligible to provide dual credit instruction beyond the scope of the grant. The Sinton ISD Leadership Team has identified long-range priorities through 2025 focused on providing engaging, rigorous, and student-centered dual credit coursework at Sinton High School and through the SISD T-STEM Academy. As part of our comprehensive needs assessment, district and campus administrators will evaluate the capacity of Sinton ISD educators, identify barriers to the dual credit program, and implement strategies to continue to support dual credit instruction through qualified, highly effective instructional practices.

Sinton ISD is engaging in ongoing discussions with the surrounding universities to determine possible options to expand on the current grant projections and continue to build on programmatic needs and expand dual credit faculty and course offerings. In order to financially support the continuation of the expansion of dual credit embedded faculty, Sinton ISD will pursue other grants, use state and federal funding while working with the universities to reduce or freeze the cost of the needed education. The Sinton ISD T-STEM Advisory Board will also continue to reach out to strategic partners that could monetarily support education expansion that would meet the partner's needs.

The Sinton ISD Leadership Team, in coordination with district and campus improvement planning, will collaborate to determine the most effective approach to achieve CCRSM goals. Local, state and federal funds will be leveraged to provide professional development, stipends, and incentives to support the fulfillment of program goals. Progress monitoring will occur regularly. Sinton ISD will continue to utilize the T-STEM Academy, GEAR UP, AVID, and RootED resources to support college, career, and military readiness and a college minded culture. In a continued effort to develop and support a college-minded culture, Sinton ISD expects to engage in the comprehensive needs assessment process to identify areas of need and growth based on student interest, market demand, and job opportunities to sustain dual credit enrollment and college course offerings for our high school students.



**TEA Program Requirements (Cont'd)**

**5. Recruitment and Retention:** How were teachers identified and recruited? What new practices will be put into place to support their completion of the accelerated credentialing program? What commitment has the applicant made to educators to ensure that they will be able to teach college courses upon satisfaction of meeting credentialing requirements? What commitment has the applicant asked of educators to ensure that they will continue to serve the CCRSM beyond the grant period to teach college-level courses?

The Sinton ISD Leadership Team wanted to ensure that the best candidates were identified and recruited for this opportunity. Recruitment activities began with evaluating staff credentials, current course offerings, and identification of campus needs. Once a target group was determined, meetings were offered to disperse information and determine faculty interest. Educators that showed interest completed a form detailing the degree and university they were interested in pursuing. Interviews of applicants were held to determine that the applicants fully understood the expectation of the grant, and would be able to commit to the program. All applicants required the approval of the administration prior to consideration.

The SISD Leadership Team met to collaboratively discuss the applicants and the intended DC classes. The intended courses need to be evaluated to see if he coincided with the student’s pathways. Selections were made based on the needs of our program. The SISD T-STEM Academy wants to expand various opportunities for Core 42 and credentials in a STEM focused field. Our current main pathways are Engineering, Healthcare Therapeutics, Nursing, and Mathematics.

Administrative oversight and mentoring will be provided through Sinton ISD, the university of their enrollment, and Del Mar College. The cooperation and collaboration between the universities, Del Mar College, and Sinton ISD is monumental to form a strong partnership to ensure the successful completion of the educator. It is the intention of our district to forge ahead to create a sustainability plan beyond 2023. The goal of the partnership is to help our educators grow and develop the next generation of students and leaders ready to address the pressing challenges of the 21st century.

The administration has committed to give the applicants priority in class scheduling to allow for the hiring of a substitute twice a semester designated for coursework completion. If necessary, class schedules will be adjusted to allow for the travel demands of face to face requirements.

Each applicant signed a hiring addendum with Sinton ISD and the T-STEM Academy with the following conditions:

1. Pursue a master’s degree in an area of need, identified by Sinton ISD T-STEM Academy in offering various opportunities of the Core 42, and credential in main pathways of Engineering, Healthcare Therapeutics, Nursing, Mathematics and other STEM pathways.
2. Maintain an average of 75% or 2.0, or higher in each course
3. Complete the master’s degree coursework on or before by May 30, 2023
4. Obtain employment with Del Mar College (dual credit IHE) to teach Dual Credit
5. Commit to teach dual credit courses beginning in the Fall of 2023 as needed
6. Commit to remain at Sinton ISD and teach dual credit courses two years after completion of the needed requirements. (through the summer of 2025.)
7. Agree to work with a mentoring program as needed provided through the partnership of Sinton ISD, the university enrolled in and Del Mar College.

In the Hiring Addendum, Sinton ISD has asked for a commitment of 2 years of teaching dual credit courses at the Academy. It is the aim of the district, through the mentoring program with the college and universities, for the educators to have a smooth transition from high school teacher to DC teacher, and therefore want to continue. It is also our intention to continue the expansion plan of adding additional DC courses on site as we move toward the goal of Core 42. As mentioned In the Hiring Addendum, Sinton ISD has asked for a commitment of 2 years of teaching dual credit courses at the Academy. It is the aim of the district, through the mentoring program with the college and universities, for the educators to have a smooth transition from high school teacher to DC teacher, and therefore want to continue. It is also our intention to continue the expansion plan of adding additional DC courses on site as we move toward the goal of Core 42. As mentioned above, the district is currently under discussion with various parties to see the best way to sustain the expansion plan after the grant.



**Budget Narrative**

Include a narrative describing how the proposed budget will support the needs and goals of the program, including for staffing, instructional expenses, supplies, materials, contracts, travel, etc. Describe any matches that are anticipated to support this program, either by the LEA, college partner, or educator. Describe the disbursement plan for the expenses incurred by educators participating in the program. Describe anticipated risks for this project and the adjustments which may be made over the course of the grant period.

The funds from the grant will be used to enable our educators to earn the Master’s degree or graduate certificate needed to teach dual credit. Sinton ISD will reimburse the educator for all educational expenses after the successful completion of the courses each term. The educator will submit the necessary paperwork, including grades to the assistant superintendent for approval and the refund will be issued. In order to keep the expenses low for the educators, the business office will prioritize their refund to high needs so that the educator will not be low in funds when the next term is needed to be paid. This process was explained to the educator before the commitment letter was signed.

One form of matching is that Sinton ISD allows time during the day to study. Each educator has a second-class period that they may use as needed for this program. Sinton ISD also has committed to hire a substitute teacher twice a semester to be utilized as requested by the educator. Sinton ISD will also pay for any copies of materials needed for the educators’ course work. In addition, class schedules of the applicable educators will be arranged to allow for travel to the university for face to face instruction. (ie. scheduling the last period as a conference period to allow time for travel) As an added incentive, Sinton ISD will pay the educator a \$1500 stipend after the successful completion of their master’s degree,

Arrangements have been made for a mentoring program as needed to be provided through the partnership of Sinton ISD, the university the educator is enrolled in and Del Mar College. The mentoring program will continue after the grant to ensure that the dual credit courses meet the necessary rigor.

Sinton ISD recognizes the possibility of losing the educator enrolled in the program. The educators that were chosen have committed to the grant but we know that things can change due to many factors. If this loss occurs prior to the final roster deadline, we will try to find a replacement from waiting staff members. If it happens after, then we will try to find the funds through local or federal funds to start a new educator in order to keep the needed dual credit class. There is also the chance that an educator might not make the required grade to pass the course and would be required to repeat it. This would set the program back at least a semester for that educator. This would set the program back at least a semester for that educator. in this case the educator would have to pay for the failed course. Again, we have discussed these scenarios with our applicants.

**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
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