



2021-2023 Title I, 1003 ESF-Focused Support Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 21, 2021

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), P.L. 114-95, Section 1003, School Improvement

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 21, 2021**.

Grant period from

June 3, 2021-August 31, 2023

Pre-award costs permitted from

Award Date

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Pathway 1: Pathway 1 Supplemental Pathway Attachment
3. Pathway 2: Pathway 2 Supplemental Pathway Attachment

NOTE: All applicants MUST submit an appropriate Supplemental Pathway Attachment for EACH CAMPUS on behalf of which the applicant is applying.

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 NOT permitted for this grant.

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Pathway 2	<input type="text" value="0"/>

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 2021-2023 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2021-2023 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant 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 the requirements of [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#).
- 6. The applicant assures that any Electronic Information Resources (EIR) produced as part of this agreement will comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements as specified in 1 TAC 206, 1 TAC Chapter 213, Federal Section 508 standards, and the WCAG 2.0 AA Accessibility Guidelines.
- 7. Title I served Federally Identified campuses awarded this grant will engage in the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) continuous improvement process and create a plan to be submitted to TEA that addresses the selected pathway aligned to the Essential Actions (EA) from the ESF.
- 8. The applicant ensures it will notify the Vetted Improvement Program provider of intent to apply and, if awarded, will work in good faith with the Vetted Improvement Program.
- 9. For all pathways, the applicant will budget at least the minimum amount indicated in the Budget Object Code 6200 - Profession and Contracted Services.

Statutory/Program Assurances, cont'd.

- 10. The applicant will identify a campus leader, on each awarded campus, who will be responsible for managing the grant project.
- 11. The applicant will provide access to TEA and its Vetted Improvement Partners for on-site visits to the district and campus(es) as appropriate.
- 12. The applicant will attend and participate in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing of best practices through the TEA program office.
- 13. The applicant provides assurance it will participate in all grant requirements including but not limited to an ESF Self-Assessment, and ESF Diagnostic, developing a web-based improvement plan, submission of funding and pathway progress reports.

Summary of Program

1. Describe how the LEA will support campus(es) in carrying out school support and improvement activities, including how the LEA will develop a web-based improvement plan for the eligible campuses selected for this grant.

Rio Grande City CISD recognizes that in to achieve success in any school improvement initiative the district must prioritize those campuses most in need of improvement. Without district support, these targeted support campuses and comprehensive support campus will not be able to maximize and sustain school improvement activities. In the district's past experience with school improvement at Grulla Elementary, the district aligned its improvement initiatives with Effective School Framework (ESF). One of the most critical components of the ESF is district commitments. Because the Effective School Framework is primarily based on the effectiveness of a set of district commitments that support the five levers of continuous improvement, Rio Grande City CISD realizes that the only way to achieve student success across the district is to closely examine its current practice to determine which ones align to ESF and prioritize those practices responsible for the campus' low performance affecting the accountability. Rio Grande City CISD will closely examine the current data at each of the affected campuses by utilizing the TEA's Fall 2019 Self-Assessment Data to determine areas of concern. Since the self-assessment data is aligned to the ESF, it will be easy to determine which levers are not fully developed or missing for school improvement. With each lever, there is a set of district commitments that must be in place for valid school improvement to take place. Based on the district's previous experience with the ESF process at one of the comprehensive support campuses at RGCCISD, it is essential to identify a knowledgeable DCSI who will support, communicate and prioritize the needs of said campus to the district as well as provide implementation support and side by side coaching . Successful schools with high student achievement and sustained student success rely on strategic leadership and consistent communication. The district will continue to provide opportunities for ongoing support and coaching of the campus leader. When low-performing schools, implement evidence-based school improvement web-based plans their goals and objectives aim to establish a unified vision for a district/school, assess its needs, and then outline a program to resolve all the issues attributing to low student performance. School administrators can then utilize these web-based plans to close the achievement gap, address low performance, and create equity in classrooms in a consistent and transparent method. These paper-based school improvement plans fail because only a few individuals have access to them. School improvement is a continuous process that requires constant re-evaluation, and this re-evaluation process should be on-going/evolving. COVID-19 has changed the entire trajectory of schools across the country, and it has made schools rely on technology as a mode of operation. It is only appropriate to evolve to a web-based school improvement process where campuses involve and inform all stakeholders of the goals and objectives. The district, through the technology department has empowered the learning community by implementing the Google blended classroom platform to elevate productivity. In addition, the ditrict has and will continue to provide opportunities for educators to become google certified. Because RGCCISD implemented a full web-based instructional plan this school year, the district is fully equipped to support web-based school improvement plans across the entire district.

2. Describe how the LEA will monitor schools receiving the ESF-Focused Support Grant, including how the LEA will: (a) Monitor a web-based improvement plans upon submission and during implementation, and (b) Implement additional action following unsuccessful implementation of such plan after the first year of the grant cycle.

Rio Grande City CISD is currently staffed with a compliance administrator who updates and monitors school improvement plans, and implementing web-based improvement plans would help the district ensure that their campus budgets are closely aligned to the improvement plans. RGCCISD provides data systems to track pertinent school culture data. The district will establish checkpoints very similar to those aligned with the school improvement process utilized by TEA where campuses would be required to use consistent (uniform software program) to develop and design their web-based plans. The district will assign an existing district level administrator to monitor all web-based improvement plan submissions and implementation through electronic means and collaborative meetings. Implementation is the single most important component of school improvement, and the district is committed to providing a stipend for campus level web-based school improvement program coordinator who will work closely with the district level administrator to monitor progress on a quarterly basis.

Campuses with unsuccessful implementation would be notified in writing along with a checklist of actions steps to taken before the next school year. The designated district administrator would work on a strategic plan with those individual campuses to ensure that their progress monitoring would occur with more frequency, and the district would also require a timeline with specific dates and monitoring checkpoints to ensure greater success in the second year.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies, Performance and Evaluation

1. Describe how the LEA will modify, as appropriate, practices and policies to provide operational flexibility to the awarded campus, that enables full and effective implementation of the Effective Schools Framework Essential Actions aligned web-based Improvement Plan.

Rio Grande City CISD will allow awarded campuses the opportunity to develop their school improvement web-based plans based on the unique needs of the campus. When developing their improvement plans, the goals should be closely linked to increasing student achievement. Student achievement should be the primary focus. Unfortunately, improvement plans often require other program components that divert the focus to federal and state compliance instead of student achievement. Rio Grande City CISD will develop web-based improvement plans with inbedded flexibility that will ensure ownership and by-in from those involved in the effective implementation. Based on the premise of the ESF 1.1 (District Committments 1.1) "The district provides the campus with adequate funding and sufficient control over their budget to ensure access to necessary resources for implementation of school's improvement plan and high-quality instruction to meet students' learning needs," Rio Grande City CISD will afford these five campuses the operational flexibility essential for successful student outcomes.

A well designed web-based campus improvement plan requires input from those most affected, and this entails a plan developed by teachers for teachers to simplify the improvement planning process. Creating a web-based campus improvement plan will assist awarded campuses by streamlining key steps and ensuring consistent compliance across the board. Once the district addresses the key factors that must be included in the awarded campuses' web-based improvement plans, campuses will have greater flexibility to address the ESF process with more frequency to ensure student success. The ESF school improvement process when done with fidelity by campuses and imbedded with a web-based platform helps ensure that campuses are free to align with a common vision that identifies key needs and develop strategies to impact results.

The district will assign the District Coordinator for School Improvement to the identified campuses to oversee daily operations and modify resources and/or schedules for campus support. This person will guide campus instructional leaders of their roles and responsibilities and will coordinate leadership tasks on a scheduled weekly calendar.

The campus leadership team will monitor on a weekly basis in accordance with the campus improvement plan goals and conduct daily/weekly evaluations based on formative assessment results. These campus will also continue to conduct daily PLCs to coordinate and adjust daily lesson plans. Campus instructional leaders will use established protocols and processes to conduct observations, capture trends, and track progress over time.

Formative assessment will be utilized in order to drive instruction and monitor growth. Campus instructional leaders will review disaggregated data to track and monitor the progress of all students, including students with disabilities and English learners among other students groups.

Budget Narrative

1. Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including for staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. 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 CISD is a small district where many administrators have several roles within their job title. Because the needs and goals of the program will be to implement the Texas Instructional Leadership Model Implementation which is considered a vetted improvement program, the district will use the proposed budget to support these initiatives. Based on previous ESF diagnostic and campus self-assessments, the Educational Service Center identified three areas for the campus leadership team to analyze deeper in their continuous improvement journey: 1) 5.1 Objective-driven daily lesson plans with formative assessments, 2) 1.1 Develop campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities, 3) 5.3 Data Driven Instruction.

These additional funds will be utilized to continue to support the work of the four target support campuses and comprehensive support campus to further develop the data driven instruction, objective-driven daily lesson plan, and develop campus instructional leaders. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the district's school improvement goals and objectives were paused as the school community switched to wholly focus on remote instruction demands. Currently, these school improvement campuses utilize Title I funding to support their initiatives. However, the district believes that to fully implement and support school improvement, there must be a uniform program across the district. Prior to COVID-19, the campus improvement plans were primarily based on the needs of each campus. Rio Grande City CISD feels adjusting this practice and allowing campuses to examine and re-evaluate their data to determine any necessary changes to the plan. By implementing a web-based campus improvement plan, all stakeholders will have access to view, revise and implement.

Rio Grande City CISD will use awarded funds as follows:

- 25% Texas Instructional Leadership Model Implementation: training costs
- 20% Payroll Costs: Program management, extended duty pay for training outside of work hours, substitute pay
- 20% Resources and Supply
- 20% Technology and Supplies
- 10% Administrative Costs

Budget Narrative, cont'd.

2. Describe how the LEA will align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with funds received under this grant.

Rio Grande City CISD currently has one comprehensive support elementary campus, three target support middle campuses and one high school target support which we realize could lead to serious ramification come the Spring of 2022. The district was on its way to improvement prior to the pandemic, and with all the death that plagued this small rural community, it is going to be an uphill battle to convince parents that the only way their children will get back to learning on grade level is in a structured environment where educators can teach and provide the intervention that many of these children will need. The pandemic created a change in priorities for many of the families in the surrounding school communities. Many parents lost employment, and to make matters worse, many lost two or three members of their family to COVID.

RGCCISD leaders are passionate and lead from the heart, and they have tried to provide the socioemotional support that took priority to EVERYTHING during this pandemic. The district will need to be able to support both students and families as the new year begins. The district evolved and designed innovative ways to incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) within the instructional component. The district will leverage all their current funding sources (local, state, federal, Title I) and newly anticipated ESSER funds. Currently, the district has allocated these multifaceted funding sources to implement its 2021-22 school year planning phase which includes specific district initiatives aimed at improving the overall instructional program. The district will be implementing a complete and comprehensive intervention program with a central office support team who will work closely with campus leadership teams to ensure that components of the TIL which are largely based on the ESF are carried out accordingly. The campus developed and submitted an RTI manual which specifies what interventions and strategies will be used to address the learning loss that has affected many of our students. The district has plans to utilize the ESSER funds to secure two intervention teachers at every elementary campus, and the campuses will be allowed to hire day tutors to assist with early childhood. Further, through the use of Title I funds, the campuses will continue to build on its current blended instruction model. The district recently adopted the LEXIA and Read Naturally programs to implement in the 2021-22 school year. The awarding of this grant would help to support the many school improvement strategies already in place or in the planning phases.

Region I service center will be training our district and campus teams to build on the district/campus existing evidence of ESF levers and improve on those levers and essential actions that will truly lead to sustained school improvement. The TIL program promises to deliver Face-to-Face Professional development, support and coaching. The district has experienced first hand that when the district and regional service center have aligned visions and goals for all students in the sytem, the two entities benefit.

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"/>

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