TEA
Texas Education Agency®

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 | **July 8, 2021-September 30, 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 | Riesel ISD | CDN | 161912 | Campus | Foster/Riesel Sc | ESC | 12 | DUNS | 100076355 |

| Address | 600 E Frederick | City | Riesel | ZIP | 76682 | Vendor ID | 74-6001973 |

| Primary Contact | Christina Flores | Email | cflores@rieselisd.org | Phone | 254-896-5000 |

| Secondary Contact | Brandon Cope | Email | bcope@rieselisd.org | Phone | 254-896-5000 |

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

☒ General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances

☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification

☒ Lobbying Certification

| Authorized Official Name | Brandon Cope | Title | Superintendent |

| Email | bcope@rieselisd.org | Phone | 254-896-5000 |

| Signature | | Date | April 20, 2021 |

RFA # [ ] SAS # [ ]

Shared Services Arrangements

☐ Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are NOT permitted for this grant.

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1 | 2
Pathway 2 | 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.

Riesel ISD is a single feeder school consisting of an elementary campus, PK-6, and a junior high and high school, 7-12, in a rural community. Foster Elementary has been identified as a comprehensive campus and Riesel School as a targeted campus in 2019. Since then, a tremendous amount of work has been conducted with a formal ESF self assessment and diagnostic for Foster Elementary and an ESF self assessment for Riesel School. At the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, there were many changes with the administration team including a new superintendent, principal, assistant principal and DCSI. As the team reviewed data with teachers, it was evident the district needed to start from scratch with prioritized levers 4.1: High Quality Curriculum and Alignment, 5.1 Effective Instruction, and 5.3: Data-driven Instruction.

These areas have stayed consistent through the 2020-2021 school year as we embraced the chaos, uncertainty and the gaps created by the pandemic and then later with a snowstorm. Riesel ISD has made great strides but with being a small, rural school district, there have been missed opportunities to build capacity thoroughly with teacher workload of multiple preps and providing both virtual and face to face daily instruction. In order to get a deeper understanding of all components, Riesel ISD has been given the opportunity for Teacher Leaders for the 2021-2022 school year through the Teacher Leader Grant. The district will continue to work with these new teacher leaders (two per campus) to build capacity in lesson alignment with formative assessment partnered with data driven instruction which has been the hallmark of the ESF work here at Riesel ISD. However, there will need to be a substantial amount of support specifically with content areas to impact the classroom.

Year 1:
Because Foster Elementary has different needs than the secondary campus, the district would like to add two additional teacher leaders. This will help create more buy-in for the grade levels they serve, PK-3 and 4-6, as well as a math and reading language arts teacher leader for each grade band.

The district will also partner with ESC 12 for direct planning with content specialists to supplement the learning from TIL with a three day implementation of lesson planning with formative assessment with the TIL leadership team. This would directly support the work which will be done over the summer with the teacher leaders and administration team. Teachers will be able to produce lesson plans with formative assessments before school starts while working with content specialists and the TIL leadership team. This level of support for teachers will continue throughout the school year adding in data driven instruction to inform lesson planning with a gradual release model so that teachers feel well supported while providing great planned instruction for optimal student success.

Year 2:
Riesel ISD should be finishing their work with lesson planning, and data driven instruction allowing the district leaders opportunities to develop proficiency in establishing and coaching toward effective instructional practices in every classroom. Riesel ISD would continue its partnership with ESC 12 for the Observation and Feedback module through TIL. This model will grow administrators and educators by letting them See It, Name It, and Do It in order to see a model of success, name the bite-size steps that lead to growth, and practice actually doing those steps to sharpen skills. The plan for year two would be to sustain and fully align all of the TIL packages on both of our campuses.

Riesel ISD currently uses Plan for Learning for campus and district improvement plans and opted as a pilot district to complete the ESF through the same platform for the 2020-2021 school year. This platform has been instrumental in reviewing action steps and monitoring progress throughout the year.

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.

The LEA will utilize the current DCSI to monitor the implementation at each campus as well as be a part of the implementation for support. The DCSI will schedule all trainings in the summer and school year as well as schedule substitutes. This scheduling will ensure lesson planning with formative assessment while utilizing data driven instruction is being implemented with fidelity with content specialists.

Each campus, when meeting with their campus leadership teams, will review the ESF and reflect on their essential actions as well as their action steps in order to identify areas for improvement and barriers. As mentioned above, a tremendous amount of work has been done but with all the chaos of the last two years, more progress needs to be made before moving forward. Refining the work that has already been done is necessary in order to get deeper into classroom planning and lesson procedures. It is evident that teachers have a better understanding of data and how to inform decisions but better planning with formative assessments will allow for all students to grow no matter where they are. The ability to have teachers working with content specialists will help with new ideas and an outlet to plan strategically instead of being in their own silo. Oftentimes, teachers are new to the teaching profession due to the district being small and rural. The experience and knowledge from these content specialists will not only be beneficial for our students but also thoroughly supporting the teachers.

The improvement plan will be revisited often and benchmarks will be set for three key times over the school year once the plan is finalized, submitted, and approved by the board.

If there is unsuccessful implementation after the first year of the grant cycle, the DCSI and campus leadership team will need to pinpoint the areas of why implementation was not successful. Creating new, obtainable action steps for success needs to be created. There also needs to be a timeline with commitments for all stakeholders.

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.

Time has been built into the summer for professional development for all staff. This time will be utilized to embed learning in the Lesson Alignment with Formative Assessment and Data Driven Instruction. These are all areas the district and campuses have identified in their ESF self assessment. This overview training will be an extension of what has been learned and the opportunity to digest information with a deeper understanding. Although there has not been much turnover at the elementary level, there has been significant turnover at the secondary level. With the help of teacher leaders, content specialists, and the leadership team, teachers will feel a sense of collaboration and investment of student and teacher success. The district will continue to provide support throughout the school year with time built into the calendar for planning with the content specialists, teacher leaders and leadership team as this is a priority in order for effective instructional practices to be occurring in every classroom, bell to bell.

The level of dedicated support for this initiative is built in a gradual release model for the teams in order to build capacity for all stakeholders. Once a routine is developed, planning with content specialists will move to every six weeks starting in the second semester with weekly support from the campus TIL leadership team. This will allow teachers to practice what they have learned with the support of the leadership team and teacher leaders for sustainability, but also give the necessary support as teachers hone in on TEKS not quite mastered.

In year two, Riesel ISD should be finishing their work with lesson planning, and data driven instruction allowing the district leaders opportunities to develop proficiency in establishing and coaching toward effective instructional practices in every classroom while continuing the routines established the previous year. Riesel ISD would continue its partnership with ESC 12 for the Observation and Feedback module through TIL. This model will grow administrators and educators by letting them See It, Name It, and Do It in order to see a model of success, name the bite-size steps that lead to growth, and physically practice doing those steps to sharpen skills. The plan for year two would be to sustain and fully align all of the TIL packages on both of our campuses.

The campus leadership will review the ESF actions steps for essential actions, paying close attention to any and all barriers. This will help enable the team to have an action plan in order not to find themselves in any pitfalls. More formal benchmarks will be reviewed to mark the work which is happening at the beginning, middle and the end of the year to reflect progress. If a campus is struggling, the DCSI is there to support and problem solve with the team. All progress will be monitored through the web-based Improvement Plan and will look different at each campus according to the needs, accomplishments, and barriers.

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.

Each campus is asking for $99,000. Each campus will utilize the ESC Region 12 in the first year to supplement the Teacher Leadership Cycle 2 grant with embedded support for all teachers (not just the two on each campus) with content specialists. This will allow the learning through the Teacher Leadership in TIL to expand to every classroom with fluidity in a more effective manner. Implementing lesson alignment with formative assessments along with data driven instruction will allow the entire district to speak the same language and align with the priorities of each campus. This also will begin the work for better effective instruction with specific dialogue for each individual teacher with their own specific needs. Working with the ESC Region 12, the cost for instructional specialists embedded throughout the school year along with professional development in the summer would be the majority of the cost for this grant. In year 2, Riesel ISD would continue its partnership with ESC 12 for the Observation and Feedback module through TIL. This model will grow administrators and educators by letting them See It, Name It, and Do It in order to see a model of success, name the bite-size steps that lead to growth, and practice these steps to sharpen skills. The plan for year two would be to sustain and fully align all of the TIL packages on both of our campuses.

In payroll costs, the campuses would allocate some funds towards the DCSI as the campus grant project contact along with subs and teacher stipends. Foster Elementary has engaged in the ESF self assessment and diagnostic and the need for two additional teacher leaders would be beneficial within the school culture in order to have two reading teacher leaders, one for PK-3 and one for the 4-6. The same would occur for math. This would allow for a teacher leader on campus to help specifically with an teacher's individual needs between the time an instructional specialist or a campus principal is unable to get to them leading in fostering an even more collaborative culture. The second year, the district would review teacher leader efficacy with the ability to continue this type of support. For Riesel School, there is a need for alignment within content areas. Extra duty pay will be added in to work specifically on lesson alignment and effective instruction with resources within each content area.

One of the most important areas to consider are instructional materials directly aligned to high quality curriculum and effective instruction. Each campus will allow resources to be purchased as teachers work with the content specialists to meet the needs of all learners.

Lastly, the district is budgeting $2000 for each campus for travel expenses for TEA required events, VIP required events, and district directed trips to support Effective Schools Framework.

There are funds available such as the Instructional Materials Allotment along with the general budget to cover the cost of our current curriculum, TEKS Resource System. Other resources have also been purchased and continue to renew through these same sources. Currently, we offer a mentor program for new teachers to the district without a stipend. The use of teacher leaders for this next year will be an added layer of support for both the mentor and mentee teachers.

Throughout the grant, the leadership teams will continue to evaluate any resources or money spent to determine their efficacy. At that point, the district will look at reallocating funds and revenue sources. This process has been revised several times over the last year and will continue to be an area the district examines as we can close the budget codes to pandemic related items from this school year and reallocate in other ways. This source of funding for these two years will kick start the learning and resources that the district will be able to sustain.

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.

From the moment both campuses conducted their initial ESF self assessment, it was apparent the areas that the district needed to prioritize. With that in mind, the new administration team worked tirelessly on systems to revamp lesson plans, using data to inform instruction, and understanding components of a high quality curriculum. It is important to note, the district did not have any of these systems or resources in place and the learning had to start from the basics. The district and campuses were feeling a sense of accomplishment headed into the benchmark season when the pandemic hit. The last two years, the district has had its challenges. The learning is not completed and the district is still committed to these goals, and more importantly, building capacity within all teachers to reach the needs of all learners.

Every purchase is reviewed extensively with the teachers and campus principals with the DCSI. This might be a bit overkill but understanding and aligning the purchases with our priorities is necessary. The district aims to provide resources which are of high caliber and most of the time come recommended from an instructional specialist at the service center.

Without the priority of data driven instruction and daily lesson plans, a platform such as Eduphoria would not have been purchased. Teachers are now able to add their resources and document instructional decisions daily as well as receive feedback from administrators. Housed within the same platform, data is at their fingertips in order to group students for small group instruction as well as review most missed concepts. After a year of building capacity within the system, teachers are now able to give online tests which was not possible a year ago which aligns to the state's initiative of online testing. Instances like this help the district build capacity and awareness of the priorities aligned to the ESF as well as strengthening campus wide systems. In future years, the district would like to add on Lead4ward data reports within this platform which will be even more beneficial to teachers and administrators.

Riesel ISD is committed to making fundamental changes in order to ensure an excellent education experience for our students. The district will continue to allocate its resources to high quality curriculum, effective instructional practices, and data driven instruction. Although local resources are limited, it will be necessary in order to catch up from a long period of not supporting the instructional program.

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		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

CDN 161912   Vendor ID 74-6001973   Amendment #

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.

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Amended Section	Reason for Amendment