



2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 13, 2022

NOGA ID [Redacted]

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 40, 87th Texas Legislature**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **competitivegrants@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 13, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **February 9, 2023 to April 30, 2025**

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

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: Pathway Selection and Participation

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization **Tyler Independent School District** CDN **212905** Campus **-** ESC **7** DUNS [Redacted]

Address **1319 Earl Campbell Parkway** City **Tyler** ZIP **75701** Vendor ID **1756002675**

Primary Contact **Cassandra Chapa** Email **cassandra.chapa@tylerisd.org** Phone **903-262-1207**

Secondary Contact **Ronald Jones** Email **ronald.jones@tylerisd.org** Phone **903-262-1004**

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 **Cassandra Chapa** Title **Chief of School Leadership**

Email **cassandra.chapa@tylerisd.org** Phone **903-262-1207**

Signature  Date **10/12/2022**

Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are permitted for this grant. Check the box below if applying as a 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 upon request.

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 2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

PATHWAY 1:

- 5. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for Education & Training teachers that receive a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. These participating teachers must commit with the MOU to, at minimum, teach the Education and Training courses and, if applicable, establish and/or grow a chapter of a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 6. The MOUs for Education and Training teachers must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 7. If implementing dual credit Education and Training courses, the LEA must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for the partnering IHE by May 31, 2023. This MOU should include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 8. The LEA will retain documentation locally of each letter of commitment or MOU and submit to TEA upon request.
- 9. The LEA assures that each high school campus within the participating LEA will implement at least the Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both courses or either course. *Please see example on page 9 of the Program Guidelines.
- 10. To receive a stipend for teaching dual credit, the LEA assures the Education and Training teacher holds a master's degree in an education-related field and be the teacher of record for at least one dual credit course section in 2023-2024 and two dual credit course sections in 2024-2025 within the Education and Training course sequence.
- 11. All LEA high schools must establish and/or grow a chapter of a CTSO that supports the Education and Training career cluster through either the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) or Family, Career and Community Leads of America (FCCLA) and participate in at least one competitive event per year.
- 12. The LEA assures that all LEA high schools will participate in an initial TEA-led Teacher Institute in Summer 2023. Education and Training teacher stipend recipients are required to attend the entirety of the Institute. Principals, counselors, and LEA grant managers are only required to attend the first day. Participants who attended any previous Grow Your Own Summer Institute must still attend. IHE/EPP partners and student ambassador attendance is optional but recommended.
- 13. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will pilot the TEA Education and Training curriculum if they are not currently using a high-quality Education and Training curriculum.
- 14. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will receive TEA implementation supports and coaching by participating in online collaborative communities to be scheduled by TEA, not to exceed 6 hours per semester.
- 15. The LEA assures that Education and Training teacher stipend recipients will participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the Education and Training programming.

Statutory/Program Assurances Cont'd

- 16. LEA grant managers shall support Practicum in Education and Training implementation, including but not limited to student scheduling, identifying field sites and field site teachers, and coordinating student transportation to field sites.
- 17. LEAs shall develop a marketing and recruitment plan to grow enrollment in high school Education and Training courses. Upon request by TEA, all LEA high schools will submit their plan for marketing and student recruitment.
- 18. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA. If requested, LEAs must participate in focus groups and surveys to give input on the Education and Training programming.
- 19. All grant-funded teachers must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

PATHWAY 2:

- 20. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for each candidate that receives a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. All candidate stipend recipients must commit with a MOU, at minimum, to remain at the LEA for an agreed upon length of time in a full-time teaching role as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 21. The MOUs for candidates must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 22. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from each accredited EPP (see Eligible Applicants section of the Program Guidelines) that will partner with the LEA to award teacher certifications to all candidates (those earning a bachelor's degree and teacher certification and certification-only candidates) by May 31, 2023.
- 23. The MOUs for EPPs must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 24. The LEA will retain all MOU documentation locally and submit to TEA upon request.
- 25. LEAs must allow reasonable paid release time and schedule flexibility, as determined by the LEA, for candidates to complete their degree and certification course requirements while engaged in the grant program.
- 26. All certification-only candidates within a LEA will be certified by the same partner EPP as a cohort managed collaboratively by the LEA and EPP.
- 27. The LEA assures that candidate stipend recipients participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the grant programming.
- 28. If positions are available that can be appropriately filled in alignment with candidates' certification area(s), LEAs must commit to hiring/retaining candidates upon successful completion of their teacher certification to serve as a teacher of record in the LEA by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.
- 29. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA.
- 30. The names of all grant-funded teachers and/or candidates must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

ALL PATHWAYS:

- 31. If a teacher or candidate is unable to continue with the grant program, the LEA must file an application amendment and provide TEA with an update of the new amount and type of stipend recipient(s) within 30 days of notification.
- 32. LEAs must file application amendments within seven days of a request from TEA.

Program Description

Describe how the Grow Your Own program will be implemented with grant funds and how the grant will address the LEA's teacher pipeline needs.

Tyler ISD is the third largest employer in Smith County and as such we are always looking to build human capital and existing talent. The purpose of participating in GYO is to remove the financial barriers for our current employees who can make an even stronger impact with our students.

Our district makes efforts to find innovative ways to recruit and sustain a talent pipeline, which includes partnerships with University of Texas - Tyler, Texas A&M Commerce, and being a District of Innovation. However, we have found that many of our most loyal employees who have built strong relationships with students and families are missing an opportunity to fulfill their potential because they are lacking the necessary teaching credentials. This grant would help us identify diverse talent existin in our district to fill hard to hire positions, including bilingual education and special education.

Tyler ISD received the Cohort 5 TCLAS GYO grant. The response to this opportunity was overwhelming. Staff members were grateful for an opportunity to further their personal goals without the fear of financial barriers. Through the TCLAS grant we were able to identify 6 candidates with various educational backgrounds and support them in their goals of becoming a classroom teacher. Of these candidates 3 of them have already furthered their journey and are supporting classrooms with a more instructional focus. Quarterly the candidates meet as a cohort to share personal success strategies in their career journey as well as participate in Teach Like a Champion techniques to prepare them for leading a classroom. We hope to continue this success with a second cohort, where they can learn from their predecessors and build a strong network of support for our future leaders.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for key personnel to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include each of the following individuals (when applicable) and a description of each role: 1. The LEA's grant manager; 2. LEA leaders involved in program implementation; 3. The campus principals for participating Education and Training high schools; 4. the college/career counselors for participating Education and Training high schools; 5. Education and Training teachers; 6. Education and Training field site teachers for Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses; 7. Any other personnel responsible for implementing the grant.

Title and Responsibilities of Position

Executive Director of Human Resources - Support with identifying qualifying candidates and leading application review committee.

Chief of School Leadership - Grant manager and point person for stipend recipients.

Federal & State Grant Coordinator - Support the grant manager through budget management and a liason to financial services.

Human Resources Recruitment Specialists - Support with identifying quality candidates, support chosen candidates during the certification process, and supporting canidates with interview opportunities.

Human Resources Certification Officers: Support candidates with compliance timelines and necessary paperwork for the certification process.

Goals and Objectives

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed Grow Your Own program. Describe the talent management strategy, (including the LEA's approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers) related to those goals/objectives.

The goal of the GYO program is to identify talented individuals who display the will and readiness to complete the educator preparation program and contribute to successful student outcomes in Tyler ISD. Our strategy is to align with our communications department to clearly outline the qualifications for eligibility to campus and department leaders. From there a selective application process including a principal recommendation and personal mission statement will be reviewed by a selection committee; including the human resource department and school leadership representatives. The committee will identify candidates, ensure they are eligible to participate, and display characteristics that align with the district mission. Interviews will be conducted if needed to ensure qualifications or establish any rubric ties.

Once selected, candidates will attend an orientation to ensure they will commit to the process. The candidates will then receive coaching sessions with district staff to plan out their respective timelines and help with their professional growth. Candidates will receive check-ins utilizing the Teach Like a Champion resources provided through TEA Effective School Framework. Our district utilizes the local ESC Region 07 to provide Texas Instructional Leadership support to all campuses. Explicit coaching with TLAC will support candidates with their campus goals and their personal professional goals. Candidates will also attend meetings to meet with previous grant recipients and build a support network.

Our communications and human resources departments work closely with each other to review data and social media analytics to build robust recruitment and retention campaigns. Capitalizing on this GYO opportunity will allow us to demonstrate trust and the belief we put in our current employees to take them to the next level in their professional journey. This will help build and maintain positive organizational culture to retain and recruit employees.

Progress Monitoring and Evaluation Measures

Describe how the performance measures identified for this program are consistent with the purpose of the program and related to teacher pipeline needs. Include the tools and processes used to measure performance and the extent to which the major goals and objectives of the grant are met.

The following will be used as performance measures for the success of the GYO program 1) candidate success rate of completion of the program, 2) decrease in campus vacancies, 3) candidate retention beyond elicited years required, and 4) annual candidate surveys.

These tools align with the program goals by focusing on stability and sustainability of retaining teachers. By monitoring candidate's progress in the program we can support them in the likelihood of completing their certification process. By utilizing surveys we can gather data regarding the strengths and improvements needed to make our supports more effective. Lastly tracking teacher vacancies beyond the timeline of the program will help build organizational culture and retention in order to close demographic gaps and decrease shortages in possible hard to staff campuses or hard to staff speciality areas.

Budget Narrative

Referencing the applicant's budget workbook and the Application Funding section of the Program Guidelines, outline the proposed budget and amounts for allowable uses of grant program funding. This should also match the Pathway Selection and Participation section of this application.

For Pathway 2 we have the following proposed budget:

Total Requested

Stipend for candidates needing to complete thier bachelors degree and alternative certification: 19,000 X 3 total candidates

Stipend for candidates needing alternative certification only: 8,000 X 3 total candidates

Total requested: 81,000

Actual Expenditures

Stipend for candidates needing to complete thier bachelors degree and alternative certification: 16,200 X 3 total candidates

Stipend for candidates needing alternative certification only: 8,100 X 3 total candidates

Max Administrative/Indirect Costs: 8,100

Total requested: 81,000

Sustainability Plan

Describe the sustainability plan for the Grow Your Own Program beyond the timeline of grant funding. The plan should address how a high-quality program will be maintained, including clear action steps beginning in the first year of grant funding and a demonstrated ability to leverage and coordinate resources to increase the LEA's capacity to strengthen the local educator pipeline and make progress on sustainability. This may include the use of other local, state, and/or federal resources. Consider also how the Grow Your Own program may be integrated into, be supported by, and provide support for existing LEA or EPP initiatives and/or priorities.

GYO Cycle 6 would be an opportunity to sustain and leverage the success from TCLAS Cycle 5. Our plan is to utilize and expand on our current structure with the GYO candidates. This includes consistent communication with the grant manager, quarterly in person meetings as a cohort to share personal success strategies in their career journey, and instructional training with Teach Like a Champion techniques to prepare them for leading a classroom. We hope to continue building this network with another cohort, where they can learn from their predecessors to build a strong network of support and future leaders.

Success with this grant would help create a design for a more sustainable program with potential EPPs that are relatively local such as University of Texas at Tyler or Texas A&M - Commerce, which is a current partner for our Leadership Pipeline. Furthermore, learning from this process would help us collect data on the likelihood of creating our own certification program to meet the needs of our district consistently. Our district currently is currently supported with financial endowments from, but not limited to the Tyler ISD Grant Foundation and TRANE technologies. By featuring the success of this program we could begin to show the importance of teacher recruitment from within our organization and the need to remove financial barriers for our current employees to impact classrooms and student achievement.

Stipend Recipient Recruitment

Describe the plan to recruit Education and Training teachers within Pathway 1 and/or candidates within Pathway 2 who are interested and eligible in participating in the program and receiving stipends. The plan must include strategies to equitably recruit diverse individuals and identify individuals with potential criteria including: **A. Pathway 1:** For Education and Training teachers, a demonstrated track record of success and/or achievement, involvement in student organizations and/or school activities, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable). **B. Pathway 2:** For candidates, a desire and commitment to teach long term in the LEA and/or region, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable).

If and once awarded the GYO opportunity for Pathway 2 the recruitment plan consists of informing campus principals of the opportunity with a video about the program's purpose and our district recruitment and retention goals. From there we would set up a district tour of Q and A sessions for potential candidates at each campus. At these sessions we would break down the application process and timelines for completion. The overall purpose of these meetings is to bring down any apprehension for candidates on submitting an application to ensure a wide pool of diverse individuals.

Our goal is to ensure we have applicants showing a desire to teach at both the elementary and secondary levels as well as a variety of core content areas and speciality areas. The applicants will submit a personal statement to demonstrate their desire and commitment. They will submit a principal/supervisor recommendation to demonstrate their strong evaluation ratings and relationships with students.

Stipend Recipient Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Referencing the Program-Specific Assurances in the Program Guidelines, describe the MOUs in which: **A. Pathway 1:** Education and Training teacher stipend recipients agree to meet grant requirements and any other terms set by the LEA; **B. Pathway 1:** IHE that will partner with the LEA(s) to implement dual credit Education and Training courses and commit to supporting the Education and Training teachers and course implementation (if applicable); **C. Pathway 2:** Candidate stipend recipients commit to remain in the LEA for an agreed upon length of time as a condition of receiving the stipend and if a position is available, the LEA commits to hiring/retaining candidates with satisfactory program completion/job performance; **D. Pathway 2:** Accredited EPPs that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to candidates and commit to supporting candidates with completion of their teacher certification and supporting LEA(s) with implementation of the grant program.

For pathway 2, the memorandum of understanding (MOU) would include and require the candidates complete the following for Part C listed above:

1. Abide by a graduation plan and or/alternative certification plan developed through the chosen EPP.
2. Attain a Texas Educator Certification on or before August 2025;
3. Receive grant money with the following conditions: grant money will be prepaid as a scholarship twice a year per district financial guidelines. Funds are to cover tuition, fees, books, and other costs incurred while obtaining a bachelor's degree and/or certification. Scholarship amount is dependent on chosen path to certification.
4. Fulfill all requirements of the TEA/Tyler ISD Grow Your Own Grant.
5. Accept all interview requests from Tyler ISD in the certification area up to an offer of employment.
6. Agree not to enter into a contract with another Texas or out of state district or school;
7. Teach full time in the area of certification for Tyler ISD for 3 consecutive years unless otherwise approved by the GYO Committee.
8. Receive board approval for employment as a teacher.

The MOU would include language to inform candidates that modifications may be needed as policies are often updated by TEA and at the district level.

The MOU would include and require the EPPs to commit and support with the following for Part D listed above:

1. Establishment of the partnership with the EPP.
2. Purpose and criteria of the program to desting a scholarship program for employees who pursue undergraduate degrees and teacher certification, respectively. This includes the candidate criteria, which is listed previously, as well as the tuituion assistance provided by the grant.
3. Scope of Agreement and Limitations of Authority: This would lay out the duties of the EPP and the duties of Tyler ISD to meet the program guidelines.
4. Term of the agreement, including timelines for the Grant program.
5. Rights of Revocation and dispute resolutions.
6. Miscellaneous Provisions that will be included based on the partnership with the particular EPP.

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.

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Amended Section

Reason for Amendment