



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.

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?

Mission CISD is a district of 15,581 students that has four CCRSM schools in its three high schools. The identification of the needs derives from the unique natures of each one. Mission High School is the largest campus and houses two school-within-a-school CCRSMs. The Mission High Eagle T-STEM Academy has been in existence since 2014-2015 and serves up to 175 students per cohort. This campus offers degrees in the areas of computer science, engineering, and health science. There is a significant need for math instructors due to the additional math coursework as part of the engineering degree plan. The recent addition of an associate degree in computer science pushes one of the dual-credit math instructors into computer science. The second is the Mission Career Tech Early College, which began in 2015-2016, serving up to 400 students. Its mission is CTE-focused, offering associate degrees in precision manufacturing technology, welding, business management, criminal justice, and teaching. With the addition of the OBMs, the number of core content area sections required for this campus are growing as students earn their degrees. Mission Collegiate High School is an almost wall-to-wall Early College High School that has been in existence since the 2012-2013 school year. Its role is to provide a rigorous college-going experience to its students with ample additional supports to ensure each student can earn an Associate of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. Over the years, the campus has lost its credentialed dual-credit faculty to other opportunities, resulting in the campus employing just two MCISD teachers teaching six total sections out of thirty-one. The campus is in need of adjunct professors to cover every content area. The newest CCRSM is the Veterans Memorial Early College High School, now serving its second cohort of students. This SWS model serves up to 125 students per cohort. Over the next two years, VMECHS will max out at 500 students. This campus offers an Associate of Applied Science in Architectural and Engineering Design, an Associate of Arts in Business Administration, and an Associate of Criminal Justice. Next year, the first cohort of students will enter their junior year, and it is during that year where there is an increased need for adjunct professors. During Fall 2021, VMHS had thirteen sections taught by MCISD adjunct professors out of twenty-two. However, only three MCISD adjunct professors taught the thirteen sections.

The district fulfills its vision to "inspire all students to be equipped to excel in the college and career of their choice, dominate 21st century skills in leadership, knowledge, language, and technology to compete in a global economy and serve as successful citizens in their community" by never resting on its laurels. The expansion of the CCRSMs across the district has led to thirteen different Associate Degree plans, requiring 106 different courses. The strong partnership with South Texas College creates the environment for innovation and success for all Mission CISD students. Collaboration between MCISD and STC staff constructed each of the thirteen different plans so that each one meets the needs of not only the CCRSM campus, but each of the students.

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?

MCISD will be collaborating with The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley to provide graduate-level instruction. During a previous grant, MCISD and UT-RGV had partnered to credential dual-credit faculty in order to provide instructors for South Texas College courses.

The district has already vetted letters of commitment to ensure that all of the staff interested in teaching dual-credit are seeking degrees that will enable them to teach courses that are part of the thirteen different crosswalks at the CCRSM campuses. With the grant award announcement on May 27, each of the teachers who submitted a letter of commitment will participate in a session that will provide information on admittance to UT-RGV graduate programs as well as ensuring that degree plans will meet the requirements set forth by South Texas College. The district will coordinate with UT-RGV on the session so that any barriers or challenges to being ready on day one of Fall 2021 are removed.

UT-RGV is creating a two-year program roadmap for the teachers that is shared with both the teachers and the district. After Fall 2021, the university will provide academic advisement ensuring that teachers earn their degrees prior to the June 2023 deadline. Additionally, the district will provide support through progress monitoring of each teacher and communicate with UT-RGV should challenges occur as each teacher earns his or her degree.

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?

South Texas College will be the dual-credit provider who will be hiring the applicants. Because MCISD CCRSM models have been working in partnership with South Texas College since 2012-2013, there exists multiple methods of communication for each of the applicants. The first line of communication is through the Coordinator for Dual-Credit Pathways assigned to each of the CCRSM campuses. In the event the assigned coordinator is unavailable, one of the others has always been able to assist to any teacher, counselor, or administrator on the campus. These coordinators act as liaisons between MCISD and the different department chairs at the college. If there is an additional need for support, the Dean for Dual Credit Programs and School District Partnerships is always available.

STC provides the Handbook of Faculty Credential Requirements as on its website at <https://academicaffairs.southtexascollege.edu/pdf/handbook-of-credential-requirements.pdf>. This document details the faculty requirements for each of the courses taught through STC. UT-RGV has a copy of this same document so that the degree plans for each of the applicants will ensure that he or she can teach dual-credit coursework.

The Memorandums of Understanding between STC and MCISD delineates the roles and responsibilities of the dual-credit provider: "The College will provide an instructor who meets the College's academic requirements for that course..." MCISD "is encouraged to hire academic Master's credentialed faculty for all high school credit only courses and future college courses to support sustainability..." The letter of hiring assurances from STC affirms that STC supports the hiring of credentialed dual-credit faculty: "South Texas College assures that Mission ISD teachers who meet the criteria may be considered for employment by the college to teach Dual Credit courses..."

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.

The MOU between STC and MCISD continues to support the sustainability of the program. For students who enrolled in courses within their degree plan, tuition is waived. For the district to maximize this agreement, the district has to provide credentialed teachers to act as adjunct professors. Sections taught by MCISD teachers cost the district nothing except for a stipend of \$350.00 per section paid to those teachers. If the district cannot provide a credentialed teacher, then the college provides the professor, but the district has to pay the cost for that professor. That cost typically ranges from \$3,200 to \$6,800 per section. Under the best-case scenario, it costs ten times as much for each section when the campus cannot provide a credentialed instructor. Another way that the college offers the district a way to sustain the program is through the textbook purchase: "College-approved textbooks purchased by the School District as required for a college course are allowed to be used for four (4) years."

MCISD is growing its CCRSM programs, with each one near the maximum number of students accepted into its cohort. With the increased number of credentialed teacher from whence to pull, it provides the district flexibility to look at expansion, including the P-TECH model, increasing the number of students within the existing CCRSM campuses, and adding new associate degrees for the students. Credentialed MCISD teachers teaching dual-credit sections provide another additional benefit. A traditional college professor is only present two or three days a week for their students. After that, it is up to the student to reach to the professor during his or her office hours. With high school students' involvement in extracurricular activities, this is sometimes a challenge. Credentialed MCISD teachers would have additional time to work with their students because of their assignment to the courses for the full five days of the week. This gives students additional learning opportunities with their professors, increasing the chance for success in college coursework. Over time, the ability to sustain and grow dual-credit programs comes down to the individual student successes within that program. Increasing the number of credentialed MCISD teachers accomplishes this goal.

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 district reached out to both the high school and junior high campus principals to enlist their aid with recruiting teachers that they felt has the skills to complete the coursework to teach dual-credit courses. The decision was made to include junior high principals as part of the decision making process to ensure the maximum number of applicants. Junior high teachers who earn the credentials could then move to a high school CCRSM campus or continue to work at their junior high campuses and teach individual courses on the CCRSM campus. Once the district committee received the pool of applicants, they were screened based upon the degree that they were seeking and looking at the needs of the CCRSM campus. That need was not just based upon current need but upon growth projections and potential future expansions of the CCRSM programs being offered.

This group of teachers will be a cohort, working together towards the completion of their degrees. The district will have sessions for the cohorts twice a semester so that these teachers can collaborate on their experiences in their dual-credit programs and ways their learning influences the district in a positive way. This talent pool provides a unique perspective: future dual-credit teachers currently teaching non-dual credit students. That perspective will be invaluable in constructing systems to ensure that students who might not be looking at dual-credit are recruited, enrolled, and supported as they work towards an associate degree.

Each of the applicants has submitted their commitment letter prior to the submission of this grant and made aware of the expectation that they would be completing their programs of student before June 2023. Each form has the signature of the teacher's principal, so he or she would be aware that these teachers are working towards master's degrees. The district will provide updates to the campuses on the potential dual-credit instructors as they approach the June 2023 deadline so that appropriate adjustments are made to staffing and master scheduling.

After the announcement of the grant award, each teacher will sign an additional letter of commitment where he or she agrees to teach dual-credit coursework for four years after the completion of the program. It is the intent of the district to provide teachers in this cohort professional development on teacher leadership during the twice-a-semester meetings. The district has committed to an end-in-mind design plan for its curriculum and vertical alignment. It is vital that dual-credit teachers act as teacher leaders because they will experience the rigor of college coursework firsthand. That rigor must permeate all levels of the district and is the path to achieving the vision that the district sets for all of its students.

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.

By increasing the number of dual-credit faculty members on the campuses that contain the CCRSM, the total cost for sustaining and growing the program will be reduced significantly. The MOU with South Texas College does not charge tuition for students who are taking coursework leading to an Associate Degree. However, in the case where STC provides the instructor, the district must pay the cost of the instructor, which ranges from \$3,200 to \$6,800. When MCISD provides the adjunct professor, the cost is only the \$350 per section stipend paid by the district to the teacher. With the anticipated growth of the program, the savings to the district is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. These savings provide the district the flexibility to continue its expansion of dual-credit opportunities.

The average cost at UT-RGV for a teacher to get a Master's Degree is \$35,431. That cost takes into account tuition, fees, and books. In the event that a teacher expends all of the \$25,000, the district will reimburse the teacher the cost for tuition as long as the teacher earns B or better for the coursework and it is part of the approved degree plan. The educator will pay any remaining costs after that.

Not every teacher has the monetary resources to pay the costs for tuition, fees, in books, even if the district reimburses them. With that in mind, the district will enter into an agreement with UT-RGV to have the tuition and fees invoiced to the district. The district will purchase any textbooks. It is the goal of the district to allow the teachers to concentrate solely on their coursework and not worry about how the expenses are paid. The district will monitor total cost amounts by CCRSM and teachers so that those who are close to the maximum grant expenditures are notified with ample time to make any necessary adjustments.

The greatest risk to this project are teachers choosing not to complete the project or not earning high enough marks to continue with the program. This is why the district will have the twice-per-semester professional development sessions to mitigate those risks.

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