



**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](mailto: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):

N/A

**Applicant Information**

Organization Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success CDN 101806 Campus 001 ESC 4 DUNS 96814150

Address 2950 Broadway City Houston ZIP 77017 Vendor ID 1760377101

Primary Contact George Flores Email george.flores@tejanocenter.org Phone 713-640-3700

Secondary Contact Angie Miranda Email angle.miranda@tejanocenter.org Phone 713-640-3700

**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 Adriana Tamez

Title Superintendent

Email adriana.tamez@tejanocenter.org

Phone 713-640-3700

Signature

Date April 20, 2021

RFA #

SAS #





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**Applicant Information**

Organization  CDN  Campus  ESC  DUNS

Address  City  ZIP  Vendor ID

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

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 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

0

Pathway 2

1

**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.

RFA #

SAS #



**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.

The LEA will support the campus by developing a web-based improvement plan that will require all district and campus staff to be active participants in the process. The structure of support will be redirected to the campus and alignment and accountability measures will be monitored for effectiveness and additional support. The web-based plan will be developed in alignment with the ESF framework for school improvement and in collaboration with the identified VIP, campus leaders, lead teachers, and the district Instructional Team composed of Chief Academic Officer (CAO), Bilingual Director (BD), Special Education Manager (SPED) and Teacher Development Specialist (TDS). The roles and responsibilities of the taskforce will be clearly articulated to ensure timelines are met and strategies and activities are designed to improve learning outcomes.

Specifically, the district School Improvement Officer (SIO) will lead the school improvement process. A task force will be identified to engage in the web-based improvement plan development that will include: 1) thorough data triangulation analysis; 2) root cause analysis to identify emerging factors and underlying issues; analysis of district practices that need to improve to meet the needs of the campus; and 3) Instructional Learning Walks to identify other data such as instructional strategies, curriculum alignment, and behaviors with the intent of identifying skills that need to be refined.

After gathering data and identifying causal factors, the SIO will convene the taskforce to engage in the identification of leadership practices that are ESF aligned and will lead the campus to meet targets. Effective instructional practices will be identified such as curriculum and TEKS analysis that will allow teachers to teach at the rigor of TEKS. The ability to develop and align assessments will be supported by the district Teacher Development Specialist (TDS) and Bilingual Director. The district TDS will align all Professional Development (PD) opportunities to ensure teachers are strengthening their teaching and learning skills. Ongoing PD that focuses on effective strategies, data analysis and RTI processes will be provided during pre-service, and support from leadership teams and colleagues will be provided through quality observation and feedback protocols.

Other departments such as Finance, Human Resources (HR) and communication will align their work to ensure: 1) budget is allocated for school improvement efforts and grant expenditures meet the guidelines; 2) HR will support by identifying quality certified teachers that will support EL and SPED since these are the targeted areas. Effective onboarding practices will be in place to ensure teachers feel supported. Communication to the community and other stakeholders will be necessary to gather support and be transparent about the current condition of schools and engage them in the process.

A continuous review process will be scheduled to assess the ESF district commitments in the improvement process and ensure essential actions are supporting teaching and learning. This process will involve reviews that assess commitments, quality of implementation, roadblocks, and next steps. Although specific strategies and actions are stated in the plan, flexibility may be needed to refine practices.

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 engage in monitoring systems that align to the ESF framework and are clearly communicated through rubrics. The rubric will include essential actions, and these will be specific regarding what these practices will look like at ECHS. The rubrics will reduce ambiguity and will focus the improvement work on developing leadership capacity as evidenced by teacher effective first instruction, assessment, and subsequent planning for differentiated instruction for EL and SPED populations.

The current condition of teaching and learning at ECHS has prompted the LEA to prioritize the campus and therefore weekly check-ins with the leadership will be in place to discuss data, observations and establish new action steps. Comprehensive check-ins will occur quarterly and these will involve all district staff that have contributed to supporting teaching and learning. Weekly and quarterly meetings will be scheduled in the Outlook Calendar and specific agendas will be included in the calendar invites to give the campus leaders time to prepare for the check in. Items such as teacher and leadership observations protocols, student achievement data such as do-nows, exit tickets, assessments, student artifacts, pacing calendars and others. The Data Management for Assessment and Curriculum (DMAC) reports will be reviewed as well as teacher appraisals. All these documents are available for review before the meeting since access will be granted to district staff monitoring the campus. Specifically, the Campus Improvement Officer, Chief Academic Officer and Superintendent will have access.

These weekly and quarterly check-ins will provide an opportunity to conduct direct coaching as part of the continuous principal supervision process. An excel document documenting these conversations will be developed and be visible to the staff involved. The document will include dates, observation notes aligned to the rubric, next steps, and timeline for next check in. A tight monitoring cycle and consistent actionable items will ensure success is measured in every stage to ensure timely coaching and feedback.

It is understood that at times some targets will not be met. Data dives to review progress in target areas will be necessary to identify the factors that may have prevented the campus to meet a specific target. In addition, conducting an Instructional Round protocol visit including the VIP support staff will help identify additional root causes that are interfering with meeting targets. After this instructional round, the VIP along with campus and district leadership team can outline corrective additional strategies including monitoring systems to ensure effective implementation and assessment of strategies.



**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.

The LEA will collaborate with the campus leadership team to discuss modifications that will allow operational flexibility in current practices and policies. This process will be necessary to effectively engage in the ESF framework for school improvement. After analyzing documents such as the Self-assessment, data trends, policies, handbooks and gathering qualitative data through interviews; the team will identify what practices may be interfering with teaching and learning. These effective practices will be identified and the LEA will address through proper channels such as policy changes approved by the Superintendent and Board of Education when needed. In essence, the LEA will ensure flexibility, alignment and clarity in strategies and activities that involve the following:

Consistently reviewing practices that interfere with teaching and learning. This will also trigger an immediate response to change or modify those practices in order to engage in high level leadership action steps to improve teaching and learning.

Examining leadership practices and engaging in a continuous cycle of observation and feedback that is timely and leads to immediate bite size actions. Such leadership practices may involve: (a) consistently communicating a clear vision regarding instructional practices; (b) continuous support to teachers to enhance teaching through reflection and professional growth; (c) providing teachers with clear, ongoing evaluations where strengths and weaknesses are identified and aligned to data; (d) collaborating with teachers to establish agreed upon goals that will meet accountability targets; (e) other supports identified by VIP.

Consistently ensuring communication with stakeholders in order to gather input and ensure commitment to the implementation of the ESF essential actions. The following actions will be necessary to increase engagement in the process and to ensure the full and effective implementation of the ESF framework:

Data analysis-comprehensive needs assessment that led to current results. Include learning, demographics, school environment and other quantitative and qualitative data.

Identify and prioritize needs by establishing rigorous but attainable goals. Set goals and timelines for completion and review. Smart goals will be necessary to ensure they are attainable and allow opportunities to adjust goals that will move toward meeting expected accountability targets.

Reorganize organizational practices from the district and campus level so that priority is directed to the Houston T-STEM and Early College (ECHS).

Identify systems and protocols for ongoing assessment alignment, and data driven instructions (DDI).

After engaging in the process above the Compliance Officer will guide the taskforce in a strategic process to complete the web-based plan. At this time the improvement taskforce will target 2 to 3 priorities that will be addressed in the web-based improvement plan. These priorities will be aligned to rigorous high leverage standards for student learning that will consistently be reviewed to ensure students are learning at high levels and all student groups are meeting accountability targets.

Communication and collaboration will be frequent so that needs are addressed in a timely manner. It will be expected that the taskforce is readily available to provide any modification based on the needs that arise in the process. These supports will also be documented in an excel spreadsheet to ensure a carefully executed cycle of observation and feedback.

As the taskforce conducts needs assessments, it will be necessary to assess the multiple ways district processes may pose barriers for successful improvement efforts. Administrative duties will be reviewed to ensure we protect leadership teams time spent in improving student learning. Those duties that are not directly related to teaching and learning will be delegated to other staff members when necessary. Another area to be assessed are policies so that we ensure policy and practice work together. These need to be synchronized and as additional policies are either modified or developed, engagement in meaningful consultation with leaders is necessary to prevent interference in the school improvement process.



**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.

The Chief Financial Officer in collaboration with the School Improvement Taskforce (SIT) reviewed several funding sources such as Title 1 (\$63,842), Title II (\$82,858) and state funds (\$121,500) and made a decision regarding how the ESF grant funds will be allocated to support targeted improvement at ECHS. The grant implementation will have a unique approach to school improvement since the focus will be to develop leadership capacity that will positively impact students' academic achievement in accountability targeted areas. It is also unique because we will be collaborating with E3 Alliance, a TEA vetted provider that will strategically focus on guiding and supporting the leadership team in addressing the needs of our targeted areas of improvement. In the past, other efforts have been directed to funding remediation programs and teacher professional development that have not been vetted or monitored by leaders. This grant will give the district and campus an opportunity to acquire sustainable practices while engaging in school improvement strategies in real time.

The district Chief Financial Officer (CFO) will manage and monitor supplemental funds with federal and state funding to maximize the impact on student learning while developing capacity among leaders and teachers. He will track the grants funding and ensure the expenditures are aligned to policies so that the district remains compliant.

The ESF Guidelines documents state that the anticipated awarded amount is \$99,000 to 150,000 per eligible campus. Application Part 2 will budget \$99,000 and later review that amount when adjusted and approved by TEA. Most of the funding is anticipated to fund the E3 Alliance vetted provider. After meeting with the E3 Alliance staff, it was determined that we will select option 2 (35,000) for the first year and option 2 (27,500) for the second year. The total amount for both years is \$62,500 therefore most of the proposed budget will be within budget code 6200 for contracted services. The remaining funds will be distributed as follows: 1) The budget code 6100 will be allocated to fund the Campus Grant Project Coordinator (\$18,000) to ensure the commitment to the school improvement process and grant required action steps. Instructional materials such as books, PD kits and supplemental materials funds will be allocated using code 6300 (\$11,000). Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) is a small district and campuses will implement a distributive leadership approach to support teachers. It will be essential to develop Teacher Leaders (TL) and for that purpose funding will be allocated in Code 6100 (\$7,500). Specifically, TL will engage in extra duty activities after their teaching scheduled time. The after school activities must be tightly aligned to school improvement efforts and previously approved by their immediate supervisor. The TL will be carefully coached and monitored through quality observations and feedback protocols. Effectiveness of their leadership will be measured with improved teaching and learning and aligned with data that shows students progress towards goals.

In order to ensure accountability measures and transparency, the CFO will maintain documentation for expenditures and will present to the district monthly cabinet meetings. We are a small charter district and these meetings are attended by the CAO, CFO, Superintendent, Bilingual Director, SPED manager, Principals and Compliance Officer. It is expected that additional funding may be necessary for sustainability and additional support. In that case, as the CFO allocates funding, he will redirect funds to support school improvement efforts and possible consultation with E3 Alliance or any strategy that is identified at that time.



**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.

An analysis of funding available will be identified after state and federal funding is allocated to the district. Specifically the CFO has identified Title 1, Title II Part A and General Funds that could be aligned to carry out the activities supported by this grant. Due to the urgency of school improvement efforts, the taskforce will meet with the CFO to communicate goals and discuss the improvement plan. The CFO will revisit policies related to budget allocations and will assign funds accordingly. The CFO maintains an open door policy and he meets with campus leaders to support them in the budgeting process. We are a small charter district and schools are located in the same property. This close proximity allows the CFO to meet and train staff to ensure policies are followed, overspending is prevented and budgets are modified if needed. Quality control measures are in place and expenditures require the approval of principals, CAO, CFO and superintendent. It is evident that other expenses, in addition to the ESF grant, will be needed in the event travel or additional professional development is needed. Other approved funding will be reallocated while considering policies and needs related to those funds. The LEA anticipates that due to challenges associated with COVID-19, significant changes may occur to either reduce or increase budgets but these will be addressed as the budget is allocated. .

The budget will be balanced in consultation with campuses and will be dependent on justification of needs, programs, attendance, enrollment and other factors that impact budgets. In order to ensure accountability measures and transparency, the CFO will maintain documentation for expenditures and will present to the district monthly cabinet meetings. We are a small charter district and these meetings are attended by the CAO, CFO, Superintendent, Special Populations Manager, Principals and Compliance Officer. It is expected that additional funding may be necessary for sustainability and additional support. In that case, as the CFO allocates funding, he will redirect funds to support school improvement efforts and possible consultation with E3 Alliance or any strategy that is identified at that time.



**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	



**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**
