

IDEA B Discretionary Technical Assistance and Support Grant Opportunity for 2019-2020

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is actively seeking Letters of Interest (LoI) from potential grantees to provide opportunities for specific work toward statewide ***Supports and Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)***. Interested regional Education Service Centers (ESC) and/or Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) should submit an LoI in the template included in Attachment A to TEA **by October 1, 2018 at 5 pm CDT**. Potential grantees are encouraged to seek cooperative partnerships or collaborative agreements to successfully meet all goals and objectives of the grant. Funding is allocated from IDEA B Discretionary funds and scheduled for implementation in the 2019-2020 school year.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity are limited to the 20 regional education service centers and all institutions of higher education located in Texas. Other nonprofits or for-profit organizations, foreign institutions, and individuals are not eligible to apply; however, they may participate with an eligible applicant as a project partner (encouraged, as applicable).

1.1 Program Description

The ***Supports and Services for Students with ASD*** is intended to increase capacity in local education agencies (LEAs) to meet the varied and unique needs of students served by special education and identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This is to be accomplished through the development and provision of resources and professional development of strategies, interventions, and tools designed to meet the unique needs of students with social and communication needs, the educators who serve them, and their families. Emphasis will be placed on a wide variety of on-going services, programs, processes and activities which promote communication, collaboration, fidelity of implementation, and innovation for family and community partnerships.

Additional considerations for materials and resources produced through this grant:

- TEA maintains the right to final approval on all materials and resources before publication or presentation.
- All materials and resources will carry the TEA logo in addition to the logo of the grant awardee.
- All materials and resources are the property of TEA and must be provided to TEA at the end of the grant period or upon request.
- All materials or resources intended for use with parents and families will be made available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Grant awardees will make formal quarterly reports to TEA on identified outcomes-based, quantifiable lead measures with lag measure reporting at the end of the grant period. These measures must be mutually approved by the grantee and TEA and should be clearly proposed in the LoI response. Additionally, budget proposals and final budget tables must include line-item/deliverable-based pricing.

1.2 Program Goal

The goal of the ***Supports and Services for Students with ASD*** grant is to build a statewide culture of high expectations for all students, including those diagnosed with ASD. This will be accomplished by increasing LEAs' capacity to provide students, educators, and families access to evidence-based best practices, resources and tools that meet the unique needs of students. This includes meaningful access to the highest level coursework appropriate for the individual student including participation in AP, Pre-

AP, and IB courses where available. Meeting this goal effectively will ensure positive academic and behavioral outcomes for children with social and communication needs.

1.3 Program Activities

Strong applications will demonstrate a comprehensive program(s) of evidence-based practices for supporting students with social and communication needs, their educators and families. Additionally, strong applications will include robust plans for networking with other grantees who have overlapping or related functions.

Additionally, strong applications will include robust planning for statewide implementation and demonstrate clear and comprehensive planning for measuring the impact of activities through outcomes-based quantifiable metrics that include measures describing implementation and effectiveness of grant deliverables in large and small urban, suburban, small, and rural LEAs.

It is required that the proposed programs contain at a **minimum** the following:

- Guidance and resources to assist LEAs in meeting requirements of administrative rules related to students with autism (19 TAC §89.1055(e))
- Resources for schools in developing appropriate practices from initial referral to program development and implementation with a strong emphasis on evidence-based strategies
- Resources for providing increased community access and lifelong living skills, including social, recreational, and employment opportunities as appropriate
- Professional development opportunities for educators and administrators; including replicable models of coaching and/or micro-credentialing opportunities
- Resources for providing self and family advocacy and support for interagency partnerships as appropriate
- Expanded and improved guidance, support, and professional development for general education teachers, school support staff, paraprofessionals, and all levels of campus administrators
- State-level professional development and training for school personnel and parents of students with autism
- Development of a communication outreach plan to current and new LEA, family, and community users that will facilitate the dissemination of resources and information
- Statewide autism conference promotion and coordination
- Resources to support the use of assistive technology or other assistive devices; communication supports, devices or tools as appropriate
- Professional development and resources to increase LEA capacity to effectively implement settings and services to support the communication, social, or behavioral goals
- Develop readily available course content that allows educators to pursue specialized training and/or opportunities for additional credentials such as Registered Behavior Therapist
- A budget that is commensurate with goals and does not duplicate current efforts
- A plan for communication and collaboration with other relevant and/or related proposed grant initiatives

1.4 Program Budget

\$1,000,000

1.5 Timeline

Lols must be submitted electronically to sped@tea.texas.gov by 5pm (CDT) on October 1st, 2018 in order to be considered. Hard copy mailed or delivered Lols will not be accepted. Applicants should combine all attachments and documents into one PDF to include a cover sheet and table of contents. Grant awardees will be notified by November 1, 2018 with the grant period to begin July 1, 2019. This is a one-year grant that may be extended for additional years at TEA's discretion.

1.6 Closing and Next Steps

Strong applications with a likelihood of award will be innovative in nature, demonstrate clear planning toward stated goals, and focus on producing desired outcomes rather than simply activity completion.

A virtual applicants' conference will be held the week of July 16, 2018. Questions submitted to sped@tea.texas.gov prior to July 13, 2018 will be answered at that time and an FAQ will be published. When submitting questions, applicants should include the name of this grant in the subject line. Applicants should refer to www.tea.texas.gov/TexasSPED for details and updates regarding the applicants' conference and this request for Lol generally.