

## At a Glance

- **What this guidance covers:** Day Placement Program Cooperative Funding Allotment eligibility, program requirements, and amount of funding.
- **Who may apply:** A school district, open-enrollment charter school, or regional education service center (ESC) serving as the cooperative's program administrator.
- **Where these program cooperatives operate:** TEA may designate no more than one qualifying day placement program cooperative per county to receive the allotment. TEA is authorized to approve up to 20 programs for the allotment each program year. Program year will be defined as 9/1 to 8/31.
- **Who is served:** Students receiving special education and related services with intensive support needs that cannot be met on a regular school campus who are placed in a day placement program by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee.
- **Funding:** \$250,000 for the first year of operation; in subsequent years, \$100,000 base funding plus an additional \$150,000 with 3+ enrolled students by 10/1 of the next school year.

## Program Overview

The Day Placement Program Cooperative Funding Allotment is authorized under Texas Education Code (TEC) §48.304 to support the development and ongoing operation of highly specialized, county-level day placement programs. These programs serve students receiving special education and related services who have intensive support needs.

The purpose of the allotment is to expand statewide capacity for individualized, evidence-based day programming for students with intensive support needs. These are students whose needs cannot be met within the standard continuum of services available on a regular school campus. When appropriate, programs should support student progress toward less restrictive educational settings.

Funding is provided to qualifying public entities that establish day placement programs and is contingent upon compliance with applicable statute, commissioner rules, TEA guidelines, and other requirements. All day placement program decisions remain the responsibility of the student's ARD committee as part of the individualized education program (IEP) process.

## Key Terms

- **Cooperative Funding Allotment:** Funding provided under TEC §48.304 to support qualifying day placement programs that form a cooperative to serve students within a county.
- **County-level:** A program designated to serve students from school districts and open-enrollment charter schools within the county for which the program is approved.
- **Day placement program:** A program that meets the definitions and operates in alignment with TEC §29.008 and 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1094
- **Eligible applicant (eligible public entity):** A school district, open-enrollment charter school, or regional ESC that establishes an eligible program cooperative and meets TEA requirements.
- **Minimum standards:** TEA-established operational and program standards a day placement program must meet under TAC §29.008 and applicable special education rules.
- **Private provider:** A non-public entity contracted by the program administrator to deliver services under a public-private partnership.

- **Program administrator:** The eligible public entity that applies for the cooperative funding allotment and serves as the fiscal agent for the program; the administrator must be located in the county where the program cooperative will operate.
- **Program scope:** The application-defined parameters for the program (e.g., capacity, student population, disability categories, age/grade ranges, and instructional models/approaches).
- **Public-private partnership:** A model in which the program administrator (eligible public entity) contracts with a private provider to deliver some or all services within the program.

## Eligible Applicants and Programs

Eligible applicants that establish a day placement program cooperative must be the cooperative’s program administrator. The program administrator may, but is not required, to also be the program host. The program administrator serves as the fiscal agent for the cooperative funding allotment. Any school system within the county where the cooperative operates would enter into an agreement with the program administrator for student placements and services. The cooperative may operate in multiple physical locations within the county but must have a single program administrator.

Eligible applicants that wish to contract with a private provider to establish a public-private partnership day placement program cooperative and receive the cooperative funding allotment must still be the program administrator. At the time of application, the applicant must identify any current or intended private provider partner. While the program administrator contracts with the private provider to establish the partnership, any school system within the county where the cooperative operates would enter into an agreement with the program administrator for student placements and services. This type of cooperative may also operate in multiple physical locations within the county but must have a single program administrator.

Day placement programs established by eligible entities and approved by TEA prior to June 2026 are permitted to apply for the new cooperative funding allotment. Their application must specify how the existing program will be expanded to meet the needs of the county.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Entity	Primary responsibilities
Program Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as the primary applicant and fiscal agent for funding allotment.</li> <li>• Establish and operate (or oversee operation of) the day placement program collaborative in accordance with applicable law, commissioner rules, TEA guidelines, and minimum standards.</li> <li>• Execute agreements with participating school systems for student placements.</li> <li>• If operating as a public-private partnership, contract with the private provider for services and ensure ongoing compliance and oversight.</li> <li>• Submit required data/reporting and provide annual notification to TEA of material program changes (including program administrator/cooperative members, scope, location(s), design/operation, or vendor(s)).</li> </ul>

<p>Participating school systems (within an approved county)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make placement decisions through the ARD committee as part of the student’s IEP process.</li> <li>• Enter into an agreement with the program administrator for placements and services, consistent with the approved program scope and capacity.</li> <li>• Fund student placements/tuition and any agreed-upon costs of services as outlined in the agreement with the program administrator.</li> </ul>
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**Ineligible Applicants or Programs**

The following non-exhaustive list identifies programs, types of programs, or operators that are ineligible for the cooperative funding allotment:

- a public-private partnership day placement program established **without** an eligible public entity serving as the program administrator
- a program whose scope **does not** establish programming for students with intensive support needs whose needs cannot be met within the standard continuum of services available on a regular school campus
- a program established to support students who are **not placed** through the ARD committee process as part of the student’s IEP
- an applicant seeking funding to establish or operate a program in a county where the applicant is **not** physically located (eligible applicants that geographically spread over more than one county will designate which county they will serve as part of their application for the funding allotment)
- any program that has been determined by the agency to **not meet** minimum standards for operation

**Program Scope and Geographic Location**

**Program Scope**

As part of the application process, the program design and parameters will be defined to include:

- the maximum student capacity for the program,
- the student population and disability categories, age/grade ranges the program will support
- the instructional models or approaches the program will establish to serve students

Any student from a school system within the county for which an approved program operates is eligible to attend the program as long as there is capacity and the student meets the designated parameters defined in the program scope.

**Geographic Location**

TEA has authority to award the cooperative funding allotment to eligible applicants in each of the 254 counties but is limited to awarding the allotment to 20 applicants each program year. Applicants will identify what

county they are seeking to establish a program for purposes of the funding allotment. TEA encourages collaboration and coordination among the eligible entities within each county to establish programs.

In instances where multiple eligible entities apply to serve the same county and more than one application receives a score sufficient to support funding, TEA will conduct an additional round of scoring to determine the final program selected for funding.

## Program Requirements

Eligible applicants must demonstrate that the day placement program cooperative does or will:

- operate in compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements, including 19 TAC §89.1094, TEC §29.008, and TEC §48.304
- meet the minimum standards established by TEA under TEC §29.008 and 19 TAC §89.1094
- provide specialized, individualized special education programming and related services for students with intensive support needs that cannot be met within the standard continuum of services available on a regular school campus
- serve eligible students from school systems within the county where the program operates, consistent with the approved program scope and available capacity
- provide data and reports to TEA upon request, including program utilization, student outcomes, and reintegration data
- annually notify TEA of any proposed changes to the cooperative members, the program scope, location(s), design, or operation of the day placement program, including any vendor(s) under a public-private partnership

All TEA-approved day placement programs are subject to TEA monitoring as part of the agency's general supervisory authority, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), TEC §29.008, TEC §29.010, 19 TAC §89.1094, and 34 CFR §300.600; programs established as a cooperative and receive this funding allotment are no exception.

## Funding

Approved programs will receive \$250,000 for the first year of operation.

Programs that continue to meet established minimum standards and TEA requirements are eligible for subsequent funding annually as follows:

- \$100,000 base funding
- an additional \$150,000 if the program has 3 or more enrolled students by 10/1 of the next school year