



2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, January 29, 2024

Texas Education Agency® NOGA ID [Redacted]

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article IX, Section 18.114(c)(v)**

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.

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, January 29, 2024**.

Grant period from **March 20, 2024-September 30, 2024**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Not Permitted**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)

See the Program Guidelines for for additional attachment information.

Select Focus Area (Applicants May Select One or Both Focus Areas)

- Focus Area 1: Career and Technical Education Course
- Focus Area 2: Work-Based Learning Experiences

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization CDN ESC UEI

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 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 2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education Grant Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education 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 curriculum will be appropriately aligned to regional labor market supported CTE programs of study.
- 6. The applicant provides assurance to provide data to TEA on student completion of courses through a special collection process run by TEA.
- 7. 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.

Summary of Program (Focus Area 1)

Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization. Describe how the program will address the mission and needs.

NEEDS - Despite being a small and remote school district with a total of 351 students in PK-12 (only about 100 in 9-12th grades), Lasara ISD has numerous CTE opportunities for its students. The district expects to grow and build career educational offerings as quality career readiness becomes a higher priority among students and families. Lasara is 98.3% Hispanic and 85.8% of students are economically disadvantaged based on the 2022-2023 Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR). The at-risk population of 57.8% is higher than the state average (53.3%). Lasara High School is a T-STEM campus and has developed long-term plans to provide programs of study as it relates to high-end math, science, social studies, and arts and humanities. At the same time, its CTE programs continue to build and develop. Based on 2022-23 TAPR data, the district had no graduate receive an industry-based certification in 2021-22 (compared to 28% of graduates around the state). The district also has a low percentage of career and college ready students. Only 4.3% of Lasara ISD graduates in 2021-22 were career or military ready (compared to 33.5% statewide and 62.4% in Region 1). It is believed students and families need more exposure to the district's CTE offerings in order to improve its career and college readiness in future years.

HOW SUMMER CTE GRANT PROGRAM ADDRESSES NEEDS - By implementing a 3-week Summer Career and Technology Education (CTE) Bridge program for 20 to 25 8th and 9th grade students 4 days per week from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., students will have the opportunity to learn about a variety of CTE opportunities in several Programs of Study - Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (animal science); Manufacturing (Welding); and Business, Marketing, and Finance. Through the bridge, Lasara ISD will offer students the opportunity to experience each Program of Study (POS) for 1 week. The bridge program is expected to increase student interest, increase family knowledge and understanding of each POS, with the goal to increase enrollment in these programs. The district expects the end result of this summer bridge "head start" to include improved student interest in careers offered at Lasara, and an increase in students graduating with industry certifications. This bridge program is intended to create early interest levels for high-demand inspired pathways so students can select their pathways earlier in their high school career. The end result of the bridge is for more students to graduate from an approved CTE program at Lasara ISD and receive industry certifications that will assist students in obtaining high quality, higher paying employment.

Summary of Program (Focus Area 2)

Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization. Describe how the program will address the mission and needs.

NEEDS - In the small district of Lasara ISD, located in a rural community, students face unique challenges when it comes to finding summer employment. Limited job prospects and a lack of available opportunities often leave students without the means to earn money during their break from school. The district recognizes the importance of providing students with not only financial opportunities but also the opportunity to gain valuable experience in programs of study that lead to credentialing and high-demand careers. Currently, quality summer employment in career track fields is rare and unavailable to students in Lasara ISD. This opportunity has been missing because of a lack of local funding to support personnel and inability to pay students. Lasara ISD is a remote area home to minimal businesses. Any potential businesses that may want to participate or support work-based learning (WBL) for Lasara students are located several miles away in another community. Difficulties finding nearby business partnerships to take on these students and especially pay them has been a hurdle during the school year and for other WBL projects.

HOW SUMMER CTE PROGRAM ADDRESSES NEEDS - By implementing a Summer Career and Technology Education paid internship opportunity led by Lasara ISD, the district aims to address the lack of employment options by providing students with opportunities within the school building. By participating in this internship program, students will not only have the opportunity to earn money but also gain practical skills and knowledge in fields that offer quality wages and growth opportunities - specifically as it relates to education, welding, agriculture, and business. With Lasara ISD as the "business partner," the focus will be two-fold as the students not only will be working and earning money, but they will be assisting the CTE staff with the Summer CTE Bridge Program.

A total of 12 students will participate in this 4-week (8 hours per day - 4 days per week) paid internship program in which students will provide support to the teachers in the bridge program, and also participate in work-based learning. The district expects 4 students each to participate in welding, business, and agriculture. Students will each work 2 weeks assisting the teachers with the summer bridge program in the morning and then experiencing work-based learning opportunities in the district's business office. Non-business focused students will spend time with the district's agriculture/welding teachers on a special project, including creating a portfolio.

The internship will involve specific goals and objectives for the students to individually and collaboratively work with school staff toward accomplishing. The ultimate purpose of the program is to provide quality paid opportunities for students who would not have this type of opportunity to work in their field, or would struggle to find any employment due to transportation issues. The plan is for the internships to provide students the opportunity to work in a professional atmosphere that can be related to the educational opportunities they have in Lasara ISD. The paid internships are expected to motivate students to continue to pursue certifications/obtain career experience in their chosen areas. This internship opportunity will not happen without Summer CTE grant funding.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel (Focus Area 1)

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the position is existing or proposed.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
SUPERINTENDENT – Responsible for supervising the grant program and ensuring all data is reported back to TEA as required.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Education or a related field. Experience: At least 3 years of experience being a Superintendent and involved in programs such as this, including CTE programming. Existing position.
CAMPUS PRINCIPAL – Responsible for managing day-to-day activities, overseeing faculty and staff, and assisting students in selecting career pathways.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Education or a related field. Experience: Must have years of experience in managing day-to-day school activities, overseeing faculty and staff, and assisting students in selecting careers. Existing
CTE CAREER COUNSELOR – Responsible to oversee program staff, aligning curriculum and ensuring performance measures as cited are met.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Counseling or a related field. Experience overseeing programs, grants, personnel, and budgets. Proposed in grant budget, but will be handled by existing staff through stipend.
DISTRICT CTE STAFF – Responsible for teaching, supporting, and communicating the targeted CTE programs of study cited in this application.	Ability to offer the targeted CTE programs of study. Must have at least 4 years of prior experience and knowledge in programs of study being taught. Existing positions.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel (Focus Area 2)

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the position is existing or proposed.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
SUPERINTENDENT – Responsible for supervising the grant program and ensuring all data is reported back to TEA as required.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Education or a related field. Experience: At least 3 years of experience being a Superintendent and involved in programs such as this, including CTE programming. Existing position.
CAMPUS PRINCIPAL – Responsible for managing day-to-day activities, overseeing faculty and staff, and assisting in selecting students and programs.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in Education or a related field. Experience: Must have years of experience in managing day-to-day school activities, overseeing faculty and staff, and assisting students in selecting careers. Existing
CAREER COUNSELOR – Responsible for overseeing program staff, aligning curriculum and ensuring performance measures as cited are met.	Minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree in counseling or a related field. Experience overseeing programs, grants, personnel, and budgets. Proposed in grant budget, but this person is a current counselor to be paid through stipend.
BUSINESS LIAISON - These personnel will be responsible for supporting the internships and other work-based learning opportunities for students.	Ability and knowledge to offer the targeted CTE trainings and/or oversight of work-based activities. Must have at least 4 years of proven knowledge of business and work-based learning programs. Not a paid position.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Focus Area 1)

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed program. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives?

GOALS/OBJECTIVES - This bridge program will introduce students to various career opportunities/pathways all supported by Lasara ISD's growing and developing CTE program. The district's CTE efforts focus on assisting more students in pursuing post-secondary education after high school, creating more college graduates who are career and college ready, and preparing more students to receive high paying positions after high school through industry certifications and licensing. The bridge program will be key to informing and educating students, parents, and families about the Programs of Study options available at Lasara. The expectation is for students experiencing the Summer CTE bridge program to be introduced to numerous pathways so they are prepared to select their career course plan earlier in their high school career. When students start their career pathways earlier, they have more time to complete all coursework and are more likely to earn their industry certifications and be ready to join the workforce in that field upon graduation.

ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES - Students in this bridge program will receive tours of the high school campus and the CTE Programs of Study (POS) areas and classrooms to ensure they are prepared and ready for their first day of school. A total of 20 to 25 8th and 9th graders will be able to sign up for this summer bridge program held in June. Recruitment efforts will begin upon grant award announcement/NOGA in spring to ensure as many students have the opportunity to sign up as they desire. Students who sign up will be required to attend all 3 weeks of the program so they can experience one week of each POS, which will include multiple career options. CTE courses held during the bridge will correlate with course options for students in fall for enrollment. Students in the bridge program will have access to technology, supplies, and materials required to complete CTE coursework. The district will also include field trips/site visits to businesses in the surrounding areas for additional student experiences. All courses offered will be instructed by highly-qualified teachers, who are experienced and knowledgeable in each subject. In addition, the bridge program will incorporate project-based learning and group project collaboration. At the end of the bridge program, students will provide survey results to help determine which POS they plan to pursue in high school so Lasara ISD administration can follow up and ensure students enroll in their chosen pathway.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Focus Area 2)

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed program. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives?

GOALS/OBJECTIVES - The main goal is to provide CTE students with quality, paid internship experiences in an area where summer jobs for students are already limited. Work-based experiences in the form of paid internships, specifically in approved Statewide Programs of Study (POS), such as Manufacturing (welding); Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (animal science and more); and Business, Marketing, and Finance (accounting and more) will provide students with hands-on work-based experiences. Through the paid internship program, students will obtain a better understanding of the skills and abilities required to become quality and reliable employees in any industry they choose. This work-based experience will help create a smoother transition for students moving from high school into the workforce in various industries. The purpose of the paid internships is to prepare students in ways that can't be duplicated in the classroom, especially for students focused on fields where hands-on experiences are imperative to learning and developing skills. The objectives include the effort to complement and bridge high school coursework into the workplace for diverse knowledge of future career possibilities, and to create an opportunity for students to experience being in the working world. As an additional benefit, students are able to be paid for the work in an atmosphere with oversight and expectations that currently aren't available in this rural district.

ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES - Lasara ISD will provide paid internship opportunities for 12 of its students who already have attended and completed some CTE coursework in Manufacturing; Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; and Business, Marketing, and Finance. This grant will support funding to build a paid internship program at Lasara ISD to meet the employment and experience needs of students in this small, rural community that lacks job opportunities for teenagers. A district staff member will oversee the internship program, collect data, match students with appropriate opportunities at the school, and provide support to ensure quality experiences for students. A final portfolio project will also be part of the internship program. Students will work on their portfolio with the support of the CTE teachers and school staff.

Performance and Evaluation Measures (Focus Area 1)

Describe the performance measures identified for this program which are related to student outcomes and are consistent with the purpose of the program. Include the tools used to measure performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of project objectives and strategies.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES - This bridge program will focus on student outcomes and will be evaluated based on several measures and data. To effectively evaluate the performance of the program, a range of tools will be utilized. These tools will include tracking the number and specific demographics of students who enter the summer bridge program and successfully complete it. Additionally, the number of Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses offered and attended, as well as the number of students who are prepared for statewide programs of study, will be monitored. Furthermore, the program will assess the number of students who plan to pursue post-secondary education. Lastly, student attendance in CTE courses and programs during the school year will also be considered as a performance measure.

MEASURING TOOLS - In order to gather comprehensive data for evaluation, project personnel will employ various tools. These tools will include student in-take forms, student and staff surveys, performance reports from courses and hands-on experiences, questionnaires, progress reports for participating students, attendance sheets, and meetings with CTE teachers to gather relevant information. By utilizing these tools, the program will be able to effectively measure both program and student performance and ensure the quality of the bridge experience.

ENSURING EFFECTIVENESS PROCESS - The data collected through the aforementioned tools will play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of the program. The district and its leadership will analyze this data to assess whether the students in the program are meeting the goals and objectives set forth. Additionally, the data will help evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to ensure student success in the bridge program. To ensure continuous improvement, student work and teacher surveys will be analyzed on a weekly basis. Furthermore, survey results will be analyzed in real-time to assess the effectiveness of the programming as it unfolds. This iterative evaluation process will allow for adjustments and improvements to be made throughout the program's duration. The ultimate aim is to ensure that the programming is of the highest possible quality, benefiting the students as they continue their CTE programs.

Performance and Evaluation Measures (Focus Area 2)

Describe the performance measures identified for this program which are related to student outcomes and are consistent with the purpose of the program. Include the tools used to measure performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of project objectives and strategies.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES - In order to effectively evaluate the program and ensure positive student outcomes, a comprehensive set of performance measures will be utilized. These measures will include tracking the number of students participating in the program, as well as their demographic information. Additionally, data will be collected on the total and average hours worked by each student, their earnings, and their performance as assessed through an internship rubric. Weekly production reports, developed collaboratively between program leaders and business partner liaisons, will provide further insight into student progress. A list of business and industry partners, along with any agreements involved in the program, will also be maintained. Finally, an assessment of the overall quality of student work and efforts will be conducted to recognize the skills acquired by students. All measures will be directly aligned with student outcomes and consistent with the program's purpose to provide paid internships and quality work-based learning experiences.

MEASURING TOOLS - A variety of tools will be utilized to gather and assess data related to program and student performance. These tools will include student in-take forms, surveys, performance reports from the businesses hosting the internships, questionnaires from both students and business personnel, progress reports for participating students, attendance sheets, and meetings or on-site visits between program staff and business liaisons. These data collection methods will provide valuable information to measure the effectiveness and the quality of student performance.

ENSURING EFFECTIVENESS PROCESS - To ensure the effectiveness of the program, a thorough process will be implemented. Prior to the start of the program, staff will develop individualized plans for each student, outlining their goals and objectives for the internship. This will help guide the evaluation process and ensure that students are on track to meet their targets. Throughout the program, regular communication will be maintained with business liaisons to monitor student attendance, participation, and the quality of their work-based activities. Site visits will also be conducted to ensure that students are following their individual plans. As a final assessment, students will present their portfolio, showcasing their work and accomplishments, to a panel of district stakeholders. This presentation will provide valuable feedback and help determine the overall effectiveness of the program.

Budget Narrative (Focus Area 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.

When considering this grant application, Lasara ISD counselors and administration met to develop a budget that would meet the needs, goals, and objectives for student development and success in a bridge program. Leadership outlined the various costs of staffing, supplies, curriculum, equipment, transportation, and equipment needed to reach the goals, based on the number of students expected to participate and length of programming.

If awarded, the district will leverage funds to impact areas in line with this grant and its purpose. The district will provide students access to classrooms, materials, software, and technology for the CTE bridge classes. Leadership will also look at any efforts to combine the bridge program with its existing T-STEM grant, including focusing on Project-Based Learning and the creation of student artifacts such as portfolios and presentations that can be developed during this bridge. The district does not have any additional funds to offer a quality bridge program such as this without the Summer CTE funding.

PAYROLL (total - \$10,920) - 3 CTE staff x 24 hours per week (includes prep time) x \$35 per hour x 3 weeks = \$7,560; 1 Guidance Counselor x 24 hours x \$35 per hour x 4 weeks (preparation week) = \$3,360. STAFF BENEFITS - \$3,300

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS - (total - \$27,780) - Includes technology devices - Chromebooks/laptops (\$21,780) for all students to work on career inventories, career surveys, create portfolios, and complete project-based learning activities during their internship program; Curriculum (\$2,000), consumables for hands-on (\$4,000)

TRANSPORTATION - \$3,500 for any daily busing and field trips/site visits for work-based experiences. INDIRECT - \$4,500

If adjustments are required, district administration will meet with program leaders (career counselors) to discuss what changes will ensure success of the bridge program. Any changes will follow the proper TEA procedures, including amendments to the application (if needed). If additional guidance is required, the district will contact TEA for assistance. If modifications significantly impact program operation, the district will communicate with students, staff, and parents.

Budget Narrative (Focus Area 2)

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.

When considering this grant application, Lasara ISD counselors and administration met to develop a budget that would meet the needs, goals, and objectives for student development and success in a paid internship, work-based learning opportunity. Leadership outlined the various costs of staffing, supplies, curriculum, equipment, transportation, and equipment needed to reach the goals, based on the number of students expected to participate and overall need.

If awarded, the district will leverage funds to impact areas in line with this grant and its purpose. The district will provide students access to classrooms, materials, software, and technology for the CTE bridge classes. Leadership also will look at any efforts to combine with bridge with its existing T-STEM grant, including focusing on Project-Based Learning and the creation of student artifacts such as portfolios and presentations that can be developed during the internship work. The district does not have funds to offer a paid internship program such as this without the Summer CTE funding.

PAYROLL (\$5,300) - 1 Guidance Counselor x 30 hours x \$35 per hour x 4 weeks responsible for developing student plans, collecting data, scheduling, ensuring proper training, and overseeing the internships = \$4,200. STAFF BENEFITS - \$1,100

PAY FOR STUDENTS (total \$23,040) - 12 students at \$15 per hour, 8 hours per day, 4 days per week, for 4 weeks.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS - (total - \$13,660) - Includes technology devices - Chromebooks/laptops (\$12,160) for all students to work on career inventories, career surveys, create portfolios, and complete project-based learning activities during the program. Various supplies and materials (\$1,500).

TRANSPORTATION - \$3,500 for any daily busing and field trips/site visits for work-based experiences. INDIRECT - \$4,500

If adjustments are required, district administration will meet with program leaders (career counselors) to discuss what changes will ensure success of the bridge program. Any changes will follow the proper TEA procedures, including amendments to the application (if needed). If additional guidance is required, the district will contact TEA for assistance. If modifications significantly impact program operation, the district will communicate with students, staff, and parents.

Program Requirements

1a. Needs Assessment (Focus Area 1): Applicants must complete a Needs Assessment Summary indicating specific area of need the LEA has that hinders the completion of courses within programs of study. (For example: describing scheduling conflicts, specific program of study teacher availability, etc.)

UNDERSTANDING CTE OPPORTUNITIES - In a district that already has a T-STEM program, CTE pathways sometimes play second fiddle to T-STEM career opportunities. District leadership personnel have noticed about half of families and students in the district are unaware of the career and technology opportunities available at Lasara ISD. Despite providing information regularly to students and families about programs such as welding, business, and agriculture, school officials continue to receive numerous questions from parents and students who are unaware of the opportunities. Even for those students who are aware, there is a lack of understanding regarding the certifications, job potential, and college choices associated with the district's CTE programs as it compares to T-STEM. In 2021-22, no graduates earned industry-based certifications and only 4.3% graduated career or military ready (33.5% statewide) according to Texas Academic Performance Reports.

This lack of knowledge of CTE programs hinders early involvement and interest, leading to issues with course completion. To address this, the district is proposing this bridge program in the summer for incoming 8th and 9th graders. The bridge program aims to ensure students are aware of the opportunities available to them and provide them with a glimpse into what they will learn and the careers they can pursue in the district's CTE offerings. By experiencing several programs during a quality summer program, students can make informed decisions about their program of study earlier in their high school career, increasing the likelihood of CTE program completion and industry certification upon graduation.

CAREER SUPPORT NEEDED - In addition to the need for increased understanding of opportunities, there is also a need for additional career and college support. District officials have recognized that not enough has been done to provide wrap-around services related to career choices. To address this, the bridge program will offer individualized opportunities for students to spend time with the CTE Program personnel to help students determine their skills and interests and align with the career education opportunities offered by the district. By providing this career information during the summer, students and their families will have a guide for their high school career, leading to increased participation, skill development, and commitment. Ultimately, the bridge and career education opportunities are expected to improve CTE program completion, including more students obtaining industry certifications to be ready for the workplace.

1b. Needs Assessment (Focus Area 2): Applicants must complete a Needs Assessment Summary indicating specific area of needs the LEA has to offer work-based learning opportunities. (For example: describing transportation limitations, describing scheduling conflicts, specific program of study teacher availability, etc.)

TEENS NEED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - Lasara ISD is a rural district with just one business located within its boundaries. The district is 10 miles from Raymondville (population 20,143 in Willacy County) and 30 miles to Harlingen (population 71,678). Although there are employment opportunities in those areas, Willacy County and Harlingen are both high poverty areas - more than double the poverty rate of the state of Texas, and have higher than the state unemployment rates (5.8% in Willacy and 5.3% in Harlingen). In the area, employment opportunities, especially for younger people, are limited to mostly fast-food restaurants. Most teens seeking a job will have to travel to potentially find one. But, that isn't easy due to transportation obstacles and competition from the hometown students. The needs for high-school age students residing in Lasara have existed for years. Because of sports and other activities in this small district, students don't always have time to work during the school year. This Summer CTE paid internship program would help youth obtain jobs in Lasara (minimal travel needed), especially positions that complement educational and career endeavors that would build on and benefit the district's existing T-STEM and CTE programs. The lack of available work-based opportunities during the school year and summer has shown that it leads to less interest in the school programming and less understanding from students and parents as to what skills and coursework is required to obtain high-demand jobs.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES - Because of the location and rural nature of the district and the hurdles accompanying that issue, district officials have data that backs up the narrative that fewer students obtain employment during the summer months, even in jobs not related to college and career aspirations. Regardless of the type of job students obtain (retail, fast food, etc.) they experience and understand soft skills and their importance. By simply having a job, these types of soft skills are learned, which will help in future employment opportunities and internships.

VARIED EXPERIENCES - Student interns will have the opportunity to experience CTE industries such as welding, while also gaining knowledge of the education field by helping their teachers in the Summer CTE bridge program at the same time.

Program Requirements, cont'd.

2. **Focus Area 1:** Applicants must specify which program(s) of study and the CTE course(s) in the program(s) of study that will be offered (see <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/college-career-and-military-prep/career-and-technical-education/cte-programs-of-study> for a list of the approved statewide programs of study). Include the number of students who be engaged and supported in this focus area.

Lasara ISD will build and provide a 3-week Summer Bridge Program for 8th and 9th grade students. During this summer bridge, 20-25 students will be provided the opportunity to take part in course sampling through a 3-week long program where students will rotate through and attend 1 week (Monday through Thursday) of each Statewide Program of Study, including - Agriculture Food and Natural Resources, Manufacturing (Welding), and Business Marketing and Finances. These are all programs available at Lasara ISD through its continuously growing and developing CTE opportunities.

This summer CTE programming will include, but is not limited to, the following Level 1 approved CTE courses:

- Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources - leads to careers such as veterinarians, wildlife biologists, agriculture engineers, food science technicians, landscaping supervisors, and soil/plant scientists.
- Principles of Business, Marketing, and Finance - leads to careers in management, service managers, accountants and auditors, financial advisors, insurance underwriters, retail buyers, and marketing specialist.
- Introduction to Welding - leads to careers as welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers.
- Principles of Manufacturing/Applied Engineering - leads to careers as CNC operators and mechanical technicians.

Through a small group rotation, where students for one week each experience POS coursework, each participating student will obtain hands-on opportunities. This experience will provide a feel for each career pathway to help students make informed decisions about what pathway they would prefer to follow as they develop in their high school career. This is especially important because few of these types of businesses and careers are located or available immediately in the Lasara ISD area, so students do not have the opportunity to observe these types of careers on a regular basis.

The courses will be taught at the high school by highly qualified CTE staff. Lasara is providing these courses during this crucial transition time and believes this bridge will undoubtedly help these students to a quicker start in their high school careers with eventual benefits to complete coursework and obtain certifications by the time they graduate and be on a path toward an associates degree if they so choose.

3. **Focus Area 2:** Applicants must specify business and industry partners who will be involved in the program. Additionally, specify the work-based learning model(s) which will be utilized and the number of students who will be engaged and supported.

Lasara ISD will offer a paid internship program, which will provide valuable work-based learning opportunities for 12 students in grades 11 and 12. This program aims to equip students with the necessary skills and experiences to succeed in high-demand industries and increase their skills and knowledge in their chosen POS pathway. The internship program will run a total of 4 weeks, with students participating in work-based learning activities four days a week, for a total of 24 hours per week. Lasara ISD is limited in its business partnership capabilities, so efforts will focus on experiences within the school district (as the industry partner) namely in three areas - Welding, Business and Agriculture Sciences. Groups of 6 students will intern for 2 weeks (2 in each POS) mostly during the month of June.

At Lasara ISD, students will have the opportunity to engage in educational training through this grant summer program, as well as gain insights into business and accounting practices within the district. Additionally, student interns will work closely with their CTE teachers and administrators to deepen their understanding of the how their POS works within the education field and explore career paths in Welding and Agriculture Science outside of the education field through additional work-based learning experiences at an area veterinary clinic.

For these students, interning with the school district, means they will be immersed in the operations of these programs by assisting the teachers and working directly with students in the Summer CTE bridge program. Also, through their work with the bridge program students spending more time with their CTE teachers, students will improve their skills and understanding in their POS, to assist in their career decisions as they proceed in their program. This invaluable experience will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the industry and enhance their employability. Through the grant funding, Lasara ISD will establish, facilitate, and monitor paid internships for 12 students, encompassing job shadowing opportunities and hands-on learning experiences. The program will not only focus on specific technical skills but also emphasize the development of essential soft skills necessary for success in the workplace.

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