



2024-2025 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant

Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 3, 2024

NOGA ID [Redacted]

Authorizing legislation [Redacted]

This IDC application must be submitted via email to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

Application stamp-in date and time

The IDC 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 3, 2024**.

Grant period from [Redacted] **June 3, 2024-August 31, 2025**

Pre-award costs permitted from [Redacted] **award announcement date to grant start date**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Required Program-Related Attachments. Refer to the program guidelines for more information.

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization [Lorena Independent School District] CDN [161907] ESC [12]

Address [308 N. Frontage Rd] City [Lorena] ZIP [76655] Vendor ID [1746001638]

Primary Contact [Rusty Grimm, Ed.D.] Email [rustygrimm@lorenaisd.net] Phone [254-857-3239]

Secondary Contact [Jessica Webb] Email [jessicawebb@lorenaisd.net] Phone [254-857-3239]

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 IDC application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the IDC application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- IDC application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name [Rusty Grimm, Ed.D.] Title [Assistant Superintendent]

Email [rustygrimm@lorenaisd.net] Phone [254-857-3239]

Signature [Handwritten Signature, Ed.D.] Date [04/03/2024]

Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not permitted for this grant.

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 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.
- 2. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2024-2025 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant Program Guidelines.
- 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2024-2025 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 4. The LEA has completed the full Design and Implementation Year with their vetted teacher residency EPP partner(s).
- 5. The LEA will use grant funds to support residency with the EPP from their TCLAS Decision 5 Strategic Staffing partnership. EPP partners must be on the [23-24 Vetted Teacher Residency Program List](#).
- 6. The LEA will sustain a stipend of at least \$3,500 per resident and a host teacher stipend of at least \$1,500.
- 7. The LEA has a signed MOU with their vetted teacher residency EPP partner(s) that indicates they will continue the partnership that started Strategic Staffing through the TCLAS grant.
- 8. The LEA will submit data to TEA about the residency partnership, including, but not limited to number of residents, resident demographics, stipend amounts, and hiring data.

Summary of Program

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.

Mission: Lorena ISD is committed to providing exceptional learning opportunities that inspire and equip all students for a productive and independent future. To ensure this success, we must sustain a pipeline that staffs our classrooms with talented teachers who are ready to support and advance student learning. Our Strategic Staffing plan continues to bring quality candidates to LISD to work with our students and provides us with year-one-ready teachers to fill annual vacancies.

Need: Recruitment plan to address teacher turnover. Lorena ISD has a student population of 1850 with starting teacher pay at \$44,100.0. While our size and location make this district ideal for educators looking to work in a small school district, salary, the demands of multiple preps, and extra duties create challenges for recruitment of high quality teachers. In the past three years, LISD has struggled to replace teachers leaving the profession (24.6% turnover rate).

The Strategic Staffing Paid Teacher Residency program provides an opportunity to showcase the benefits of working in LISD and Lorena ISD has used this opportunity to hire quality first-year teachers. Over the last 3 years, Lorena ISD has hired 6 of the 11 paid teacher residents.

During the Strategic Staffing design process, principal surveys identified a need for quality accelerated instruction. To help fill this need, teacher residents were placed in classrooms to facilitate small group instruction and tutor students. In addition, principal surveys revealed a need to provide quality instruction during teacher absences to reduce learning loss. Teacher residents have maintained quality instruction during teacher absences by serving as classroom substitutes.

Lorena ISD has identified a need for funding in order to sustain a competitive resident stipend. Lorena ISD has reallocated funds to sustain paid residencies at a rate of \$6,000.00 per resident (6 total) for the SY 24/25, which is significantly lower than the recommended \$20,000. This grant would allow LISD to increase the number of paid residents currently available to us through our EPP and provide a livable wage for residents.

In partnership with Texas Tech University and ESC Region 12, Lorena ISD successfully completed the two-year Strategic Staffing Design and Implementation process to create a successful Paid Teacher Residency model with the support of TCLAS D5 grant funding. Lorena ISD and TTU will continue to monitor, improve, and implement the strategic staffing models they have developed over the course of the TCLAS D5 grant. Lorena ISD will host six paid teacher residents in SY 24-25 with a goal of hiring at least 60% of the residents to help fill anticipated end-of-the-year vacancies.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

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, and include at least one person from the LEA and one person from the EPP.

Lorena ISD Assistant Superintendent (existing position), Dr. Rusty Grimm, has the experience to continue to lead campus and district teams to make programmatic decisions during sustainability. He also oversees payroll and staffing, so his expertise will support staffing and payroll plans developed by the Strategic Staffing team.

Lorena ISD Director of Curriculum and Instruction (existing position), Jessica Webb, was on the design and implementation team and has experience with project management. She will coordinate with the EPP to provide quality instructional training for residents and conduct data analysis to inform program implementation and sustainability.

Texas Tech Instructor and Site Coordinator (existing position), Dr. Brandi Ray, oversees TTU at Waco's teacher residency program. Dr. Ray will contribute her expertise in planning, implementing, and evaluating the ongoing paid residency program partnership with LISD and TTU. In addition, Dr. Ray will continue to help monitor the effectiveness of the program through the lens of an EPP, compare results to other similar programs, and share ideas to aid in further development of the program.

ESC Region 12 Strategic Staffing Technical Assistance will provide a trained SS consultant to assist LISD and TTU in making informed decisions to maintain the paid teacher residency program according to best practices as per the Texas Strategic Staffing guidelines. In the future, Lorena ISD would prefer to hire a position to serve as the program director. However, funds are not currently available.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed residency program. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives? How do these relate to broader educator pipeline goals/objectives at the LEA?

Through the paid teacher residency program, Lorena ISD endeavors to establish a sustainable, ongoing pipe line of year-long residents. This allows the District to vet candidates for an entire year and provides a pool of high-quality applicants to fill vacant positions. In addition, year-long teacher residents, as implemented in the current teacher residency program, receive much needed support from both the EPP and the District throughout the school year. This structure establishes a solid foundation for success for the resident's first year of teaching on their own. With that solid foundation, residents are well-prepared and feel confident in their ability to take on a classroom of their own. As a result, teacher morale is boosted and residents stay in the profession and the District longer, which reduces teacher turnover both locally and statewide.

Lorena ISD intends to use paid teacher residents to increase the number of highly trained instructional staff to serve as substitutes in the classroom. The District has experienced a well-documented shortage in substitute teachers. By working with the EPP through paid teacher residents, Lorena ISD will be able to decrease the shortage of substitute teachers and deliver high quality instruction at the same time.

Finally, through the use of paid residents, Lorena ISD will be able to expand its accelerated instruction and tutoring opportunities. Since Lorena ISD will utilize trained educators (paid teacher residents), the District will be able to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the accelerated instruction and tutoring programs.

Lorena ISD will use perception data from mentor and paid resident focus groups, teacher turnover rates (currently at 23.1%), and student performance data to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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.

Tools for measurement:

Lorena ISD intends to utilize student performance data on benchmark exams and standardized testing to compare classrooms with paid teacher residents to classrooms without paid teacher residents.

Lorena ISD will also examine teacher retention data to determine if teacher residents remain with the District and in the profession longer than those who become certified through other avenues.

Lorena ISD will investigate the number of times a resident serves as a substitute for class periods within the day and as a paid full day substitute.

Lorena ISD will examine the number of expanded tutoring and other accelerated instructional opportunities provided by using paid teacher residents.

To date, Lorena ISD and TTU (our EPP) partnered with a technical assistance provider to design and implement a plan for collecting data that effectively monitors their staffing models for substitute teaching and tutoring. All data will be reviewed by a sustainability team to monitor and adjust the effectiveness of staffing models and the experiences of all stakeholders.

A summary of the data collection plan is as follows:

- Two campus walk dates, one per semester
- Two focus group meetings, one per semester, for mentors, residents and principals
- Quarterly Governance meetings where data from EPP Pop cycles, campus visits and focus group meetings are shared with a sustainability team made up of members from the current design and implementation teams.
- EOY teacher vacancy data reports shared with the team in order to adjust recruitment plans during the final governance meeting.
- EOY student data shared with team to adjust staffing models during the end-of year governance meeting.

Budget Narrative

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 district will utilize grant funds to continue the current paid teacher residency program that has been currently administered using TCLAS Option 5 funds in 2023-2024 and prior academic years.

The proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the sustained paid teacher residency program by providing funds for teacher resident salaries, host teacher stipends, and a stipend for the program director. If awarded, district funds and grant funds will be combined to sustain the existing program. Teacher residents will be paid an annual salary of \$20,000 (Grant \$16,500 & District \$3,500) plus an allocation of approximately \$3,300 for related taxes, retirement, and benefits. Host teachers will be paid an annual stipend of \$3,000 (Grant \$1,500 & District \$1,500) plus an allocation of \$300 for related taxes, retirement, and benefits. In addition, the Project Director will be paid an annual stipend of \$5,000 (Grant \$5,000.00) plus an allocation of \$750.00 for related taxes, retirement, and benefits.

A supplies budget of \$900 is requested to provide an allowance of \$150 per teacher resident to purchase startup classroom management and instructional supplies.

In future years and without additional grant funds, the District plans to adjust staffing models and the general fund budget to accommodate the future needs in order to sustain the program.

The District has allocated 87.19% (required > 66%) of the grant directly to teacher resident stipends. In addition, the district has exceeded the required host teacher stipend with an anticipated spend of 7.93% (required > 6%). The overall direct administrative cost budget for this grant is 12.15% (required < 15%).

Program Requirements

1. Describe your Strategic Staffing Design Year (2022-2023).

- a. Who was part of the Design team from the LEA and EPP?
- b. What data did you use to inform design?
- c. To which model(s) did the LEA and EPP agree? How did they meet your instructional needs?

Strategic Staffing design Team for Lorena ISD:

Dr. Joe Kucera, Lorena ISD Superintendent
 Dr. Rusty Grimm ,Lorena ISD Assistant Superintendent
 Jessica Webb, Lorena ISD Director of Curriculum and Instruction
 Dr. Brandi Ray, Texas Tech Instructor and Site Coordinator
 Dr. Erin Balk, Texas Tech Instructor and Site Coordinator
 April Jewell, Primary (PK-2) Principal
 Dr. Liza Cunningham, Elementary Principal
 Jennifer Allison, Middle School Principal
 Dr. Mark Parsons , ESC 12 Strategic Staffing Technical Assistance

Data used to inform design: Campus principals from the primary, elementary and middle school campuses were surveyed to collect data on their campus' highest needs for instructional supports for students. According to the survey data collected the following needs were identified:

Primary (PK-2) : Guided Reading and Guided Math Intervention. More opportunities for students to work in small groups with a certified teacher. Student to teacher ratios, and a continued shortage of substitutes.

Elementary (3-5) Highest Need: 3rd, 4th & 5th Grade , all subjects. ESL, Special Education. ELAR teachers must be ESL certified, HB4545 tutoring needs.

Middle School (6-8) Highest Need: Quality teacher candidates for vacancies that meet certification requirements (content, state required additional certs.: ESL, STR. etc.) Assistance with state required tutoring (HB4545).

Strategic Staffing Models Selected: Lorena ISD and Texas Tech University EPP agreed to design and implement two Strategic Staffing models to meet the needs of the selected campuses.

Instructional Needs Met:. Teacher residents placed in classrooms to facilitate small groups for effective accelerated instruction and to tutor students, filled a need for instructional supports to accelerate learning. Lorena ISD was able to keep students on pace and mitigate learning loss by providing continuous quality instruction through using teacher residents as classroom substitutes when teachers were absent.

Program Requirements (Cont.)

2. Describe your Strategic Staffing Implementation Year (2023-2024).

- a. Was the Implementation Year team different than the Design team? If so, why?
- b. What improvements did the LEA and EPP(s) make throughout implementation year to improve the residency experience for residents, host teachers, and principals?
- c. What improvements need to be implemented for the 2024-2025 school year?
- d. What percentage of residents will the LEA hire at the end of this year?

Implementation Team:

Dr. Joe Kucera, Lorena ISD Superintendent
 Dr. Rusty Grimm, Lorena ISD Assistant Superintendent
 Jessica Webb, Lorena ISD Director of Curriculum and Instruction
 Dr. Brandi Ray, Texas Tech Instructor and Site Coordinator
 Dr. Erin Balk, Texas Tech Instructor and Site Coordinator
 April Jewell, Primary (PK-2) Principal
 Dr. Liza Cunningham, Elementary Principal
 Jennifer Allison, Middle School Principal
 ESC 12 Strategic Staffing Technical Assistance Shirley Strong (initially Dr. Mark Parsons and transitioned to Shirley Strong).

* With the exception of the technical assistance provider from TEA, the implementation team is the same as the design team. Region 12 changed the TA provider to accommodate a staffing change at the service center. The initial TA provider for Region 12 was Mark Parsons, and was transitioned to Shirley Strong.

Implementation Year Improvements to LISD Model:

Lorena ISD has hosted teacher residents through Texas Tech University using a similar model for EPP support alongside District support for multiple years prior to TCLAS. However, the District was not able to provide a paid teacher residency until TCLAS. Lorena ISD has established a strong working relationship with the EPP and a solid format for supporting teacher residents. Therefore, there has not been a need to make additional improvements for the implementation year. However, as a small, rural District, grant funding and technical support from Region 12 is imperative to sustain a paid teacher residency program at the current level. Paid teacher residencies are key to mitigating recruiting challenges and minimizing learning loss while teachers are absent. Other Districts in the area will likely have the resources available to continue to provide adequate paid teacher resident opportunities, which will put Lorena ISD at a noteworthy disadvantage.

Improvements that need to be implemented for the 24-25 school year:

In the absence of ongoing funding opportunities, it will be imperative to continue to investigate other opportunities within the District to offset costs associated with implementation of the paid teacher residency program. Specifically, Lorena ISD will investigate additional tutoring opportunities such as after school and before school accelerated instruction to meet HB 4545 requirements. Priority for these instructional opportunities would be given to the teacher residents. Unknown student growth and need for tutoring, based off of upcoming state assessments, limits the District's ability to accurately identify magnitude of need at this time. However, the District has experienced significantly more growth over the 2023-2024 school year than in previous years and a recent demographic study indicated that a fast growth trend will continue. Therefore, the District anticipates additional needs for before school and after school tutoring opportunities, since the needs associated with student growth will outpace the ability for campuses to provide necessary tutoring through master scheduling during the regular school day.

Program Requirements (Cont.)

3. Sustainability Assessment - Please answer the following questions with consideration for existing funding at the LEA. Do not use Texas COVID Learning Acceleration Supports (TCLAS) data to answer the questions below.

- a. How many residents will the LEA place for the 2024-2025 school year?
- b. At what amount can the LEA sustain resident stipends? Host teacher stipends?
- c. What sources of funds will the LEA be using for residents? Host teachers?

Lorena ISD will place a minimum of 6 paid teacher residents for the 2024-2025 school year. In addition, Lorena ISD has the capacity for 3 additional non-paid teacher residents, if the EPP is able to provide 9 total, eligible residents.

Lorena ISD is committed to providing up to \$3,000 per intern, for a total of \$18,000 plus the cost of benefits (see budget worksheet for additional details). In addition, the district is committed to provide the interns additional pay through their service as a substitute teacher, as allowed by our EPP (Texas Tech University), and before-school and after-school tutoring opportunities. The substitute and tutoring opportunities allow for an additional \$3,000. This brings the total stipend to \$6,000 for each paid teacher resident. This plan helps alleviate the burden of district costs associated with paid teacher residencies by supplanting regular costs incurred by the district for substitute teacher and tutoring pay with pay toward teacher residencies.

The entire cost of the teacher residency program will be paid out of the regular Lorena ISD Maintenance and Operations budget. The total stipend available to teacher interns is \$6,000. The first \$3,000 per intern will be additional cost that must be incurred by the district. The remaining \$3,000 will be a cost offset since the teacher residents will be providing a service that would already be incurred by the district to pay substitute teachers and after-school tutors.

Program Requirements (Cont.)

4. **Continued Implementation** - Please answer the following questions about the implementation of the residency designed for the 2024-2025 school year.
- What are the requirements for host teachers to receive their stipend?
 - Who at the LEA manages the residency program? If this person has other job responsibilities, how do they relate to residency?
 - What is your governance structure? Who is responsible for setting agendas for those meetings?

The following is required of mentor teachers to receive their stipend:

- at least 2 years of credible teaching experience as a certified teacher
- work within the district as a certified teacher for at least one year
- complete an annual application for mentor teacher
- receive a recommendation from their current campus administration
- attend mentor teacher training conducted by the site coordinator 3 times per semester
- regularly and effectively consult with the site coordinator regarding resident teacher progress
- complete a survey provided by the EPP regarding performance of the teacher resident.
- Work collaboratively with teacher interns to plan, deliver, and assess instruction using the co-teach model consistent with the resident teacher's progress through the Teacher Education Program.
- Provide time for instructional events during which a resident teacher can conduct apply and evaluate assignments and performance assessments.
- Work collaboratively with the site coordinator to guide improvement of the resident teacher's instructional competency and professionalism through coaching and high-quality feedback.
- Establish and maintain a professional relationship and open communication with Texas Tech site coordinator and resident teacher.

The assistant superintendent manages the paid residency program. The assistant superintendent has many other responsibilities including but not limited to transportation, human resources, school safety and security, Title IX Coordinator, and McKinney-Vento Liaison. Human resources is the sole responsibility of the assistant superintendent. Therefore, this role directly relates to the teacher residency program through the aspects of recruiting and retention of high quality instructional staff. In addition, the assistant superintendent also makes recommendations for compensation and pay structures associated with every position in the district.

Two governance meetings are scheduled per semester. To date, our EPP (Texas Tech University), Region 12 (technical assistance provider), and Lorena ISD have all worked together to set the agenda and schedule meetings. Without Region 12's technical support in the upcoming school year, the EPP and Lorena ISD will work together to set governance meeting dates and agendas. However, if funds allow, it is the goal of Lorena ISD to retain Region 12 as a technical assistance provider for support for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.

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