

LASO Cycle 3 (2024-2025)

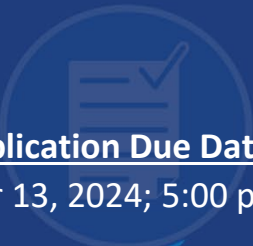
Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2024-2025 Blended Learning Grant

Program Guidelines

REVISED 10/24/25

Authorized by General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III,
Rider 68, 88th Texas Legislature



Grant Application Due Date

December 13, 2024; 5:00 p.m. CST

Table of Contents

<i>LASO Cycle 3 (2024-2025) Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities</i>	1
Grant Program Guidelines	3
Introduction	4
Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines	4
Errata Notices	4
Overview of the Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC) Grant Process	5
Contact for Clarifying Information	6
Grant Program Contact	6
Funding Contact	6
U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations	7
Timeline	8
Grant at a Glance	9
Authorizing Legislation	9
Where to Submit the Grant Application	9
Purpose of Program	9
Eligible Applicants	9
Shared Services Arrangement	10
Application Funding	10
Supplement, Not Supplant	11
Limitation of Administrative Funds	11
Pre-Award Costs	11
Grant Application	11
Program Elements	16
Allowable Activities and Use of Funds	19
Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds	20
Attachments	21
Required Program-Related Attachments	21
Required Fiscal-Related Attachments	21
LASO Scoring and Review	21
LASO Review and Funding Criteria	21
Priority Points	23
Oral Interviews for Funding	23

Grant Program Guidelines

Grant Name as it will appear on the TEA Grant Opportunities Page	2024-2025 Blended Learning Grant Program Guidelines
Application Due Date	December 13, 2024; 5:00 p.m. CT
Program Authority	General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 68, 88th Texas Legislature

Introduction

TEA, as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA), Program Guidelines, is to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² Grantee is defined as the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the federal government for the use of the funds provided. The term "grantee" does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors that may receive funds from a grantee. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Overview of the Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC) Grant Process

The following steps provide a high-level overview of the process for responding to a grant opportunity, including submitting an application, and being selected for funding:

1. TEA publishes IDC application and supporting documents on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#).
2. Eligible applicants submit the grant application via Qualtrics by the specified deadline in this document.
3. Grant applications are reviewed and scored. Note: The highest scoring applicants may be required to attend an oral interview or respond to questions regarding their IDC application.
4. TEA announces applicants selected for funding on the TEA [Grants Awarded Data](#) webpage.
5. Applicants selected for funding will be required to submit and certify an eGrants funding application including assurances and a budget summary to receive funding. Note: All data submitted in the grant application is incorporated into the eGrants funding application under the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).
6. TEA staff conducts budget negotiations on the IDC application.
7. Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) issued upon successful completion of the negotiation process.

Contact for Clarifying Information

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *TEA Contacts*.

The following TEA staff member should be contacted with questions:

Grant Program Contact

Program manager name	Michael Strange
Program manager title	Blended Learning Program Manager
Program manager email	Michael.Strange@tea.texas.gov
Program manager phone	(512) 463-9616

Funding Contact

Program manager name	Competitive Grants Unit
Program manager title	Grants Administration Division
Program manager email	competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov
Program manager phone	(512) 463-8525

U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education Appropriations Act:

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Total funds available for this project	\$6 million
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	0%
Amount of federal funds	0
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	100%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$6 million

* Should additional funding become available for this program, the agency may add it to the base amount indicated above and fund additional qualifying awardees until all funding is exhausted.

Timeline

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Date	Event
October 1, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.	General Webinar Option 1 Registration link can be found on the LASO 3 website .
October 3, 2024 at 3:00 p.m	General Webinar Option 2 Registration link can be found on the LASO 3 website .
October 14, 2024	Grant application available LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on October 14, 2024. Please see the LASO 3 website for more information.
October 17, 2024 at 1:00 p.m	Program Specific Webinar Option 1 Registration link can be found on the LASO 3 website .
October 22, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.	Program Specific Webinar Option 2 Registration link can be found on the LASO 3 website .
November 1, 2024	Deadline to submit questions for the final FAQ document Applicants may email their questions to the LASO central inbox at LASO@tea.texas.gov .
November 13, 2024	FAQ Publishing The FAQs for this grant program will be posted to the TEA Grant Opportunities page and LASO website no later than the date listed on the Grant Timeline. See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions.
December 13, 2024	Due date for the IDC Qualtrics application The LASO 3 application must be received by the TEA by 5:00 p.m., Central Time. See General and Fiscal Guidelines , LASO 3 Application Due Date and Time.
December 20, 2024- January 30, 2025	Application review period, including interviews if necessary See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Review Process
February 20, 2025	Anticipated award announcement
February 20, 2025	eGrants ADC and Application opens for awarded applicants
March 1, 2025	Beginning date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
April 07, 2025	Due Date for eGrants Application
January 29, 2027	Amendment due date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
April 30, 2027	End date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period

Grant at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant is authorized by the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 68, 88th Texas Legislature; TEC Sec 28.020 – Math Innovation Zones - and 29.924 – Blended Learning Grant Program-28.020(a)(2): "from funds appropriated or donated for purposes of this section, award a grant to support implementation of innovative mathematics instruction at the campus in accordance with this section. 29.924(b): "From funds appropriated or available for purposes of this section, the commissioner shall establish a grant program to assist school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in developing and implementing effective blended learning models, including an innovative mathematics instructional program at a campus designated as a mathematics innovation zone as provided by Section 28.020. In awarding grants under the program, the commissioner shall give priority to school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that have the highest enrollment of students who are educationally disadvantaged."

Where to Submit the Grant Application

LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on October 14, 2024. Please see the [LASO 3 website](#) for more information.

Purpose of Program

The Blended Learning Grant opportunity has two distinct cohorts and associated purposes that applicants will select from, as described below.

The Blended Learning Planning cohort will support school districts and open-enrollment charter schools through a planning stage to design and subsequently implement a high-quality blended learning model in math (through Math Innovation Zones - MIZ) and Reading Language-Arts (RLA) aligned with a High-Quality Instructional Material curriculum (HQIM).

The Blended Learning Strategic Operations cohort will support school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in leveraging a blended learning model to make a strategic operational shift to scheduling, staffing and/or budgets. This shift will seek to make robust operational changes in order to optimize campus staffing models for teachers while maximizing academic impact for students. The grant is available to LEAs that have successfully completed a planning phase of either Math Innovation Zones or RLA Blended Learning grants. Applicants will select a blended model that will require significant operational and staffing shifts to rethink time in a teacher-centric way at the participating campus(es). More information about these models is available in the Description of Program Section below.

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility for Funding.

The eligible applicants are:

- Eligible applicants to the Blended Learning Planning cohort are those LEAs who have previously participated or currently participating in strong Tier 1 math and/or reading curriculum planning TEA initiatives. (i.e. LASO 2 Strong Foundations, LASO 1 Strong Foundations, TCLAS Strong Foundations, or CRIMSI).
- Eligible applicants to the Blended Learning Strategic Operations cohort are those LEAs who have previously participated in TEA Blended Learning Grants (i.e. Math Innovation Zones, Blended Learning Grant Program, or School Action Fund Redesign- Blended Learning). Applicants must have shown high usage in approved supplemental products in math and/or reading language arts for grades K-8 in spring of 2024.

Education Service Centers (ESCs) are not eligible to apply.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed.

Application Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#): *Continuation Funding, Fund Management, and Use of Funds*.

Planning Cohort

It is anticipated that approximately 10 applicant(s) will be awarded up to \$275,000.

Strategic Operations Cohort

It is anticipated that approximately 14 applicant(s) will be awarded up to \$370,000.

* Should additional funding become available for this program, the agency may add it to the base amount indicated above and fund additional qualifying awardees until all funding is exhausted.

Planning Grantees will be funded using the following formula:

$$\$100,000 + (\$10,000 \times \# \text{ of participating campuses}) + (\$40 \times \# \text{ of participating students})$$

The maximum award is \$275,000 if awarded Math or RLA and \$375,000 if awarded Math and RLA

Strategic Operations Grantees will be funded using the following formula:

$$\$170,000 + (\$50,000 \times \# \text{ of participating campuses}) + (\$40 \times \# \text{ of participating students})$$

- There is a maximum award of \$370,000 per grantee.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be selected in rank order.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cost Share/Match Requirement.

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this grant program.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration's [Training and Other Resources](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision does apply to this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

NOTE: Administrative funds include **both** direct administrative costs **and** allowable indirect costs.

TEA limits the amount of funds that may be budgeted to administer the program, including direct administrative costs and indirect costs, to no more than 15% of the total Grant awarded.

For this state-funded Grant, the Grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to **the lesser** of its current, approved restricted indirect cost rate or 15%.

To calculate the maximum indirect costs that can be claimed for a Grant, complete the [Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet](#), located on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page.

Pre-Award Costs

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

Grant Application

This section identifies the types of requirements in which applicants must comply to be eligible for funding:

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)

- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)

Statutorily Required Responses

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Statutory Requirements.

The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program.

The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. Per TEC §22.0834, any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a grantee or subgrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *Fingerprinting Requirement*.
2. The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program. The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:
 - A. Implement with fidelity an innovative blended learning instructional program approved by the Commissioner for purposes of this section that addresses the essential knowledge and skills of the subject-specific curriculum required by Sections §29.924 and/or §28.020 of the TEC;
 - B. Comply with objectives, metrics, and other blended learning math and/or reading requirements imposed by the Commissioner through rules adopted under Subsection (g); and
3. Provide all data relating to the grant program requested by the agency.

TEA Application Required Responses

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), TEA Program Requirements.

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements based on grant pathway; Planning Cohort and Strategic Operations Cohort. Applicants must address within the application how they will achieve the following:

Planning Grant Program

1. LEAs must assign a project manager, other than the Superintendent, who is able to **dedicate 50% of time to managing grant**.
2. LEAs must provide the project manager's name and contact information.
3. LEAs must have participated in at least one of the following TEA Tier 1 curriculum planning grant cohorts
 - a. LASO 2.0 Strong Foundations Grant
 - b. LASO 1.0 Strong Foundations Grant
 - c. TCLAS Strong Foundations Grant
 - d. CRIMSI Grant
4. Participating campuses must serve grades K-8 Math or RLA by the end of the grant period
5. LEAs must choose to implement a Math, RLA or both blended products with your TEA-available core product.
6. LEAs must identify with core product that will be implemented with a blended learning model from the following:
 - a. Carnegie Texas Math Solutions 6-8
 - b. Eureka Math TEKS Edition K-5
 - c. Amplify Texas RLA K-5

- d. Or submit a different Math and/or RLA core product not included above that will need to be approved by TEA

Strategic Operations Grant Program

- 1) LEAs must assign a project manager, other than the Superintendent, who is able to **dedicate 50% of time to managing grant.**
- 2) LEAs must provide the project manager's name and contact information.
- 3) LEAs must have participated in current and/or previous TEA Blended Learning Grant program(s)
 - a) LASO 1.0 BLG Math (First year of execution in 2023-2024)
 - b) LASO 1.0 BLG RLA (First year of execution in 2023-2024)
 - c) TCLAS 3A Math (First year of execution in 2022-2023)
 - d) TCLAS 3A RLA (First year of execution in 2022-2023)
 - e) SAF Blended Learning Redesign (First year of Continuation in 2021-2022)
 - f) MIZ Grant (First year of execution in 2021-2022 or prior)
 - g) Non-Math (First year of execution in 2021-2022 or prior)
- 4) Participating campuses must serve, at least, each grade-band by the end of the grant period; K-2, 3-5, 6-8
- 5) LEAs must choose one or more models to implement (Large Scale Rotational Model, Student-Driven Flex Model, District-Proposed Model), requiring significant operational and staffing shifts, including a master teacher approach, at each participating campus(es).
- 6) If District-Proposed Model is chosen, LEAs will describe their initial plans including elements that maximize the number of students served by a master teacher and/or decrease the number of adults required while maintaining or increasing the quality of the academic experience.
- 7) LEAs will download and upload the following scoring template linked [here](#) to submit with calculations for the questions below:
 - a) How many supplemental products were implemented for each blended model(s) at the applicant campus(es)
 - b) Name of supplemental product implemented for each blended model(s) at the applicant campus(es)
 - c) List the recommended supplemental product usage target (e.g., '30 minutes per week', '2 lessons per week', etc.)
 - d) Identify campuses and grade-levels implementing the above supplemental product in the Spring of 2024
 - e) How many Total K-8 students are enrolled at the participating campuses above?
 - f) How many K-8 students participating in blended learning at participating campuses in the Spring of 2024?
 - g) What is the percentage of K-8 students participating in blended learning at participating campuses (questions f and e)?
 - h) Of the participating students in question f, how many of them are meeting the recommended supplemental product usage target (question c)?
 - i) What percentage of participating K-8 students met the supplemental product usage target, from the above two questions?
- 8) LEAs must choose to implement a supplemental blended product in Math, RLA or both with the districts TEA-available core product.

- 9) LEAs must identify with core product that will be implemented with a blended learning model from the following:
 - a) Carnegie Texas Math Solutions 6-8
 - b) Eureka Math TEKS Edition K-5
 - c) Amplify Texas RLA K-5
 - d) Or submit a different Math and/or RLA product not included above that will need to be approved by TEA
- 10) Participating campus will implement the above core and supplemental products for their selected grade-levels and student population.

Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Provisions and Assurances.

- 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 Grant 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.
1. The applicant assures 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 assures to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the Program Guidelines.
 3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
 4. 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.
 5. The applicant acknowledges that Per Section 22.0834 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives Grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a Grantee or subGrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding Grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fingerprinting Requirement.
 6. The LEA will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.
 7. The LEA will regularly submit their expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on-track for grant expenditures.

In addition to the grant assurances above, TEA has established the following program-specific assurances based on grant pathway; Planning Cohort and Strategic Operations Cohort.

The following assurances apply **grant-wide for both cohorts** (Blended Learning Planning and Blended Learning Strategic Operations):

- 1) The grantee will designate and provide a **district-level project manager** who will be available to **dedicate approximately 50%** of his or her time to designing and implementing the blended learning plan and who has decision making authority to act on developed plan.
- 2) The LEA agrees to designate and share with TEA and vendors an **LEA level lead/sponsor** for communication for logistics and usage monitoring. They also agree that this information is updated and maintained throughout the grant.
- 3) The LEA agrees to designate and share with TEA and vendors a **campus level lead/sponsor** for communication for logistics and usage monitoring. They also agree this is updated and maintained throughout the grant.
- 4) The grantee agrees to work with a third-party vendor to complete a technology audit for a landscape analysis of supplemental products currently purchased and/or used at campuses.
- 5) The grantee will submit fidelity of planning deliverables prior to the beginning of the first school year, including but not limited to the following:
 - a) master schedule
 - b) Assessment calendar
 - c) stakeholder engagement plan
 - d) professional learning calendars
- 6) The grantee will complete execution deliverables in program implementation during the grant period, including but not limited to the following:
 - a) Student usage progress towards the selected adaptive software program recommended metrics.
 - b) Sharing student [TSDS](#) unique IDs with select software product vendor for TEA quarterly reports.
 - c) Sharing unit assessment data from core curriculum
 - d) Complete all required training(s) to build competency with the adaptive software product.
 - e) Completing all required research surveys throughout the grant program period
- 7) The grantee will participate in required communities of practice and any additional grant program meetings.
- 8) The grantee must use an online curriculum, including an adaptive software program and Tier 1 High-Quality Instructional Material (HQIM), both approved by TEA.
- 9) The grantee will complete all required training(s) to build competency in the online curriculum.
- 10) The grantee must implement the online curriculum program in all grade levels selected to participate in the Blended Learning grant.
- 11) The grantee will complete annual reflection and revision plans in implementation years to continuously improve upon blended learning and/or strategic operations planning.
- 12) The grantee must implement the digital adaptive software program in grade levels selected to participate in the Blended Learning grant.
- 13) The grantee will adhere to all statutory requirements in TEC Sections 28.020 and 29.924 including, but not limited to:
 - a) Develop a plan to implement a blended learning model according to statute requirements.
 - b) Implement the model across at least one full grade level at the campus and expand to other grade levels and/or campuses.

- c) Require teachers to differentiate instruction for all students in a grade level using a research-backed blended learning model.
- d) Provide teachers and other relevant personnel with professional development opportunities regarding blended learning.
- e) Require the use of a proficiency-based assessment

In addition to the grant-wide assurances above, the following assurances apply to the **Blended Learning Planning** cohort:

- 1) The grantee will submit strategic planning deliverables in the first year of implementation, such as a master schedule, assessment calendar, stakeholder engagement plan, professional learning calendars, etc.
- 2) The grantee will complete blended learning execution requirements in program implementation, including student progress on selected online curriculum, unit assessment data from High Quality Instructional Material (HQIM) curriculum, and evidence of training completion.

In addition to the grant-wide assurances above, the following assurances apply to the **Blended Learning Strategic Operations** cohort:

- 1) The grantee will establish a cross-departmental steering committee, which includes a representative from the finance team, to facilitate strong planning and implementation.
- 2) The grantee will select one of the following three operational models to plan for and implement: 1.) Large Scale Rotational Model, 2.) Flex Model, or 3.) District Proposed Model. These operational models will require significant adjustments to staffing models (e.g., one master teacher leading a large group of students with the support of paraprofessionals or teacher aides). See Description of Program section for full definition of each model.
- 3) The grantee will develop and submit strategic planning deliverables in the six months of the grant (March 2025 - August 2025) tailored to the operational model selected.
- 4) The grantee will pilot the proposed model in the 2025-2026 school year with at least one full grade level at the participating campus(es).
- 5) The grantee will fully implement the selected model in the 2026-2027 school year in all proposed grade levels at the participating campus(es).

Program Elements

Description of Program

Blended learning combines face to face instruction with online learning to provide access to core tier 1 instruction for all students while differentiating supplemental instruction based on individual student needs with powerful, adaptive online curriculum.

The Blended Learning grant will support school districts and open-enrollment charter schools through one of two pathways:

The Blended Learning Planning cohort, starting in spring of 2025, to design and subsequently implement a high-quality blended learning model in math (through Math Innovation Zones) and reading language arts (RLA)

aligned with an approved High Quality Instructional Material as core curriculum. Implementation will continue in the 2025-2026 school year through the 2026-2027 school year.

Awarded LEAs will receive funding support for associated expenses to plan for and implement a high-quality blended learning model. Expenditures can include licenses for approved products, professional learning opportunities for high fidelity use of these products, technical assistance for designing and implementing a blended learning model, and other costs related to the implementation of a blended learning model.

The Blended Learning Strategic Operations cohort will support school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in leveraging a blended learning model to make a strategic operational shift to scheduling, staffing and/or budgets. This shift will seek to optimize campus staffing models for teachers while maximizing academic impact for students. It is available to LEAs that have successfully completed a planning phase of either Math Innovation Zones or RLA Blended Learning grants.

Strategic Operations grantees will select from three operational models to be implemented at the campus level. Each model will require significant operational and staffing shifts at the participating campus(es). The three models are:

1. Rotation Model

Description: In the Rotation model, students rotate through two or more stations on a fixed schedule set by the teacher; including the technology station and teacher station. This model will leverage a flexible scheduling arrangement with a master teacher and other paraprofessionals making use of spaces both inside and outside of the traditional classroom setting. Online learning will be the main driver of the student learning experience through an adaptive software program with support from teachers in a small group and/or 1:1 setting.

Example: A campus has three 2nd grade math classrooms with one experienced math teacher, one brand-new teacher, and one long term substitute teacher. Instead of operating three classrooms separately with their own teachers, the classrooms will work together to incorporate a rotation model within a 90-minute daily math course. Approximately 75 students start each class with the same assigned teacher and are given the day's instructions including which teacher to start with based on previous data (e.g., exit ticket, adaptive software data). After the brief whole group instruction, students move to their specific station, each facilitated by one of the three teachers:

1. Small group station with the master teacher for on-level instruction and reteach
2. Adaptive software station that differentiates students learning needs
3. Collaborative/Independent station where students work in small groups or individually toward a specific learning objective.

Note: The above model can occur in separate nearby classrooms simultaneously, each classroom dedicated to a specific station, with students moving to specific classrooms on a set schedule or one large classroom with specific areas dedicated to each station.

2. Student-Driven Flex Model

Description: In the Flex model, students move on a fluid schedule among learning activities according to their own needs with the guidance of a master teacher and other paraprofessionals. Online learning is the main driver of the student learning experience through an adaptive software program. Teachers provide support and instruction on a flexible, as-needed basis while students work through course curriculum and content. This model can give students a high degree of control over their learning.

Example: A campus has two 5th grade reading language arts classrooms with one experienced math teacher and one paraprofessional teacher. Instead of operating two classrooms separately with their own teachers, the classrooms will work together to incorporate a flex model within a 90-minute daily RLA course. Approximately 60 students start each class with the same assigned teacher and are given the day's instructions including which teacher to start with based on previous data (e.g., exit ticket, adaptive software data). After the brief whole group instruction, students access their weekly individualized agenda (i.e. playlist, workplan, etc) through a dedicated learning management system (LMS) that is created by the teaching team each week and use this agenda as their self-directed guide for the weeks learning activities and such as the following:

1. Online instruction through teacher created videos + activities and/or adaptive software lessons.
2. Offline learning activities such as group collaboration, projects, independent study with on-demand feedback provided to students after completion.
3. Teacher support through small group intervention, workshops, and/or 1:1 conferencing with students throughout the week

Note: The above model can occur in separate nearby classrooms simultaneously, with students moving to specific classrooms based on need. However, one large classroom space would be the most ideal setting.

3. District-Proposed Model

Description: Districts may propose an operational shift not included above that will leverage a master teacher and adaptive software program to shift scheduling, staffing and/or budgets. This shift will seek to optimize campus staffing models for teachers while maximizing academic impact for students. This shift must maximize the number of students served by a master teacher and/or decrease the number of adults required while maintaining or increasing the quality of the academic experience.

Qualifications and Experience

The applicant agrees to provide data on the qualifications and experience of the existing or future staff members, as required per the program guidelines as follows:

- LEAs must identify a project manager who is able to navigate across departments in the LEA to facilitate strong planning and implementation processes.
- Note: Strategic Operations cohort should have a project manager with district-level decision making authority on campus staffing, scheduling, and/or budgeting

Performance and Evaluation Measures

The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance and evaluation measures:

- The grantee must submit strategic planning deliverables such as a master schedule, assessment calendar, stakeholder engagement plan, professional learning calendars, etc.
- The grantee will complete blended learning execution requirements in program implementation. For planning grantees, this includes but is not limited to student progress on selected online curriculum, unit assessment data from OER curriculum, and evidence of training completion. For strategic operations grantees, this includes but is not limited to student progress on selected online curriculum, year-over-year teacher retention and satisfaction data, and annual reflection and revision plans.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

Applicants should make every effort to ensure that contracted evaluators are independent and objective.

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds.

Allowable activities and use of funds for this Grant include only the following:

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Planning Cohort:

- Payroll costs, as described below:
- Contracted Services: Funding to contract with an approved online adaptive curriculum vendor (required) for technical assistance and training and for an approved implementation vendor (optional) to support implementation of the blended model.
- Supplies and Other Programming Costs: Funding to support implementation of the blended programming, including licenses, technology, supplies related to blended learning, and personnel expenses
- Capital outlay- for technology supplies and/or infrastructure only.

Strategic Operations Cohort

- Payroll costs, as described below:
- Contracted Services: funding to contract with an approved design and implementation vendor (required) for technical assistance to support planning and implementation of the new operational model. Note: 15% of awarded funds will be dedicated to the budget towards phase 2 and phase 3 grant implementation support by an approved technical assistance provider.
- Capital outlay- for technology supplies and/or infrastructure only.

Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — allowable costs include: The bullets below are for SBITA, but there are other debt service possibilities.

- Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
- Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)

- Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
- Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)

Other Allowable Operating Costs Requiring Specific Approval in the Grant Application (6400)

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are allowable.

Out-of-state travel costs should be minimal. Travel costs are allowable as long as the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items are only incurred by employees on official business of the Grantee and follow the Grantee's regular business operations and written travel policy.

Out-of-state travel will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Out-of-State Travel form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Travel Costs for Officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members

Travel costs for officials such as executive director, superintendent, or board members may be funded under the Grant program.

Only the following travel costs may be allowable for these positions:

- Personalized or Blended Learning Practices
- Innovation or Technology Innovation Practices
- Leadership & Change Management

Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences

Conferences may be hosted or sponsored under the Grant program.

Conferences must be managed to minimize costs to the Grant award. The following types of conferences may be allowable:

- Personalized or Blended Learning Practices
- Innovation or Technology Innovation Practices

Hosting or sponsoring of conferences will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on unallowable costs.

- Operating transfers out

- Costs for travel for students to conferences may not be funded under the Grant program (does not include field trips).
- Field trips may not be funded under the Grant program.
- Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may not be funded under the Grant program.
- Non-employee costs for conferences may not be funded under the Grant program.
- The cost of membership in any civic or community organization may not be funded under the Grant program.
- An advisory council may not be funded under the Grant program.

In addition, unallowable activities and use of funds for this Grant include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — unallowable costs include:
 - a. Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
 - b. Audit services for state-funded Grants

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with your Qualtrics application:

Required Program-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Required Program-Related Attachments, for a general description of program-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

The applicant must submit with the application the following required program related [attachments](#).

1. Software Usage Scoring Attachment for Spring 2024 (Use the following naming convention when submitting: *[LEA Name] Supplemental Usage Scoring Attachment – Spring 2024*)

Reminder: Do not submit unsolicited attachments. Unsolicited attachments will not be reviewed.

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fiscal-Related Documentation Required to Be on File, for a general description of fiscal-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

This does not apply to this grant.

LASO Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of LASO applications.

LASO Review and Funding Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *Review Successful Participation Criteria*

Planning Cohort	Description	Ranking or Points Scored
Part 1 - Scoring	Applicants will be prioritized in rank order by participation in the following TEA initiatives. These initiatives indicate successful planning for and implementation of core Tier 1 products, enabling readiness for the applicant to plan for and implement aligned high quality supplemental products through the Blended Learning Planning Grant.	1. LASO 2 Strong Foundations 2. LASO 1 Strong Foundations 3. TCLAS Decision 2 SAVL 4. TCLAS Decision 2 CRIMSI 5. CRIMSI
Part 2 – Scoring	LEAs will be ranked within each priority level by percent of student population identified as • highest to lowest percentage of economically disadvantaged and be distributed evenly between Math and RLA cohorts until funding is exhausted and awarded accordingly. In the case of a tie with any resulting LEAs with matching economically disadvantaged numbers, LEAs will be ranked by percentage of K-8 student population participating in blended learning across the entire LEA.	% Eco Dis = # of points (ex: 85% economically disadvantaged = 85 points)
Total Standard Review Points Possible	Applies to Planning Cohort	100 pts
Strategic Operations Cohort	Description	Ranking or Points Scored
Part 1 – Scoring	Applicants will be scored in two ways: 1. The percentage of K-8 blended learning students participating in supplemental product implementation at participating campus(es).	1-14% 0pts 15-40% 5 pts 41-80% 10 pts 81-100% 15 pts
Part 2 – Scoring	2. The percentage of students meeting high-fidelity usage of a supplemental product implemented during the Spring of 2024. LEAs will calculate and submit an application "high-fidelity usage" as the following: a. Measured as number of students at the participating campus(es) meeting research-based fidelity in Spring of 2024 for the associated blended product out of the total number of students participating in blended learning in participating campuses. Points will be awarded accordingly: In the case of a points tie, LEAs will be ranked by percent of student population identified as highest to lowest percentage of economically disadvantaged	1-40% 10 pts 41-80% 20 pts 81-100% 30 pts

Part 3 - Scoring	3. Finalists (highest number of applicants based on part 1 and part 2 scoring and funding availability) are invited to final interviews will be assigned points based on the interviews in three areas: assessing need, leadership buy-in, and understanding of the type of shift needed.	15 pts
Total Standard Review Points Possible	Applies to Strategic Operations cohort ONLY	60 pts
Note: TEA may request follow up usage evidence from the provided supplemental product vendor for Spring 2024 supplemental usage data from the submitted Software Usage Scoring Attachment for award finalists. • Evidence will include: • Designated research usage target from submitted product(s) • Total number of students using each product(s) at proposed campuses. • Percentage of students by grade level who met research usage targets in the Spring 2024 semester at proposed campuses.		

Priority Points

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Priorities for Funding.

Oral Interviews for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *Oral Interviews for Funding*.

Applies to the Strategic Operations Cohort ONLY (No Oral Interviews for Planning cohort)

Applicant finalists invited to the virtual Oral Interview phase should include the following individuals in the Oral Interview process:

Superintendent or Superintendent delegate

Proposed grant Project Manager

Senior district leader directly responsible for overseeing curriculum and instruction for the selected campus(es)

Campus-level leader(s) directly responsible for overeeing implementation of blended model for the selected campus(es)

Interviews will assess readiness for a large-scale operational shift, including assessing need, leadership buy-in, and understanding of the type of shift is required. Districts will be scored in following way to determine readiness: finalist must have a **minimum score of 30 points** from the interview to be awarded (until funding is expired);

- Alignment of Strategic Operations-BLG with overall district strategy for school improvement (10 pts)

- Understanding of operation shift requirements and planning activities (10 pts)
- Presence of existing practices and policies to support Strategic Operations-BLG planning (10 pts)
- Support from district leadership and school board (5pts)
- Awareness of operational shift implementation challenges and mitigation strategies (5 pts)
- Plans for engaging technical assistance organizations (5pts)

If funding remains from the original finalist group, the next highest scoring applicant(s) from the part 1 and part 2 from the strategic operations funding criteria application scoring will be offered the opportunity to be interviewed for possible awarding.