

Informal Discretionary Competitive (IDC Grant)

LASO 2026-2027 (Cycle 5)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2027-2029 Early College High School (ECHS) Implementation Grant Program Guidelines

Authorized by General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Rider 48, College and Career Readiness School Models

Grant Application Due Date

December 1, 2026; 5:00 p.m. CST



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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers federal¹ and state grant awards to its subgrantees² to carry out a program. Such entities include primarily school systems (referred to as local educational agencies [LEAs] in statutes), including independent school districts and charter schools; education service centers (ESCs); and, to a lesser degree, institutions of higher education (IHEs), nonprofit organizations (NPOs), and other statutorily allowable organizations.

The following Program Guidelines apply to all eligible subgrantees for the designated grant program.

The Program Guidelines, as part of the request for application (RFA), are to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions or other RFA requirements, as listed for the grant on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of Application Part 1 (PDF narrative schedules) and Application Part 2 (Excel budget schedules). An eligible applicant must submit both parts of the SAS to apply for funding, unless specifically delineated in these guidelines.

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

Requirement for Username and Password

To access eGrants and apply for this grant, you must have access to the [TEA Login \(TEAL\)](#). Follow these steps to apply for usernames and passwords on TEAL:

1. Visit the [TEA Login \(TEAL\)](#) page of the TEA website. Select [Request New User Account](#) to begin the process of applying for a TEAL account online.
2. Once you have been assigned a TEA Login (TEAL) account, log into TEAL and under Self-Service select My Application Accounts.
3. The My Accounts tab will open. Select Request New Account, then find eGrants in the list and follow the instructions to submit your request.
4. Entities with existing TEAL accounts but no eGrants accounts should email competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov to ensure proper access to eGrants and this application.
5. If the application does not appear in your “Apply for Eligible Grants” section in your eGrants homepage, please email competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

¹ TEA is the grantee and pass-through entity for federal education funding. *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 pursuant to a subgrant or contract. (34 CFR 77.1) *Pass-through entity* is defined as a recipient or subrecipient that provides a subaward to a subrecipient (including lower tier subrecipients) to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.1)

² *Subgrantee* is defined by TEA to be the same as a *subrecipient*, which is defined in 2 CFR 200.1 as an entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal award. The term does not include an individual that is a beneficiary or participant of the program. For purposes of the request for application (RFA), TEA may use the terms *subgrantee*, *grantee*, *subrecipient*, and *applicant* synonymously.

6. For those entities without a prior relationship with TEA, and no TEAL accounts please email competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov with the following information prior to requesting a TEAL account:
 - a. Entity name
 - b. Entity full address – Street, city, state, zip code
 - c. County
 - d. Entity phone number
 - e. Entity email address
 - f. Entity Legal Authority - Name, title, email and phone
 - g. Entity Legal Authority Backup – Name, title, email and phone
 - h. Vendor ID/FEIN
7. All requests for TEAL and eGrants accounts must be submitted well in advance of the application deadline to avoid delays. Please note that this application process is both detailed and time intensive. It is the applicant's responsibility to plan accordingly and allocate sufficient time to complete, certify, and submit the application before the deadline.

Late submissions caused by delays in obtaining TEAL or eGrants access, or by technical issues, will not be accepted under any circumstances. To ensure a smooth process, we strongly recommend initiating account setup and application work as early as possible.

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 the grantee review all cross-referenced sections when preparing the application.

Errata Notices

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

Overview of LASO Process

The following steps provide a high-level overview of the process for responding to Informal Discretionary Competition (IDC), including submitting an IDC application, and being selected for funding:

1. TEA publishes IDC application and supporting documents on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#).
2. Eligible applicants submit the LASO application via Qualtrics by the specified deadline in this document.
3. IDC 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 eGrant funding application including assurances and a budget summary to receive funding. Note: All data submitted in the needs assessment 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.

Email Bulletins

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), GovDelivery Bulletins, as applicable.

Contact for Clarifying Information

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

The following TEA staff member should be contacted with questions:

Primary Program Contact: Darin Ford, CCRSM Statewide Coordinator

Primary Program Contact Email: darin.ford@tea.texas.gov

Primary Program Contact Phone: (512) 936-6060

Additional Program Contact: Krystal Garza, Postsecondary Preparation Program Director

Additional Program Contact Email: krystal.garza@tea.texas.gov

Additional Program Contact Phone: (512) 463-9371

Funding Manager: Competitive Grants Unit, Grants Administration Division

Funding Manager Email: competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov

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	\$909,763.00
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	\$909,763.00

**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.*

LASO Timeline

For all dates related to LASO, 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
September 14, 2026	General Webinar Option #1 Registration link 1 Webinar registration link can be found on the LASO website
September 18, 2026	General Webinar Option #2 Registration link 2 Webinar registration link can be found on the LASO website
September 23, 2026	LASO application available LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on September 23, 2026. Please see the LASO website for more information.
September 28, 2026	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. Applicants may email their questions to the LASO central inbox at LASO@tea.texas.gov See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions
October 21, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #1 Registration links found on the LASO website
October 22, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #2 Registration links found on the LASO website
November 1, 2026	FAQ question submission deadline
November 5, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. CT	Office Hours Registration links found on the LASO website
December 1, 2026	Due date for the LASO Qualtrics application. The LASO application must be received by the TEA by 5:00 p.m., CT. See TEA Grant Opportunities LASO Application Due Date and Time
December 2, 2026- January 30, 2027	Application review period, including interviews if necessary See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Review Process
February 8, 2027	Anticipated award announcement
February 8, 2027	eGrants ADC and Application opens for awarded applicants
March 2, 2027	Due Date for eGrants Application
March 2, 2027	Beginning date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
January 30, 2029	Final date to submit an amendment (if selected for funding)

April 30, 2029

End date of grant (if selected for funding)

Resources Available to Help Applicants Select the Most Appropriate Initiative(s)

An applicant that is eligible to apply for more than one initiative is encouraged to carefully review all available program information before submitting an application. To support applicants in determining which initiative or combination of initiatives best aligns with local needs, program goals, and eligibility requirements, the following resources are available:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Resource**
 Applicants may submit program-specific questions through the FAQ process to obtain clarification regarding eligibility requirements, allowable activities, program priorities, application expectations, and other grant-related topics. Responses to frequently asked questions may also provide additional guidance and interpretation of program requirements that can assist applicants in making informed decisions about which initiative(s) to pursue.
- Webinars**
 The Texas Education Agency (TEA) may offer informational webinars designed to provide an overview of available initiatives, application requirements, timelines, funding considerations, and program expectations. These live virtual presentations may include slide decks, demonstrations, and opportunities to address commonly asked questions. Recordings and presentation materials may be made available for later reference.
- Office Hours**
 TEA program staff may conduct designated office hours to provide technical assistance and support to prospective applicants.
- Additional Best-Fit Guidance Resources**
 TEA has developed supplemental resources to assist applicants in selecting the initiative or combination of initiatives that best aligns with local needs and strategic priorities. These resources include initiative-specific one-pagers, best-fit guidance presentations, and initiative coherence supports designed to help applicants understand program distinctions, identify complementary funding opportunities, and make informed application decisions. Resources can be found via the [LASO Cycle 5 website](#).

Note: Programmatic support is only available via webinars and the FAQ process. Office hours are for technical support only regarding application submittal prior to the application deadline.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize these resources prior to submitting an application. Participation in webinars, review of FAQ guidance, and engagement during office hours can help ensure a clear understanding of program requirements and assist applicants in identifying the funding opportunity that best supports their intended outcomes.

LASO at a Glance

Authorizing Legislation

Authorized by the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Rider 48, College and Career Readiness School Models.

Where to Submit the LASO Application

LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on September 23, 2026. Please see the LASO website for more information.

Purpose of Program

The Early College High School (ECHS) Implementation grant provides Designated and Designated with Distinction campuses with funding, expert technical assistance, and strategic improvement support to strengthen CCRSM implementation, expand student access to postsecondary opportunities, and accelerate CCMR outcomes.

The grant supports the sustained implementation and strategic expansion of high-quality Designated ECHS programs while prioritizing programs that broaden access for underserved students, align academic and support structures to improve program coherence, and deliver rigorous dual-credit pathways that lead to meaningful college and career success at no cost to students.

Eligible Applicants

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

All current CCRSM ECHS programs that are:

- Designated or designated with distinction programs;
- Demonstrating fidelity of implementation to CCRSM standards; and
- Deemed to have completed the annual [CCRSM Program Application](#) by the stated deadline.

CCRSM ECHS programs that currently fall under Designated Needs Improvement status are not eligible to apply.

***If a charter school closure is pending review, the award will be placed on hold pending a final determination regarding closure. If the final determination is to keep the charter open, the funding will be released. If the determination is to close the charter, making the charter ineligible, the award will be voided and no funds will be disbursed.*

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

Eligibility List

There is no eligibility list for this grant.

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*.

It is anticipated that up to 12 applicant(s) will be awarded up to \$75,814.00.

** 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.*

***If a charter school closure is pending review, the award will be placed on hold pending a final determination regarding closure. If the final determination is to keep the charter open, the funding will be released. If the determination is to close the charter, making the charter ineligible, the award will be voided and no funds will be disbursed.*

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.

TEA requires a 20% cost share/match for this 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.

Note Regarding Grantee Determination of Grant-Funded Position Functions as Administrative or Programmatic: The grantee is responsible for making case-by-case determinations to determine whether the functions of a grant-funded position are **administrative or programmatic**, or divided between both. There may be overlap in characteristics and activities, and no single factor or combination of factors is necessarily determinative. There are no uniform federal regulations that define how to characterize costs as either direct program or direct administrative costs. However, the organization must be consistent across programs in how they charge these costs. For more information, including considerations for making a determination regarding a grant-funded position, see the [Universal Errata](#) issued by TEA on July 15, 2026.

Direct Administrative Costs

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

Indirect Costs

For this grant program, the grantee may claim a maximum for allowable indirect costs equal to its current approved restricted indirect cost rate.

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.

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

Pre-Award Costs

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

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

LASO Application Requirements and Assurances

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

Statutorily Required Responses

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

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.

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. ECHS program: A school established under Texas Education Code (TEC), §29.908, that enables a student in Grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 who is at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by TEC, §29.081, or who wishes to accelerate completion of high school to combine high school courses and college-level courses. An ECHS program must provide for a course of study that, on or before the fifth anniversary of a student's first day of high school, enables a participating student to receive both a high school diploma and either an applied or academic associate degree, with a completed field of study curriculum, as defined by (TEC), §61.823, that is transferable toward a baccalaureate degree at one or more general academic teaching institutions, as defined by TEC, §61.003. 2.
2. The ECHS program must enter into an articulation agreement with IHEs that are accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in accordance with 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.25.

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. Applicants must address within the application how they will achieve the following:

1. Complete and submit the [CCRSM Program Application](#) by the established deadline and remain in compliance with all applicable CCRSM requirements.
2. Sustain and strategically improve a high-quality ECHS model aligned to CCRSM benchmarks and ECHS Blueprint requirements.
3. Effectively partner with and take full advantage of the free technical assistance provided by TEA and the TEA-designated technical assistance provider throughout the grant period.
4. Maintain and enhance a coordinated system of wraparound supports, engaging multiple stakeholders to promote student readiness, persistence, and success in rigorous academic and workforce pathways.
5. Maintain formal IHE partner agreements that support dual credit, advising, and student supports at no cost to students.
6. Maintain an active ECHS Leadership Design Team to lead campus decision-making, monitor

implementation, and support continuous program improvement.

7. The grant program will be funded by reimbursement once the NOGA has been issued and the grantee submits payment requests through the Expenditure Reporting (ER) system. See [Expenditure Reporting](#). The grantee is required to regularly request payment for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out.

Statutory or Program-Specific Assurances

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

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 IDC 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 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.
3. The applicant assures that it will adhere to all statutory and TEA program requirements as noted in the ECHS 2027-2029 Program Guidelines.
4. The applicant assures that it will adhere to all performance measures, as noted in the ECHS 2027-2029 Program Guidelines, and shall provide TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Equal Treatment of All Persons: Consistent with Article I, Section 3a of the Texas Constitution, the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, federal and State law, and Executive Order No. GA-55, Subrecipient represents and warrants that: 1. All conduct under this Subaward shall be administered and performed in a neutral manner without regard to race of persons; 2. Subrecipient shall not, in the specific performance of this Subaward, elevate one individual person over another, or advantage any one person over another, due to race; 3. Subrecipient shall not, in the specific performance of this Subaward, employ practices or engage in any advancement of the programs known as DEI, critical race theory, affirmative action, or other similar, divisive agendas; 4. Subrecipient's staff, agents, subgrantees, contractors, and subcontractors that are selected and employed in the specific performance of this Subaward shall be selected and employed solely on merit and the ability to perform; and 5. Subrecipient shall ensure that any subgrantees, contractors and their subcontractors participating in the specific performance of this Subaward represent and warrant to the provisions of this clause.
8. Biological Sex and No Preferred Pronouns: Subrecipient represents and warrants that it shall ensure

that all actions in specific performance of this Subaward shall comply with federal and state law and reflect that there are only two sexes. Subrecipient's employees, officers, representatives, subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors, and agents shall not, in performance of this Subaward, present, direct, request, or suggest the use of preferred personal pronouns in professional correspondence or presentations.

9. The school system will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.
10. The school system will regularly submit expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on track with grant expenditures.
11. The school system will participate in all required meetings and submit evidence of implementation at a monthly or quarterly cadence.
12. At TEA's request, ECHS programs must submit evidence demonstrating implementation of enrollment policies and practices that support equitable student access and align with statutory requirements. Documentation should verify the use of performance-blind admissions, open-access enrollment processes that encourage applications from all students, or a weighted lottery that prioritizes students identified as at-risk under TEC §29.081 and other targeted ECHS student populations.
13. At TEA's request, ECHS programs must submit evidence of sustained stakeholder engagement practices used to inform and strengthen program implementation. Documentation should demonstrate how student, parent, community, school system, school board, and postsecondary partner feedback is regularly solicited, analyzed, and incorporated into continuous program improvement, along with outreach activities that promote understanding of ECHS opportunities and outcomes.
14. At TEA's request, ECHS programs must submit a current, signed, and dated memorandum of understanding (MOU) and course articulation agreement with one or more accredited institutions of higher education (IHE) partners that fulfill statutory requirements. Documentation should demonstrate active implementation of the partnership and address curriculum alignment, instructional materials, academic calendars, pathways leading to an associate degree or up to 60 college credit hours, student enrollment and attendance processes, grading policies, statewide assessment administration, and data-sharing procedures.
15. At TEA's request, ECHS programs must submit evidence of a comprehensive system of wraparound supports designed to promote student success in rigorous high school and college coursework. Documentation should demonstrate implementation of coordinated academic, behavioral, and mental health supports, including academic mentoring, intervention and acceleration services, counseling and advising, parent engagement, peer mentoring, and connections to community-based resources and social services as needed. Evidence should demonstrate how these supports are monitored and refined to improve student outcomes.
16. ECHS programs will update and complete the [CCRSM Program Application](#) on or before the deadline and remain in compliance with applicable CCRSM requirements.
17. ECHS programs will share one practical product or presentation that highlights an effective ECHS practice such as TSIA best practices, recruitment strategies, data collection initiatives, or college credit partnerships by the end of the grant period.
18. The applicant agrees to complete the program-specific assurances for this LASO program listed in the Qualtrics application.

Program Elements

Description of Program

The Early College High School (ECHS) Implementation grant provides Designated ECHS campuses with funding, expert technical assistance, and strategic improvement support to strengthen CCRSM implementation, expand student access to postsecondary opportunities, and accelerate CCMR outcomes.

The grant supports the sustained implementation and strategic expansion of high-quality Designated ECHS programs while prioritizing programs that broaden access for underserved students, align academic and support structures to improve program coherence, and deliver rigorous dual-credit pathways that lead to meaningful college and career success at no cost to students. By investing in the continuous improvement of Designated ECHS campuses, this grant strengthens the systems, partnerships, and supports necessary to increase student success, improve CCMR outcomes and A-F accountability ratings, and sustain high-quality implementation of the CCRSM model. Key areas of support include:

- **Postsecondary Pathways:** Expands access to rigorous dual credit opportunities that promote college readiness, credential attainment, and stronger CCMR outcomes.
- **Technical Assistance:** Provides no-cost expert coaching and implementation support to strengthen ECHS quality, sustainability, and alignment with CCRSM benchmarks.
- **IHE Partnership Support:** Strengthens collaboration with accredited institutions of higher education to increase student access to tuition-free college coursework, credentials, and degree attainment opportunities.
- **Program Coherence:** Aligns academic pathways, advising, student supports, and postsecondary experiences within a cohesive framework that promotes student success.
- **Program Effectiveness:** Supports continuous improvement through data-informed program review, strategic planning, and monitoring of student outcomes.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

- The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the stakeholder input methods used to gather feedback about the program's implementation from students, parents, community members, and postsecondary partners.
- The applicant agrees to collect and report data on the annual CCRSM program application and submit it to TEA upon request.

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.

Note regarding travel costs, if allowable per guidance below: Any personnel approved in this grant must be reimbursed for travel according to the applicant's written policies and procedures; however, reimbursement may not exceed State of Texas mileage allowance, General Services Administration (GSA) hotel rate, and per

diem rate existing in the current Texas State Appropriations Act. The state travel guidelines require only reimbursement of actual costs paid and, therefore, prohibit per diem payments to travelers without reconciliation to actual costs expended. Note: Contractor travel is paid as it is described in the individual contract, not to exceed the State rates, and may or may not be delineated out specifically in the contract.

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

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Professional and contracted services.
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials.
- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — allowable costs include SBITA, but there are other unallowable debt service options (see unallowable): Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514); Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526).
- Capital outlay.
- Teacher professional development.
- Staff and student tuition and fees for higher education, public, and nonpublic schools for the following: Services rendered by institutions of higher education (IHEs) for the benefit of school system personnel when payment is made directly to the institution.
- Staff and student tuition and fees for higher education, public, and nonpublic schools for the following: Tuition when the school system is under contract to provide instructional services to students.
- Staff and student tuition and fees for higher education, public, and nonpublic schools for the following: Other tuition and transfer payments not detailed above NOTE: If tuition is to be paid by the staff or student participant and then reimbursed upon completion of the course, budget this cost in Other Operating Costs (6400).

Field Trips

Field trips may be funded under the Grant program. Only the following types of field trips may be allowable:

- Same-day field trips for ECHS students to partner IHEs or partner industry sites.

Field trips will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Educational Field Trips form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Stipends for Non-Employees Other Than Those Included in 6419

- Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may be funded under the Grant program.
- Stipends for non-employees will require pre-authorization in writing. To access the pre-authorization form for participant support costs, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Non-Employee Costs for Conferences

Non-employee costs for conferences may be funded under the Grant program.

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

allowable:

- CCRSM Regional Convenings.
- CCRSM Leadership Summit.
- CCRSM Showcases.

Non-employee costs for conferences will require pre-authorization in writing. To access the pre-authorization form for participant support costs, 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:

- Relevant in-state ECHS/CCRSM travel.

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.

Note: If out-of-state travel; travel for students to conferences; field trips; stipends for non-employees; non-employee costs for conferences; travel costs for officials such as executive directors, superintendents, or board members; cost of membership in any civic or community organization; hosting or sponsoring of conferences; and/or advisory council are unallowable, list them in this section.

- Out-of-state travel.
- Cost of membership in a civic or community organization.
- An advisory council.
- 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:
 - Capital School Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512).
 - Capital School Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522).
 - Interest on Debt Costs (6523).
 - Audit services for state-funded grants.
 - Food, beverage, and snacks.
 - Any activity not specified above in the Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section

Expenditure Reporting (ER)

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cash Management, as well as the [Expenditure Reporting](#) webpage.

The grant program will be funded by reimbursement once the NOGA has been issued and the grantee submits payment (drawdown) requests through the Expenditure Reporting (ER) system. The grantee is required to request payment regularly, at minimum quarterly, for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out. However, it is best practice to request funds monthly to support program implementation.

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with your 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. In 400 words or fewer, identify specific campus data points from the 2025-2026 school year that influenced the decision to apply. Explain how each data point was discussed during planning meetings with school system or campus leadership and how it informed the proposed improvement effort.
2. Upload a current Letter of Support from the primary IHE partner. In 400 words or fewer, identify activities conducted jointly with the IHE partner during the 2025-2026 school year. Include the purpose of each activity, the participants involved, and how the activity contributed to student success or degree attainment.
3. Upload the current crosswalk using the provided template. In 400 words or fewer, describe how the chosen field of study and crosswalk prepare the students for college and/or career success after graduation.
4. In 400 words or fewer, identify recruitment activities conducted during the last recruitment cycle. For each activity, provide the target audience, approximate participation level, and evidence that the activity contributed to student applications or enrollment.
5. In 400 words or fewer, provide examples of support structures currently implemented for ECHS students. For each example, identify the staff member (by job title only) responsible, frequency of implementation, number of students served, and the specific student outcome the support is designed to improve.

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.

No fiscal-related attachments are required for this Grant program.

Adding Attachments

The instructions in the following sections describe how to attach files to an eGrants application, if applicable.

General Instructions

The size of each attachment cannot exceed 10MB. If you have a larger file, use a different scanning setting or zip the file to make it take up less space.

The only supported browser is Google Chrome. If you are using another browser, please change to Google Chrome before attaching files.

Documents only need to be attached once. Do not attach duplicate documents when completing an amendment. Remove an existing attached document prior to attaching a new version.

Naming Attachments

Name the files you are going to attach with no spaces (for example, 501C3letter.doc or 501C3_letter.doc) and no special characters. Use a meaningful name that identifies the specific document.

Make sure that each attachment has a valid extension (.pdf, .doc, .rtf, .xls, .bmp, .txt, .docx, .xlsx).

Note that attachments with very long names may not be able to be uploaded. If you have difficulty, try renaming the file and starting over.

Scanning Documents

If a document must be scanned to create an electronic copy, use the following hints to ensure that the document size is as small as possible:

- Use an OCR or DPI setting of 200 DPI.
- Scanned files must be in PDF format.

Ziping Files

If your files are too large, add them to a zip file to save space (download a free version of [WinZip](#) and find instructions on creating zip files).

Attaching Files to an eGrants Application

1. Ensure that the document is saved on your computer, using the naming instructions above.
2. On the Grant application's Table of Contents page, select Attach File.
3. Select the appropriate radio button for a TEA Defined Attachment or an Optional Attachment.
4. Select the Browse button. A standard Windows browser appears. Find the file.
5. Select Attach.
6. Confirm the document title appears under Documents Submitted in This Version; refresh the page if necessary. If the attachment does not appear, you may have to rename your document with a shorter name and start over.
7. Repeat this process to attach all your documents.

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 Criteria*.

Criteria	Description	Points
Strategic Needs and Outcomes: Challenges, data, and acceleration of student success.	Demonstrate the local need, stakeholder support, and data-driven justification for investing in ECHS program improvement.	15
Postsecondary Partnerships & Pathways: Strength and	Show how the ECHS program leverages strong IHE partnerships and aligned academic pathways to	35

effectiveness of ECHS partnerships and pathways.	increase college access, college credit attainment, and degree completion opportunities.	
Student Access & Support: Access, enrollment, and student support systems.	Describe how the ECHS program expands access while providing the academic, advising, and support systems necessary for student success.	35
Program Quality & Sustainability: Long-term viability and success of the ECHS program.	Share how school system and program leaders use continuous improvement processes, data-driven decision-making, and sustainability planning to maintain a high-quality ECHS program over time.	15

Total Standard Review Points possible: **100 Points**

Priority Points

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

Criteria	Points
TEA CCRSM program's benchmark products website is of high quality, current and accessible to the public	3 points
School systems classified by TEA as Rural	2 points
School systems classified by TEA in the upper quartile of economically disadvantaged students	2 points
TEA CCRSM program classified as Designated with Distinction	2 points
School systems with at least a 165-instructional-day calendar	1 point

Total Priority Points possible: **10 Points**

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

If a school system qualifies for multiple initiatives, the applicant will be invited to an interview to determine the best fit. Applicants must include the following individuals in the oral interview process:

- Superintendent, superintendent designee, or senior school system leader directly responsible for overseeing the potentially selected campus.
- Campus-level leader selected to lead the school action planning process.
- Dual credit campus or school system leader responsible for overseeing the dual credit and crosswalk components of the potentially selected ECHS program.

The interviews will cover the topics below:

- During the virtual oral interviews, applicants will have the opportunity to elaborate and be evaluated on their planned partnership with a Texas Institute of Higher Education (IHE), student support systems, outcomes-based measures (OBMs) strategies, as well as answer any additional questions that the TEA may have to assess their readiness for this grant program. The applicant may reference any documents, including the Program Guidelines and FAQs.