

Informal Discretionary Competitive (IDC Grant)

LASO 2026-2027 (Cycle 5)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2026-2027 School Action Fund (SAF)

Program Guidelines

Authorized by Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003.

Grant Application Due Date:

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



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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.
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

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.

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 Notices.

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: Gaby Monreal, School Action Fund District Support Specialist

Primary Program Contact Email: schoolactionfund@tea.texas.gov

Primary Program Contact Phone: (512) 463-8525

Additional Program Contact: Doriane Marvel, Innovative School Models Manager

Additional Program Contact Phone: (512) 463-8525

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	\$12,700,000
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	\$12,700,000
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	0%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$0

**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 12, 2026 3:00 p.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #1 Registration links found on the LASO website
October 15, 2026, 9:00 a.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #2 Registration links found on the LASO website
November 1, 2026	FAQ question submission deadline
November 2, 11:00 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
June 2, 2028	Final date to submit an amendment (if selected for funding)
August 31, 2028	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

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the initiative program.

Authorizing Legislation

This initiative is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003.

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 School Action Fund (SAF) awards grants that support whole-school strategies school systems use to increase access to high-quality schools, meet community needs, and address chronic underperformance. The ultimate goal of the SAF grant is to give more students access to A/B-rated campuses and for more families to have access to the schools they need, want, and deserve in their communities. The 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant will support Restart Action grantees (school system-run ACE model planning only) eligible for Resource Campus designation to achieve that designation by the end of the grant period. More information about Resource Campus designation can be found [here](#).

Eligible Applicants

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

- Eligible applicants are school systems that apply on behalf of schools that are Title I-serving schoolwide designated at the time of application, and are Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-Identified campuses, based on school year 2025-2026 ratings. For new schools, there must be clear Title I, Part A eligibility and intent to obtain Title I-serving status for school year 2027-2028 and beyond.
 - *Note: Campuses must be SAF grant-eligible at the time of application, and, if awarded a SAF grant, remain Title I-serving schoolwide for the entire grant period.*
- To be eligible for Restart and Create new Actions, a campus may not have received any School Action Fund (SAF) (Planning, Continuation, or Implementation) grants since LASO I (2023).
- If a campus qualifies for multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, the school system will be invited to an interview to determine the best fit of grants.
- TEA reserves the right not to award a grant to a campus or school system that is identified by TEA as a high-risk grantee.
- A maximum of six (6) total SAF grants will be awarded to any individual school system. A maximum of four (4) awards of any one action will be awarded to any individual school system.

Charters not **yet** serving students are not eligible.

***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 an eligibility list and it is posted in the Application and Support Information section of the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

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 approximately 30 applicants will be awarded amounts ranging from \$250,000 to \$550,000.

The table below outlines the awards for each Action over the course of the grant when a planning year is included.

Action	Year 1 LASO 5 Planning	Year 2 Continuation	Year 3 Continuation	Total Across 3 Years Per Grantee
Create New	\$250,000	\$550,000	\$550,000	\$1,350,000
Reassign	\$250,000	\$275,000	\$275,000	\$800,000
Restart	\$250,000	\$475,000	\$475,000	\$1,200,000

The table below outlines the awards for each Action over the course of the grant when the grant begins with implementation.

Action	Year 1 LASO 5 Implementation	Year 2 Implementation	Total Across 2 Years Per Grantee
Create New	\$550,000	\$550,000	\$1,100,000
Reassign	\$275,000	\$275,000	\$550,000
Restart	\$475,000	\$475,000	\$950,000

**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.*

***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 by selected action.

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.

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 direct administrative costs for this grant program to no more than 8% of the total grant award.

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.

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 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

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. Develop comprehensive support and improvement plans under ESEA section 1111(d)(1) for schools receiving funds under this section.
2. Support schools developing or implementing targeted support and improvement plans under ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A), if funds received under this section are used for such purpose.
3. Monitor schools receiving funds under this section, including how the local educational agency will carry out its responsibilities under clauses (iv) and (v) of ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(B) if funds received under this section are used to support schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans.
4. Use a rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partners with whom the local educational agency will partner.
5. Align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with funds received under subsection (b)(1).
6. As appropriate, modify practices and policies to provide operational flexibility that enables full and effective implementation of the plans.

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:

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of all Actions

1. Ensure that the Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer and/or Chief Innovation/Transformation Officer, School Action Fund Project Manager (who has Cabinet-level access and decision-making authority), Chief Financial Officer, and any Superintendent designee understand the following commitments.
2. Contract with a Technical Assistance Provider from the LASO Cycle 5 State Approved Provider List for SAF.
3. Submit Approved Technical Assistance Provider contracts and required funding summary reports to TEA.
4. Maintain active oversight of Technical Assistance providers by establishing a clearly defined scope of work with deliverables and timelines, conducting regular performance check-ins, reviewing and approving all artifacts prior to submission to TEA, and maintaining documentation of services provided which are in turn reviewed by school systems and TAs with TEA and ensuring that Technical Assistance providers adhere to all guidance, requirements, protocols, and expectations outlined in the SAF Technical Assistance Handbook.

5. Permit Approved Technical Assistance Providers access to campuses to provide in-person support and actively participate in implementation support and coaching provided by the Approved Assistance Provider.
6. Fully engage with the TEA-designated third-party fidelity of implementation evaluation, including providing requested data, documentation, access to personnel, and support for all evaluation activities in accordance with TEA-established requirements and timelines.
7. Fully implement the selected school action and model as defined by TEA and empower a campus leader who has a track record of success to lead the planning and implementation of the school action and model.
8. Applicants must establish measurable academic, operational, and organizational performance goals and monitor progress through regular implementation reviews.
9. Campus-specific goals and metrics must be documented in a Performance Agreement (for school system-run actions) or a Partnership Performance Contract (for partner-managed actions), signed by the campus leader and the school system superintendent and/or Board of Trustees.
10. Ensure that the school system's Board of Trustees complete TEA-approved board training by Gate 3 of Year 1 of the awarded grant.
11. Ensure that any campus that is closing must follow TAC 97.1066.
12. Implement strategic scheduling programs that require operational and staffing shifts to optimize time and accelerate instruction at the SAF campus(es) by Year 1 of Continuation/Implementation as defined by the TEA, unless otherwise approved or stated by the TEA.
13. Applicants applying for Implementation grants must have completed planning the school action with a TEA-approved Technical Assistance provider before being awarded a School Action Fund award in March 2027, and be ready to fully implement the Action in Fall 2027.
14. 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. The grantee is required to regularly request payment for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out. See [Expenditure Reporting](#).
15. The school system must obtain board approval of an academic calendar with at least 175 instructional days for the 2027-2028 school year.

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Create New School Actions

1. New School Actions receiving a planning grant guarantee that a dedicated FTE school leader of awarded campuses is dedicated to the designing and preparing of the New School action(s) and model(s).
2. "Create new school" Action applicants must select and designate a campus leader no later than June 4, 2027, and commit to that campus leader's full participation in the New School Design Fellowship program beginning Summer 2027.
3. Applicants must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066.

Note: Campus "phase-out" is not supported by the 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant.
4. "New Schools" established without tested grade levels must be paired with another campus in the

same school system or the overall school system for accountability purposes by March 2028, as per guidelines in Chapter 7 of the 2027 Accountability Manual (or, a later version if published).

5. New schools may open in one of three ways: i) open in a co-located facility, ii) the new school may open in a newly constructed facility, or iii) a previously unoccupied building.
6. A "new" school may be created through the conversion from a School system-Run campus to an Innovation Partner-Managed school.
7. Applicants selecting "Create a New School" school actions must include the new campus in its Title I ESSA plan in time for Year 1 Continuation/Implementation, or first school year the new school opens.
8. The applicant must demonstrate how the selected TEA-codified school model will be implemented with fidelity and sustained beyond the grant period through staffing, budgeting, and school system support structures.
9. The applicant assures enrollment at a "New School" will prioritize students previously attending or zoned to a Title I-serving and Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-identified school. The school system must establish and execute a student recruitment and enrollment strategy that ensures students and families are informed of the new school option and have equitable access to enrollment opportunities.

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Reassign Actions

1. School systems pursuing a Reassign Action must identify receiving campus(es) that are rated A/B and demonstrate that the receiving campus has the capacity, leadership, systems, and staffing necessary to successfully absorb and serve the reassigned student population.
2. School systems must develop and implement a transition plan that ensures access to A/B-rated receiving campus(es), addresses student assignment, staffing, transportation, communications, student supports, and continuity of services for all impacted students and families, and ensures access to evidence-based strategies to improve student outcomes, especially for students reassigned from underperforming campuses.
3. School systems must engage affected staff, families, and community stakeholders in the planning process and document efforts to communicate the rationale, timeline, and expected outcomes of the Reassign Action.
4. School systems must ensure that students impacted by the Reassign Action maintain access to high-quality instructional materials, effective educators, extracurricular opportunities, and specialized services required by law.
5. School systems closing an existing campus must follow TAC 97.1066 rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number).
6. School systems must demonstrate how the Reassign Action supports the school system's long-term strategy for improving outcomes for students previously enrolled in low-performing campuses.
7. Applicants pursuing a Reassign Action must maintain a system for identifying and tracking students impacted by the reassignment and regularly monitor academic, attendance, belonging, and other student outcome data to evaluate whether the action is improving student outcomes.

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Restart Actions

1. Applicants pursuing a Restart Action must identify the intended campus at the time of application and demonstrate that the selected campus meets all School Action Fund eligibility requirements.

2. School systems reconstitute campus leaders and a majority of staff, and implement a new whole-school educational model, including high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines) in both Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses, to turnaround a chronically underperforming campus.

For school system-run grantees:

1. Applicants must implement the ACE school model. ACE is an approved turnaround plan by TEA and is legislated in Texas Statute, (Sec. 39A.105). For school systems to utilize this approved plan, the following criteria must be met while closely aligning with the five core pillars of ACE.
 - Principal Assignment: Principal with a history of improving student academic growth.
 - Teacher Effectiveness: At least 60% of classroom teachers must have demonstrated instructional effectiveness.
 - Employment and Compensation:
 - Incentives: Significant incentives for high-performing principals and teachers.
 - Commitment: Three-year commitment to continue incentives.
 - Best Practices Implementation
 - Data-Driven Instruction: Practices based on data.
 - Teacher Observation and Feedback: Systematic observation and feedback mechanisms.
 - Positive Student Culture: Creating a positive culture for students.
 - Family and Community Engagement: Partnerships with parents and community groups.
 - Extended Learning: Opportunities beyond regular school hours, including service or workforce learning.
 - Student Services: Services before or after school to improve performance, such as tutoring, extracurricular activities, counseling, and providing meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner).
 - Third-Party Assistance: Involvement of an approved third-party provider in the development and implementation of the plan.

The 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant will support Restart Action grantees (school system-run ACE model planning only) eligible for Resource Campus designation to achieve that designation by the end of the grant period. More information about Resource Campus designation can be found [here](#).

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Partner-Managed Actions

1. Partner-Managed awardees must implement high-quality authorizing practices which rigorously evaluate Operating Partner (OP) applicants' likelihood of success, and include a review of OP applicants' plans to implement high quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined in these Program Guidelines) during the Call for Quality Schools process. More information about a Call for Quality Schools process can be found in the TEA's Authorizer's Handbook available on the Texas Partnerships [website](#).
2. For planning grants only: A Call for Quality Schools (CQS) must be released no later than June 30, 2027.

3. Applicants selecting “Partner-managed” actions must commit to the adoption of TEA’s Texas Partnership model [authorizing](#) tools and resources, including Performance Contracts, unless otherwise approved by the TEA.
4. Grantees awarded “Partner-managed” actions must register for the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy (TALA) **by December 17, 2027 and complete TALA training by Spring 2028.**
5. School systems may apply for a Restart Action with a Partner-Managed governance structure **ONLY** for campuses that have received an overall unacceptable rating (or an equivalent as defined by TEA) the year prior to becoming a partnership school, per Texas Partnerships requirements. **ONLY** these campuses may be eligible for the pause in accountability sanctions outlined in the TEA Texas Partnerships Guide available at [txpartnerships](#).
6. Grantees applying for the “implementation” phase with a partner-managed action must provide evidence of Board approval of the partnership at the time of application. See note about artifacts in attachments section.

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 to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the SAF Program Guidelines.
4. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the SAF Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
5. The applicant assures that they accept and will comply with all Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances requirements.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

9. 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.
10. The school system will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.
11. The school system will regularly submit its expenditures, monthly preferred and quarterly at minimum, to remain on track for grant expenditures.
12. The school system will participate in all required meetings and submit evidence of implementation at a monthly or quarterly cadence.
13. Use a data-informed evaluation process and criteria (both quantitative and qualitative), and an appropriate timeline for identifying the campus(es) for school action(s) by Gate 0 of the first year of the awarded grant if a specific campus has not yet been identified.
14. Align the school action with the school system's overall strategy for support and intervention in low-performing schools and/or the school system's strategy for expanding high-quality school choices for students and families.
15. Ensure that senior leaders of the school system and campus have been involved in the decision to select the school action for the campus(es) and to apply for this School Action Fund Planning and Implementation Grant, and that they will continue to be involved throughout the grant period.
16. Ensure that the applicant school system has worked or will work with members of the school community (staff, families, community leaders) to communicate plans and solicit input into the school action planning and implementation process.
17. Participate in required TEA-led activities, including grant kick-off(s), monthly check-ins, webinars, learning opportunities, and communities of practice.
18. Select a school system level (Central Office) staff member who is both qualified and experienced in project and program management to manage the planning and implementation of the grant by Gate 0 of the first year of the awarded grant.
19. Ensure the School Action Fund Project Manager attends regular meetings, at least monthly, with the TEA SAF program staff.
20. Ensure the school system level (central office) Business/Finance Office staff member responsible for overseeing SAF grant expenditures and drawdown processes must attend at least quarterly meetings

with the school system's School Action Fund Project Manager and the TEA SAF program staff.

21. Use grant funds in alignment with the required allocation structure and ensuring all expenditures support the goals of the SAF program.
22. Regularly submit expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on-track for grant expenditures.

The program-specific assurances for this LASO program are listed in the Qualtrics application.

Program Elements

Description of Program

School actions are whole-school strategies school systems use to increase access to high-quality schools, meet community needs, and address chronic underperformance. By providing technical assistance and grant funds to support school actions for individual campuses, TEA also supports school systems in taking strategic actions that both improve schools and provide communities, parents, and families with the schools and programs they want, need, and deserve.

School systems that receive a 2027-2028 School Action Fund (SAF) Planning grant on behalf of eligible campuses may apply for up to two one-year continuation grants for funding, resources, and support to implement the school action(s) on the awarded campus(es). School systems must satisfactorily complete all required elements, meet all milestones of the 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant, and all Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances outlined in this document to be eligible for a non-competitive Continuation grant. See the Program Descriptions below for more details about each action.

School actions may be school system-run or managed by an operating partner, as defined by Texas Partnerships/SB 1882 requirements. School system-run campuses must implement a TEA-supported school model as outlined below. School systems applying for a Partner-Managed award must implement high-quality authorizing practices, including a review of the plan to implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined later in these Program Guidelines), that result in a high-quality campus.

In school system-run actions, grantees must meet all universal requirements for success: selection of a TEA-codified, ESF-aligned, evidence-based school model; development of a master calendar that maximizes instructional staff and time; selection, assignment, and empowerment of a campus leader with a track record of success to lead the planning and implementation of the school action and model; and implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined in these Program Guidelines) and research-based instructional strategies (RBIS).

Applicants may apply for Implementation grant(s) in the 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant if they have completed planning the school action with a TEA-approved Technical Assistance provider before receiving a School Action Fund award in March 2027. Applicants for Implementation grants must clearly demonstrate their readiness to fully implement the action at the awarded campus(es) in Fall 2026.

To learn more about school actions and model playbooks, please visit the Center for School Actions' [website](#).

During the application process, school systems follow the decision process below based on individual campus needs.

STEP 1: Select one of the 3 Actions below for each eligible campus

1. **Restart Action** | School systems reconstitute campus leaders and a majority of staff, and implement a

new whole-school educational model, including high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines) in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses, to turnaround a chronically underperforming campus. School systems implement the selected school model in all grade levels in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation.

2. **Create a New School Action** | School systems create a new school that may be co-located in a school system facility and is phased-in one grade level at a time **OR** opened with all grade levels in a new facility or a facility that was unoccupied by a school in the previous year. New schools must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066; recruit, select, and hire a new empowered campus leader and staff; and implement an evidence-based educational model, including high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines), in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation. New schools must be designated Title I-serving in Year 1 (one) of implementation and throughout the grant period.

School systems may also apply for a Create New School Action to convert an existing school to an Innovation Partnership-Managed campus or launch a brand-new Innovation Partnership-Managed campus.

Note: Phase-out support is not provided by the 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant.

3. **Reassign Action** | School systems work with their communities to thoughtfully close school(s) and reassign students to existing A/B-rated campuses or new schools. School systems closing an existing campus must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066: Campus Repurposing and Closure. The 2027-2028 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant's Reassign Action must be implemented prior to the school year in which the school may receive its fourth unacceptable rating. School systems provide transition support for families, students, and staff.

Receiving schools must be designated Title I-serving in Year 1 (one) of implementation and throughout the grant period and must implement high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines), in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation.

STEP 2: Select one of 2 Governance Structures for each eligible campus

1. **School system-run** | The campus is directly run and supported by the school system (applicant). All staff members of the campus are employees of the school system. The grant-awarded campus is allowed flexibility from school system policies and practices in order to enact the school action/model and implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). This flexibility is documented in School Design Plans, Performance Agreements, and Implementation Plans and is approved by the superintendent and/or the Board of Trustees.
2. **Partner-Managed** | School systems authorize an Operating Partner to manage the school through an SB 1882 partnership, which is either a Turnaround Partnership (available only for campuses with an unacceptable accountability rating, or an equivalent, as defined by TEA) or an Innovation Partnership. The school system launches a Call for Quality Schools (CQS) no later than June 30, 2027, to recruit, evaluate, and approve a high-quality operator to plan and implement the school action(s). The call must require that Operating Partners implement high-quality instructional materials, or HQIM, as defined later in these Program Guidelines. More information about Texas Partnerships can be found [here](#).

STEP 3: Select a school model.

For each eligible school system-run campus, select one of the evidence-based, codified school models from those found below. School systems planning and/or implementing Turnaround or Innovation Partnerships campuses with Operating Partners should select the Partner-Managed campus option.

1. **ACE (school system-run, Restart Action only)**

- Campuses that are eligible for Resource designation will be required to meet all expectations for Resource designation by the end of the 2nd (second) year of implementation.
- More information about Resource designation may be found [here](#).

2. **Advanced STEM (school system-run, Create new school Action only; Elementary and Middle schools)**

3. **Partner-Managed \$**

- Turnaround – available only to campuses with an unacceptable accountability rating (refer to the TEA Texas Partnerships website)
- Innovation – available to A, B, and C-rated campuses, or brand new schools

\$: Models that may yield additional sustained funding opportunities.

School Model/Designation Playbooks for ACE and Advanced STEM models are found on the Center for School Actions' [website](#).

High Quality Instructional Materials Requirements

For School Action Fund grantees, high quality instructional materials ([HQIM](#)) include at least Math and English Language Arts/Reading materials and are curricular resources that, in the state of Texas, meet the criteria below:

1. Ensure **full coverage of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)**.
2. Align to the **English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)** and **prekindergarten guidelines**.
3. Provide **evidence-based best practices** in the relevant content areas of reading language arts (RLA), math, science, and social studies.
4. **Support all learners**, including students with disabilities, Emergent Bilinguals (EB), and students identified as gifted and talented.
5. Meet **grade-level suitability** requirements.
6. Be **free from factual error**.
7. Enable **frequent progress monitoring** through embedded and aligned assessments.
8. Provide teacher and student-facing lesson materials with implementation supports.
9. Follow **Manufacturing Standards and Specifications for Textbooks (MSST)** for physical and electronic materials.
10. Receive **approval from the SBOE** through the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process.

All SAF grantees **must** implement HQIM in all grade levels at the school action campus by the beginning of Year 1 (one) of continuation/implementation. Authorizers (Partner-Managed grantees) must demonstrate evidence of evaluating and approving the academic model proposed by the operating partner.

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:

The school system must select a qualified Project Manager at the school system-level (Central Office) who has access to C-suite decision-makers, and who has the authority to implement activities related to this grant. This staff member must be identified and in place no later than March 1, 2027 (beginning of the 2027-2028 School Action Fund–Planning and Implementation grant).

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

Grantees must establish goals which will allow student performance and achievement to result in the SAF North Star Goal of A/B rating after two years of Continuation/Implementation. These goals must be identified for Measurable Progress and written as SMART goals. Each grant year will have either four or five “Gates”: 0-4, or 1-4. There will be specific “Deliverables” due in each Gate. The section below includes a representative sample, but not all, Deliverables.

Completion of ongoing progress monitoring through quarterly gate artifact submission, including Student Performance and Achievement goals, as established by the TEA. Upon grant award, TEA will provide awardees with the SAF Progress Monitoring Rubric (PMR) and access to data upload systems/platforms. School systems must complete the SAF Progress Monitoring Rubric (PMR) with support from their matched school action technical assistance provider. Progress will be monitored by the TEA SAF Team on a regular basis.

Note: Deliverables and Gates may be adjusted based on feedback and need in an ongoing continuous improvement process.

School system-run Actions, Planning Deliverables

- Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan
- TEA-approved Board of Trustees Governance Training and/or Coaching
- Performance Agreement, signed and approved by Campus Leader, Superintendent and/or Board of Trustees
- Master Schedule
- SAF Planning and Implementation Roadmap, including Needs Assessment, Goal Setting, Project Plan, and Campus Budget

Partner-Managed Actions, Planning

- Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan
- Evidence of Authorizer TALA Participation
- School system Board-approved District Authorizing Policy
- Call of Quality School
- Operating Partner Approval Process
- School system Board of Trustees approval of Operating Partner

- School system Board of Trustees approval of Partnership agreement, Performance Expectations and Contract Terms
- Approved SB 1882 Benefits Application
- Monitoring Plan
- Implementation plan

School system-run Actions, Implementation

- SAF Planning and Implementation Roadmap, including Needs Assessment, Goal Setting, Project Plan, and Campus Budget
- Classroom observations/walkthrough schedule and leadership team and teacher assignments
- Baseline data for Math, ELAR, and sub-population SMART goals
- PLC and professional development schedules, and agendas/topics
- BOY/MOY/EOY CBA data and/or Formative Assessment Data for Math and RLA
- Data analysis meetings and Learning Acceleration Plans (DDI) based on BOY data
- SAF Fidelity of Implementation Review/s (independent third party ESF-aligned review)
- A School Action Fund Fidelity of Implementation (SAF FOI) Evaluation (ESF-aligned independent third-party fidelity of implementation quality review) will be completed by Texas Tech University, or another TEA-Approved organization, during the Fall semester of Year 1 (one) of Continuation or Implementation, unless otherwise determined by TEA. The SAF FOI Evaluation will focus on the implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), research-based instructional strategies (RBIS), and the aligned and relevant school action and model.

Partner-Managed Actions, Implementation

- Implementation Plan
- TALA Training (if not completed by Authorizer within last two years)
- Operating Partner updates on progress toward goals outlined in the Partnership Contract (quarterly)
- Authorizer Progress Monitoring Plan and Reports
- Data review meetings and reports

Project Evaluation and Modification

By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the required evaluation reports in the format and time requested by TEA. Grantees/school systems will collect and analyze relevant data from PEIMS, if it is available, and submit the data reports to TEA.

Specific critical success factors and milestones will be developed in a manner deemed appropriate by the TEA.

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

- Payroll costs
- Professional and contracted services
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials
- 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. If SBITA costs (6514 and 6526) are unallowable for the Grant program, delete and move to the Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds list. If 6512, 6522, and 6523 are allowable debt service costs, move them from the Unallowable section to here.
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)
- The school system's (Central Office) Project Manager must attend monthly meetings with the TEA SAF grant program staff and the school system's (Central Office) Business/Finance Office staff responsible for overseeing grant expenditures and draw down processes must attend at least two of these meetings per semester.
- Grant applicants must establish grant budgets that align with the following requirements for use of funds and include all required budget line items below. It is expected that grantees will closely adhere to the categories and amounts listed in the Budget Guidance section below. Exceptions and capital expenditures must be pre-approved by the TEA SAF Team.

Budget Guidance

School system-run Actions, Planning

- Planning Year School Leader release time to complete planning activities
- School system Central Office Administrator / Innovation Officer Position
- High-quality instructional materials and support
- Educator Stipends and Salaries
- Travel expenses
- School community engagement support
- Technical Assistance Provider Contract (a minimum of 20% of total award allocated for baseline services)

Partner-Managed Actions, Planning (80% of total award allocated must go to Operating Partner)

- School system Central Office Authorizer Administrator / Innovation Officer Position
- Operating Partner Organization Start-up/Transition Funding:
- Travel expenses
- School community engagement support
- Technical Assistance Provider Contract (a minimum of 20% of total award allocated for baseline services)

School system-run Actions, Implementation

- School system Central Office Administrator / Innovation Officer Position
- High quality instructional materials and support
- Educator Stipends and Salaries
- Travel expenses
- School community engagement support
- Technical Assistance Provider Contract (a minimum of 20% of total award allocated for baseline services)

Partner-Managed Actions, Implementation (80% of total award allocated must go to Operating Partner)

- School system Central Office Authorizer Administrator / Innovation Officer Position
- Operating Partner Funding
- Travel expenses
- School community engagement support
- Technical Assistance Provider Contract (a minimum of 20% of total award allocated for baseline services)

Required TA Scope of Work Elements

The school system must demonstrate that the selected Technical Assistance services are directly aligned to findings from its school analysis process and support successful implementation of the approved school action. The Technical Assistance Provider scope of work must identify the selected service areas, expected deliverables, implementation milestones, performance measures, and associated budget allocations.

School systems must contract for one or more of the following services through an Approved Technical Assistance Provider (TA). Every SAF-funded campus will receive support in the following areas regardless of action selected. At least 20% of awarded funds should be allocated towards your Technical Assistance Provider for the following baseline services:

All Actions

Baseline Technical Assistance Provider Service	Success Criteria
School Action & Model Implementation	School action is fully planned and implemented in alignment with SAF requirements, ESF, the selected school model, PMR expectations, and Gate deliverables.

School Design & Operational Readiness	School design artifacts, implementation plans, operational systems, schedules, and model blueprints demonstrate readiness for launch and model fidelity.
Implementation Planning & Project Management	The school system maintains clear work plans, timelines, budgets, risk mitigation strategies, and implementation milestones that remain on track throughout the grant.
Leadership Coaching & Capacity Building	Campus and system leaders increase their ability to lead implementation, manage change, monitor progress, and sustain key systems independently over time.
Performance Agreements & Governance Support	Performance agreements, partnership contracts, and governance structures clearly define autonomy, goals, accountability, performance expectations, and monitoring systems.
Instructional Model Implementation (HQIM/RBIS)	High-quality instructional materials and research-based instructional strategies are implemented with fidelity and monitored through instructional evidence and student outcomes.
Data Monitoring & Performance Management	Outcome, implementation, and leading-indicator goals are established and regularly monitored through PMR processes to inform decision-making and course correction.
Deliverables, Gates & Compliance Support	PMR submissions, Gate artifacts, FOI evidence, and grant deliverables are completed on time, meet quality expectations, and demonstrate implementation progress.
Stakeholder Engagement & Coordination	School system stakeholders, partners, and providers remain informed, aligned, and coordinated to support successful implementation and address challenges early.
Sustainability & Continuous Improvement	School systems build ownership of systems and practices, participate in collaborative learning opportunities, and develop plans to sustain implementation beyond the grant period.

New School

Baseline Service	Success Criteria
School Action & Model Implementation	New school is designed and launched in alignment with SAF requirements, approved design plans, ESF, PMR expectations, and Gate deliverables.

School Design & Operational Readiness	School design artifacts, staffing plans, instructional model, culture systems, and operational plans demonstrate readiness for successful launch.
Implementation Planning & Project Management	Work plans, milestones, budgets, and launch activities are executed on schedule, with risks proactively addressed.
Leadership Coaching & Capacity Building	Founding leaders demonstrate the capacity to lead school startup, manage implementation, and sustain key systems independently.
Instructional Model Implementation (HQIM/RBIS)	HQIM, instructional systems, and research-based practices are selected, implemented, and embedded within the school model.
Data Monitoring & Performance Management	Leading indicators, implementation metrics, and student outcome goals are established, monitored, and used to inform decisions.
Deliverables, Gates & Compliance Support	PMR submissions, Gate artifacts, and SAF deliverables are completed on time and meet quality expectations.
Stakeholder Engagement & Coordination	Families, staff, and community stakeholders understand and support the school model and implementation plan.
Sustainability & Continuous Improvement	School systems develop the structures, leadership capacity, and plans necessary to sustain the model beyond the grant period.

Restart ACE

Baseline Service	Success Criteria
School Action & Model Implementation	ACE requirements and turnaround strategies are implemented with fidelity and produce evidence of improved practices and outcomes.
School Design & Operational Readiness	School structures, staffing, schedules, and operating systems are redesigned to support accelerated student achievement.
Implementation Planning & Project Management	Improvement plans, milestones, and turnaround actions remain on track and are adjusted based on implementation data.
Leadership Coaching & Capacity Building	School leaders demonstrate increased effectiveness in leading turnaround efforts, monitoring implementation, and supporting staff performance.
Instructional Model Implementation (HQIM/RBIS)	HQIM, instructional coaching, intervention systems, and research-based practices are implemented consistently across classrooms.

Data Monitoring & Performance Management	Student outcomes, implementation data, and leading indicators are reviewed regularly and drive improvement actions.
Deliverables, Gates & Compliance Support	PMR submissions, FOI evidence, Gate requirements, and grant deliverables are completed with quality and on schedule.
Stakeholder Engagement & Coordination	Staff, families, and stakeholders understand the turnaround strategy and actively support implementation efforts.
Sustainability & Continuous Improvement	School systems build internal capacity to sustain turnaround practices and continuous improvement processes over time.

Partner-Managed

Baseline Service	Success Criteria
Partnership Oversight & Implementation Monitoring	District authorizers establish and implement oversight structures that monitor school action implementation, contractual commitments, partnership performance, and school outcomes while respecting school autonomy.
Partner Contract & Governance Support	Partnership contracts clearly define autonomies, performance expectations, governance responsibilities, accountability measures, monitoring processes, and intervention pathways aligned to authorizing best practices.
Authorizer Systems, Processes & Performance Management	District authorizers maintain documented monitoring protocols, reporting calendars, performance management routines, and decision-making processes that enable consistent and effective partnership oversight.
Performance Evaluation & Data Analysis	District authorizers regularly collect, analyze, and apply academic, financial, organizational, and implementation data to assess performance, identify risks, and inform accountability decisions.
Stakeholder Engagement & Authorizer Communications	District leaders maintain transparent and proactive communication with governing boards, partner organizations, school leaders, families, and community stakeholders regarding partnership goals, performance, and oversight activities.
Compliance, Reporting & Accountability Systems	District authorizers meet SAF, contract, and authorizing requirements through effective compliance monitoring, timely reporting, accurate documentation, and accountability processes.
Authorizer Sustainability & Continuous Improvement	School systems strengthen long-term authorizing capacity through continuous improvement, portfolio management practices, leadership development, policy refinement, and sustainable oversight structures.

Grant funds can be allocated for additional contracted services from your Technical Assistant Providers. These can include:

Teaching & Learning Excellence

- Beyond implementing a model, these services strengthen instructional systems and accelerate student outcomes.
- Comprehensive instructional program redesign
- Curriculum audit and coherence studies
- Subject-specific instructional improvement (Literacy, STEM, CCMR)
- Assessment system design and calibration

Instructional Coaching System Development

- Teacher development pathways and career ladders
- New teacher induction and onboarding systems
- Classroom observation framework design
- AI-enabled instructional planning and teacher supports
- Schoolwide acceleration strategies for historically underserved students

PLC & Continuous Improvement Systems

- Building school system and campus capacity to sustain improvement independent of TA support.
- PLC architecture and facilitation training
- Data meeting protocols and implementation
- Root cause analysis facilitation
- Campus performance dashboard development
- Walkthrough and observation systems
- Cross-campus learning networks
- School system continuous improvement systems
- Strategic monitoring and accountability frameworks

Advanced Leadership Development

- Developing leadership pipelines and organizational capacity beyond school action implementation.
- Executive coaching for superintendents and cabinet leaders
- Principal pipeline development
- Instructional leadership academies
- Change management leadership training
- Distributed leadership structures
- Board governance support
- Lone Star Governance alignment
- Leadership succession planning
- Leadership competency framework development

Talent Strategy & Human Capital

- Designing innovative staffing models that maximize impact and sustainability.
- Strategic staffing model design
- Opportunity culture implementation
- Role redesign and compensation strategy
- Recruitment and retention planning
- Principal selection support
- Teacher pipeline partnerships

- Performance management systems
- Workforce planning and forecasting
- Restart staffing reconstitution and talent acquisition

Culture, Climate & Student Success

- Supporting whole-child outcomes and sustainable school culture systems.
- School culture framework development
- Attendance and persistence strategies
- Student belonging initiatives
- MTSS implementation architecture
- Behavior systems redesign
- Family engagement system development
- Community partnership cultivation
- Postsecondary readiness supports
- Student voice and leadership structures

Operational Excellence & Sustainability

- Helping school systems redesign systems that create long-term conditions for success.
- Resource allocation studies
- Budget redesign and sustainability planning
- Strategic finance planning
- Enrollment forecasting
- Operational systems redesign
- School launch readiness reviews
- Project management office (PMO) design
- Facilities and growth planning
- Organizational redesign and central office effectiveness reviews

Innovation & Strategic Planning

- Services that extend beyond implementation into system transformation.
- School system strategic planning
- Portfolio strategy development
- School quality review systems
- School incubator development
- New program development
- Community demand analysis
- Market and enrollment studies

Partner-Managed Actions, Planning (80% of total award allocated must go to Operating Partner)

Partner-Managed Actions, Implementation (80% of total award allocated must go to Operating Partner)

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

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are allowable with prior approval from the TEA SAF Team.

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:

- Travel expenses for TEA required events, school action convenings hosted by TA provider organization, LEA-directed trips to visit similar in-state model-specific successful campuses, or other TEA-approved activities to support school action planning and implementation.

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.

- Advisory Council
- Field trips
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences
- Travel costs for students to conferences
- Stipends for non-employees
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Debt service (lease-purchase)
- Personal computing, electronics, and other devices (purchased in a quantity that will create an excess of a one-to-one technology ratio for students or faculty and staff)
- Textbooks or curricular materials purchased in a quantity that will create an excess of a one-to-one resource ratio for students or faculty and staff.

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 Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
 - Interest on Debt Costs (6523)

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.

Federal Grant Requirements

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded Grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement does not apply to this federally funded Grant program.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded Grant program.

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. Grantees applying for the “implementation” phase with a partner-managed action must provide evidence of Board approval of the partnership at the time of application.
2. Board approved 2027-2028 Academic Calendar demonstrating at least 175 instructional days.

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

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

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 5013C_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.

Zippping 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*

Eligibility and Dermination: A school system must be Title I-serving in SY 2025-2026 and throughout the SAF grant, if awarded, **and** Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-identified in order to be eligible for award. Additionally, a campus may not have received any School Action Fund (SAF) Planning, Continuation, or Implementation grants since LASO I (2023).

Awards will be determined according to the following methodology:

1. **Confirm Eligibility:** Applicants will complete the LASO application and indicate the school action(s), governance structure(s), and model(s) the school system (applicant) is applying for each eligible campus. Title I-serving and Comprehensive/Targeted/Additional Targeted-identification status will be confirmed.
2. **Priority Points:** Eligible applicants will receive priority points based on campus and school system context, up to a maximum of 30 points per campus:
 - a. **5 points** for each school system with a state-appointed Board of Managers and/or with at least 5 consecutive years of unacceptable accountability ratings,
 - b. **5 points** for each school system that is an active participant (or recent alum in good standing) of a TEA-approved Strategic Leadership Support program, including Texas Strategic Leadership, System of Great Schools, or the Effective District Framework Accelerator program,
 - c. **5 points** for each school system that received a LIFT award in LASO 4
 - d. **5 points** for each school system with a TEA-approved Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) or Enhanced Teacher Incentive Allotment (E-TIA) system, that has been implemented no later than SY2025-26,
 - e. **5 points** for a school system with at least one campus that is eligible for resource campus benefits*
 - f. **5 points** for a school system with at least a 175 instructional day calendar.

TEA will rank order campuses by priority points within each action.

3. **Virtual Interview:** Based on Priority Points as calculated above, the top 50 campuses will proceed to the virtual Interview. In the case of a tie, campuses with the higher economically disadvantaged percentage will go to the Interview. (For new schools and campuses that have not yet been identified, the school system's [applicant's] average will be considered.)
4. **Determine Finalists:** Applicants must meet at least 80% of overall points (Priority and Oral Interview points) to be considered for a grant award.
5. **Determine Awards:** Awards will be granted to all of the finalists for each action until funds are expended, with priority for funding in the order listed below:
 1. Restart Actions
 2. Create new Actions
 3. Reassign Actions
6. **Awarding:** Finally, awards will be made as funding allows based on the prioritization of actions as noted above. Any remaining funds may be awarded to applicants who scored less than 60%, in rank order with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students on a campus, while keeping the maximum of six awards of grants and a maximum of four awards of any one action per individual school system in place.

Priority Points

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

Priority Points based on campus and school system context; up to a maximum of 30 points per campus:

- **5 points** for each school system with a state-appointed Board of Managers and/or with at least 5 consecutive years of unacceptable accountability ratings,
- **5 points** for each school system that is an active participant (or recent alum in good standing) of a TEA-approved Strategic Leadership Support program, including Texas Strategic Leadership, System of Great Schools, or the Effective District Framework Accelerator program,
- **5 points** for each school system that received a LIFT award in LASO 4
- **5 points** for each school system with a TEA-approved Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) or Enhanced Teacher Incentive Allotment (E-TIA) system, that has been implemented no later than SY2025-26,
- **5 points** for a school system with at least one campus that is eligible for resource campus benefits*
- **5 points** for a school system with at least a 175 instructional day calendar.

TEA will rank order campuses by priority points within each action.

** Per TEC §29.934, a campus eligible for resource campus benefits must have received an overall performance rating... of D or F, or an overall performance rating under Section 39.054(a-4)(1) or 39.0546 of "Not Rated," for three years over a 10-year period of time*

Virtual Oral Interview with school system and campus leaders: up to 100 points per campus

In the case of a tie between applicants at the end of available funding, the grant will be awarded to the applicant with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students at the campus.

Note: A maximum of six awards will be awarded across all actions to any individual school system (applicant). No more than four awards of any one Action will be awarded to an individual school system (applicant).

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

SAF and LIFT are distinct initiatives with significant implementation requirements. If you choose to apply for both, you may be invited to an interview to determine feasibility of dual implementation.

All finalists for SAF grant awards will be invited to attend a virtual interview.

The interviews will cover the topics below.

School Action Selection, and multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, if qualified (**50 points**)

- Evaluation process and criteria for selecting the school action and campus leader
- Alignment of school action with overall school system strategy for school improvement
- Support from Board of Trustees and school system leadership, including Human Resources/Talent, Finance/Budget,
- Curriculum and Instruction (Teaching and Learning; Academics)

Readiness to Plan/Implement, including multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, if qualified (**50 points**)

- Understanding of school action requirements and planning activities
- Awareness of school action implementation challenges and mitigation strategies
- Plans for engaging technical assistance organizations
- Presence of existing practices and policies to support school action planning and implementation, such

as Human Resources/Talent, Finance/Budget, Curriculum and Instruction (Teaching and Learning; Academic

If a campus 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, or Superintendent designee
- Selected (or, proposed) SAF grant Project Manager
- Chief Financial Officer
- Senior school system leader directly responsible for overseeing the potentially selected campus(es)
- Campus-level leader with track record of success selected to lead the school action planning process (if identified)