

Informal Discretionary Competitive (IDC Grant)

LASO 2026-2027 (Cycle 5)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2027-2029 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant Program Guidelines

Authorized by 89th GAA, Strategy B.3.1, Improving Educator
Quality/Leadership; HB 2 Section 3.08.

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: Ingrid Ang, Data and Grants Management Specialist

Additional Program Contact: Corliss Bunkley, Texas Strategic Staffing Manager

Program Manager Email: txstrategicstaffing@tea.texas.gov

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	\$2,920,000
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	\$2,920,000

**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.*

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.

2027-2029 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant Program Guidelines

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 LASO website , Frequently Asked Questions
October 14, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #1 Registration links found on the LASO website
October 28, 2026 at 10:30 p.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #2 Registration links found on the LASO website
November 1, 2026	FAQ question submission deadline
November 6, 2026 at 1:30 p.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 for 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
Monday, January 31, 2028	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

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the initiative program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant is authorized by the 89th GAA, Strategy B.3.1, Improving Educator Quality/Leadership; HB 2 Section 3.08, Section 21.466.

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 Texas Strategic Staffing (TSS) for Residencies Grant supports a two-year process in which a school system and Educator Preparation Program (EPP) commit to using strategic staffing to design and implement a sustainable, year-long residency model during the school years (SY) 2027-28 and SY 2028-29.

Strategic staffing - deliberate decisions around staffing, scheduling, and instructional roles - allows school systems to build this residency model in a budget-neutral way. In subsequent years, school systems can sustain this high-quality residency model through the reinvestment and reallocation of existing funds, combined with the Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Residency Allotment (TEA's ongoing state funding stream for teacher residencies). The TSS for Residencies Grant is designed to bridge the transition from designing to sustaining their school system's residency model: TSS technical assistance builds the strategic staffing framework used to implement residency programs while supporting school systems in planning for full sustainability by SY 2029-30.

A well-designed, sustainable residency model will enhance instructional capacity, strengthen hiring pipelines, and increase student access to skilled educators - ultimately advancing educational outcomes.

Note: While all eligible school systems may apply, including those that previously participated in Strategic Staffing for Residencies prior to the 2025-27 or 2026-28 grant cycles, this grant and its selection criteria are well suited to school systems that:

- Have many residents and are seeking to expand a residency program in a budget-neutral way;
- Are, or have recently been, designated as rural and are seeking start-up technical assistance and funding to design and sustain a residency program; or
- Have never participated in a Strategic Staffing for Residencies grant.

This two-year grant provides:

- **In-kind technical assistance** for school systems and EPP partners to implement a year-long residency program using strategic staffing approaches.
 - Education Service Centers (ESCs) provide technical assistance focused on strategic staffing approaches that strengthen resident preparation, expand host teacher capacity, and meet school systems' short- and long-term instructional needs.
 - ESCs may also support school systems in reallocating resources and leveraging available grant funds to meet the program requirements of the PREP Residency Allotment and sustain residency programs beyond the grant period.
- **Funding to strengthen program sustainability.** Grant funding may be used for investments that help build and sustain high-quality teacher residency programs, such as co-funding the salary of the school system representative who oversees all Grant activities (i.e., Strategic Staffing Lead) and/or the cost-match requirement for the Preparing and Retaining Educators Program (PREP) Allotment: Residency Preservice Program.

See the Allowable Uses of Funds section for more information.

To learn more about Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies, please visit tss.tea.texas.gov.

Eligible Applicants

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

Eligible applicants must:

1. Be a LASO 4 (2025-2026) PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program awardee* or have applied for the LASO 5 (2026-2027) PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program.
2. Not have been recipients of either:
 - a. Any year of the Pipeline to Leadership (P2L) Grant or Continuation Grant.
 - b. The LASO 4 2026-2028 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Program.
 - c. The 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Program.

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

** If a school system was a LASO 4 (2025-2026) PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program awardee, but did not place residents, they are still eligible to apply for this grant opportunity.*

***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.*

Eligibility List

There is not an 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 50 applicant(s) will be awarded \$58,400.

**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 within three funding tiers. Specific criteria is listed below in the 'LASO Review and Funding Criteria' section.

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

Indirect Costs

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

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

Pre-Award Costs

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

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

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.

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. The PREP Residency Preservice Program Manager, as submitted in the school system's application for the PREP Residency Preservice Program Allotment, must serve as the primary point of contact for all Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies grant-related activities or must designate another school system representative who directly supports them in that role.
2. The school system may partner with one or two Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to engage in the collaborative Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies design and implementation process*. Participation in grant activities is limited to the selected partner(s) over the full two-year grant period. Each partnering EPP must verify their commitment to participate in the entire two-year design and implementation process through the [Texas Strategic Staffing \(TSS\) Grant Participation and Partnership Verification Form](#).
 - a. Within the 'Attachments' section of the grant application, school systems must upload a single PDF of the [TSS EPP Grant Participation and Partnership Verification Form](#), signed by their EPP partner(s).
 - b. If you have two EPP partners, each EPP must sign their own verification form. You must combine the forms into a single PDF for upload to the application.
3. 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.

* NOTE: School systems with more than two EPP partners are eligible for the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant. However, participation in grant activities will be limited to *no more than two* verified EPP partners.

Statutory or Program-Specific Assurances

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

1. The applicant assures that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
2. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2027-2029 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant Program Guidelines.

3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2027-2029 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
4. The applicant assures that any Electronic Information Resources (EIR) produced as part of this agreement will comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements as specified in 1 TAC 206, 1 TAC Chapter 213, Federal Section 508 standards, and the WCAG 2.0 AA Accessibility Guidelines.
5. The applicant acknowledges that Per Section 22.0834 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a grantee or subgrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fingerprinting Requirement.
6. The school system will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.
7. The school system will regularly submit its expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on track for grant expenditures.

General Program Assurances

1. The applicant will meet all statutory and TEA program requirements for the LASO V PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program.
2. The applicant will appoint a school system representative (i.e., Strategic Staffing Lead) who will dedicate at least 20% of their time and effort to oversee the 2027-2029 Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant. This school system representative must:
 - a. Manage or directly support the school system's PREP Residency Preservice Program.
 - b. Serve as the point of contact for the ESC technical assistance provider and EPP partner(s).
 - c. Together with the ESC, coordinate with other school system staff and the EPP partner(s) to schedule grant activities and complete program milestones.
3. The applicant will develop and communicate resources to successfully implement strategic staffing models.
 - a. These resources may include parameters for strategic staffing, resident and/or host teacher responsibilities, and communication plans.
 - b. Resources developed for the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant must be communicated to all stakeholders involved in the PREP Residency Preservice Program and the EPP partner(s).
4. The applicant will share data with technical assistance providers to inform successful implementation of strategic staffing. This data may include teacher vacancies or student characteristics.
5. The applicant will submit implementation and outcomes data to TEA, which may include:
 - a. Selected strategic staffing models and parameters.
 - b. Resident and host teacher stipend amounts.
 - c. Characteristics of residents participating in the program.
6. Sustainable Funding for Residencies

- a. The applicant will use strategic staffing approaches to design and implement a residency model that can be sustained beyond the two-year grant. The model must enable applicants to satisfy the allotment's cost-match requirement described in TEC §48.157(b) and establish a program leveraging allotment funds to fully support resident and host teacher stipends by SY 2029–30.
- 7. School System and EPP Partnership(s)
 - a. The applicant and its EPP partner(s) will meet all statutory and TEA program requirements for educator preparation programs outlined in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 228 and the LASO V PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program.
 - b. After the applicant is awarded, the applicant and its EPP partner(s) must sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the ESC technical assistance provider.
 - 1. Note that this is an MOU specific to the Texas Strategic Staffing grant that will be distributed by the Texas Education Agency and signed after awardees have been selected. This MOU will confirm the commitment of school systems and their EPP partner(s) to engage in the two-year technical assistance process with ESCs.
 - c. The applicant and its EPP partner(s) will engage in collaborative grant activities, including designing and implementing a mutually beneficial strategic staffing model that enables candidates to meet all residency program requirements and earn enhanced standard certification.
 - d. Per TAC Chapter 228, the applicant and its EPP partner(s) must meet at least quarterly with school system and campus administrators to review data. These meetings must entail evaluating residency performance data, implementation of the strategic staffing model(s), and opportunities for continuous improvement.
 - e. If and only if at least one resident is placed in the 2028-29 school year, up to \$10,000 of grant funds may be used towards contracted services with the approved EPP partner(s) to support field supervisor(s) overseeing the school system's residents during the grant's implementation phase.
 - f. The applicant will provide good-faith priority consideration, consistent with applicable law and local hiring policies, for qualified teacher residents who successfully complete the residency program and earn enhanced standard certification. This assurance does not guarantee employment or supersede required hiring, posting, certification, nepotism, or approval procedures.
- 8. Technical Assistance for Design and Implementation
 - a. The applicant will participate in all required technical assistance activities and complete all associated artifacts in a timely and high-quality manner. Technical assistance activities will support key decisions, structures, and processes that build internal capacity to implement and sustain the strategic staffing model by SY 2029-30 with PREP Allotment funding and without ongoing technical assistance support.
 - b. The applicant will ensure that a designated team of leaders from the school system, campuses, and EPP partner(s) actively participates in strategic staffing model training and technical assistance activities beginning in SY 2027-28.

- c. The applicant and its EPP partner(s) will participate in sustainability meetings with the ESC technical assistance provider at a cadence determined by the ESC throughout strategic staffing implementation. These meetings will focus on sustaining the strategic staffing model(s) and residency program and meeting the PREP Residency Allotment's cost-match requirement beyond the grant period.

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

Program Elements

Description of Program

The Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant supports a two-year process in which school systems and educator preparation program (EPP) partners work with an Education Service Center (ESC) technical assistance provider to design and implement a sustainable, year-long residency model using strategic staffing approaches.

These approaches may include residents supporting host teachers' release time or serving in instructional support roles, such as tutoring, providing enrichment instruction, substitute teaching, or paraprofessional positions. By aligning staffing structures and funding sources, school systems can expand residency opportunities while strengthening instructional capacity, teacher pipelines, and long-term program sustainability.

This grant is designed to complement and expand the impact of the Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Residency Allotment. Through strategic staffing approaches, school systems may identify opportunities to reallocate and reinvest existing resources to meet the allotment's \$10,000 per-candidate cost-match requirement and support sustainable funding for residency programs. School systems may also use strategic staffing approaches to expand residency opportunities beyond the maximum residents supported through the allotment, further strengthening their teacher hiring pipeline strategy.

Overview of Included Supports

Part I: Strategic staffing technical assistance

Technical assistance enables school systems to build the internal strategic staffing framework needed to implement and eventually self-fund residency programs.

- These are in-kind (no cost to the school system) technical assistance services, provided by the Education Service Center, to design, implement, and sustain a strategic staffing model.
- This training and technical assistance support will be provided in SY 2027-28 and 2028-29.
- School systems will be matched with an ESC technical assistance provider.

Part II: Funding for strategic staffing implementation and residency program sustainability

- Grant funding may be used for investments that help build and sustain high-quality teacher residency programs, such as co-funding the salary of the school system representative who oversees all Grant activities (i.e., Strategic Staffing Lead) and/or the cost-match requirement for the Preparing and Retaining Educators Program (PREP) Allotment: Residency Preservice Program.
 - See the Allowable Uses of Funds section for more information.

Design, Implementation, and Sustainability Overview

The purpose of the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant is to support school systems and their EPP

partner(s) in designing and implementing strategic staffing approaches that build residency programs that can be sustained beyond the two-year grant period.

School systems and EPP partner(s) must engage in activities focused on the design, implementation, and sustainability of strategic staffing models and residency programs.

School System Strategic Staffing Lead Role: Responsibilities & Estimated Time Commitments

To assist applicants in planning for the Strategic Staffing Lead role, the anticipated responsibilities and time commitments are outlined below. The designated school system representative must be the Program Manager for or directly support the school system's PREP Residency Preservice Program.

Part I: Design Phase Responsibilities

The design phase focuses on goal setting, identifying best-fit strategic staffing models, and developing the resources and systems needed to support implementation. This phase may also include identifying sustainable funding sources and strategies to meet the PREP Residency Allotment's \$10,000 per-candidate cost-match requirement during and beyond the grant period.

The design process will require the Strategic Staffing Lead to:

- Attend three full-day, in-person sessions.
- Participate in regular virtual meetings with the technical assistance provider (estimated frequency: one to three times per month; approximately one hour each).
- Engage key leadership, including superintendent or cabinet-level employees.
- Review key artifacts between sessions.
- Support summer training for teacher residents and host teachers, as applicable.
- Manage required grant submissions to TEA.

If the school system maintains an EPP partnership from an existing residency program, it may, with the approval of TEA, **modify design-phase activities based on school systems' previous experiences with residency programs if they continue to meet all grant milestones and requirements.**

Note: The Strategic Staffing Lead will participate in all design activities. However, the design team should also include other school system leaders and EPP faculty and staff at various points throughout the design process.

Part II: Implementation Phase Responsibilities

The implementation phase, which spans at least one full school year, focuses on implementing, evaluating, and continuously improving the strategic staffing model(s).

The implementation process will require the Strategic Staffing Lead to:

- Monitor implementation of the strategic staffing model(s) on an ongoing basis.
- Manage communication among the school system, campuses, and EPP partner(s).
- Engage key leadership, including superintendent or cabinet-level employees.
- Coordinate job-embedded training, as needed.
- In collaboration with the technical assistance provider, regularly collect and review data related to strategic staffing goals.

- Co-lead and prepare for implementation site visits with the technical assistance provider and EPP partner(s) (at least two to three times during implementation).
- Attend and contribute to quarterly meetings with EPP partner(s).
- Manage required grant submissions to TEA.

Part III: Sustainability Phase Responsibilities

Sustainability activities occur throughout implementation and toward the end of the grant period. The school system and its EPP partner(s) will participate in sustainability meetings with the ESC technical assistance provider at a cadence determined by the ESC. These meetings will focus on sustaining the strategic staffing model(s) and residency program beyond the grant period, including leveraging the PREP Residency Allotment and meeting the \$10,000 per-candidate cost-match requirement.

The sustainability process will require the Strategic Staffing Lead to:

- Attend and contribute to sustainability meetings.
- Manage required grant submissions to TEA.

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 Strategic Staffing Lead must be the Program Manager for or directly support the school system's PREP Residency Preservice Program. Further, they should have enough authority or autonomy to communicate and engage with senior leadership regarding programmatic decisions made during strategic staffing design and implementation.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

- Conduct program evaluation as requested by TEA, including submission of resident placements, strategic staffing models, and host teacher data during SY 2027-28 and 2028-29.
- During the design phase, provide regular (at least monthly and as requested) report(s), documenting progress towards strategic staffing design milestones, including examples of key artifacts.
- During the implementation phase, provide regular (at least quarterly and as requested) report(s), documenting implementation year monitoring and related implementation data.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

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

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

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

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

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

A school system may use money received to fund any combination of the following.

- Partial salary or time and effort of School System Strategic Staffing Lead(s).
 - Resident salary or payroll costs
- Grant funding may be used towards the cost-match requirement of the Preparing and Retaining Educators Program (PREP) Allotment: Residency Preservice Program (more information can be found in the 'Cost Share or Matching Requirement' section of the PREP Allotment: Residency Preservice Program Guidelines)
- Host teacher stipends and/or training (e.g., the TEA-adopted Texas Mentorship Training)
- If and only if at least one resident is placed in the 2028-29 school year, contracted services with the approved EPP partner(s) to support field supervisor(s) overseeing the school system's residents during the grant's implementation phase
 - This amount may not exceed \$10,000 per grant period
- Other allowable costs that help build and sustain high-quality teacher residency programs, which include but are not limited to residency program implementation supports, in-state travel, supplies and materials, and costs for conferences or trainings directly related to grant activities.
 - This amount may not exceed \$10,000 per grant period

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

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:

- Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Member travel to conferences, trainings, or activities directly related to this grant.

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.

- Out-of-state travel.
- Travel for students to conferences.
- Technology-related costs or subscriptions.
- Field trips.
- Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419.
- Non-employee costs for conferences.

- The cost of membership in any civic or community organization.
- Hosting or sponsoring conferences.
- 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 Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
 - Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
 - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- 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.

Please upload a PDF of the [Texas Strategic Staffing \(TSS\) Educator Preparation Program \(EPP\) Grant Participation and Partnership Verification Form](#), signed by your EPP partner(s). You must upload one form for each EPP partner, and you may have no more than two EPP partners.

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 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.

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*.

TEA will select awardees using the following tiered process for all applicants that have met eligibility criteria and agree to the grant assurances. TEA will fund applicants using the process below until it reaches 50 awardees.

Condition	Definition
Tier 1: School Systems with Many New Hires Up to 25 awards	First, TEA will rank the grant applicants in order from greatest to fewest number of new teacher hires with no previous experience teaching (i.e., new hires, excluding re-enterers) using the most recent data available from the Newly Certified and New Hire Teacher Hires Dashboards . All school systems with more than 40 new teacher hires will be ranked by priority points (below). The top 25 school systems will be selected for award.
Tier 2: Rural School Systems Only Up to 25 awards	Of the remaining applicants, TEA will narrow the pool to applicants who are considered rural in either 2024-25, 2023-24, or 2022-23 , based on school system data verified through TEA's District Type Data Search . TEA will rank these school systems by priority points (below). The top 25 school systems will be selected for award.
Tier 3: All remaining applicants	TEA will rank all remaining applicants by priority points. All remaining applicants will be awarded in order of greatest to fewest priority points.

In the case of a tie when selecting awardees within groups, the grantee will be the school system with a **greater number of new teacher hires** with no previous experience teaching.

If a tie remains, the grant will be awarded to the applicant with the largest percentage (%) of Economically Disadvantaged students.

Priority Points

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

The following priority points will be awarded to school systems who:

Condition	Points
First-time recipients of any Texas Strategic Staffing funding (including TCLAS and the 2025-2026 Sustainable Residency Implementation Continuation Grant)	5 points
Submitted LASO V Applications to or confirmed LASO IV participants for the following programs: All three PREP Program Allotments (Grow Your Own, Residency, Mentorship)	5 points
Submitted LASO V Applications to or confirmed LASO IV participants for the following programs: Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)	2 points

Are currently participating in the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) with a fully approved local designation system and between 15%-25% of school system teachers designated	1 point
Are currently participating in the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) with a fully approved local designation system and at least 25% of school system teachers designated	2 points
Received designation by TEA as an Enhanced Teacher Incentive Allotment (Enhanced TIA) school system, submitted a letter of intent for Enhanced TIA, or are currently participating in a Strategic Compensation Cohort.	2 points
Are currently participating in a Texas Strategic Leadership (TSL) cohort in SY 26-27	2 points
Implement at least 165 calendar instructional days	2 points

Maximum priority points available: **20 Points**

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

Oral interviews do not apply to this grant.