

Informal Discretionary Competitive (IDC Grant)

LASO 2026-2027 (Cycle 5)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2027-2028 Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator Grant Program Guidelines

Authorized by: GAA, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Texas Education Code Sec. SB 569 30B.201 and 30B.202

Grant Application Due Date

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



Table of Contents

Introduction to the Program Guidelines	3
Requirement for Username and Password	3
Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines.....	4
Errata Notices	4
Overview of LASO Process	4
Email Bulletins	5
Contact for Clarifying Information.....	5
U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations	5
LASO Timeline.....	5
Resources Available to Help Applicants Select the Most Appropriate Initiative(s).....	6
LASO at a Glance	7
Authorizing Legislation	7
Where to Submit the LASO Application	7
Purpose of Program	8
Eligible Applicants	9
Application Funding	9
Limitation of Administrative Funds	11
LASO Application Requirements and Assurances	11
Program Elements	14
Allowable Activities and Use of Funds	18
Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds	21
Expenditure Reporting (ER)	21
Attachments	21
Required Program-Related Attachments	21
Required Fiscal-Related Attachments	21
LASO Scoring and Review	22
LASO Review and Funding Criteria	23
Priority Points.....	24
Oral Interviews for Funding	24

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 account:
 - a. Entity name

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.

- 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: Ann Rajan, Division Director of Virtual and Hybrid Education

Primary Program Contact Email: [VHPA help desk](#)

Primary Program Contact Phone: (512) 463-8916

Additional Program Contact: Dr. Sara Baker, Deputy Director of Virtual and Hybrid Resources and Support

Additional Program Contact Phone: (512) 463-9893

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	\$1,900,000
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	\$1,900,000

**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.

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

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 23, 2026 at 1:30 p.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #1 schedule Registration links found on the LASO website
October 27, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. CT	Program Specific Webinar #2 schedule Registration links found on the LASO website
November 1, 2026	FAQ question submission deadline
November 19, 2026 at 2:30 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 , 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 grant is authorized by GAA, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Texas Education Code Sec. SB 569 30B.201 and 30B.202.

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 Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA) supports school systems and open-enrollment charter schools in establishing and strengthening high-quality virtual and hybrid programs or campuses under Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 30B. Through funding and technical assistance, the program helps school systems develop personalized learning models, expand access to rigorous and flexible learning opportunities, implement innovative staffing approaches, broaden course offerings, and increase access to high-quality instruction statewide, with the goal of establishing schools designed to achieve A or B accountability ratings.

VHPA is a two-year program. By the end of the first year, participating school systems and open-enrollment charter schools must either launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus that will operate in the 2028-2029 school year. School systems that meet all engagement and deliverable requirements in Year 1 may use this participation to satisfy the planning year requirement for virtual and hybrid campuses outlined in Senate Bill 569. School systems that meet the milestones and submit artifacts in alignment with Year 1 requirements will qualify for Year 2 funds and supports.

School systems must commit to operating one of the following virtual or hybrid model options:

- **Full-Time Virtual Program** is an educational option where students attend almost entirely online, receiving instruction and content primarily via the Internet, either synchronously or asynchronously, with minimal to no in-person attendance.
- **Full-Time Hybrid Program** is a full-time educational option where a student attends in-person classes for less than 90% of instructional time. Instruction can be delivered online (synchronously or asynchronously), in person, or through other methods. Hybrid programs may be organized so that courses are delivered partly in-person and partly online or scheduled such that students attend both virtual and in-person classes within the same school day, or through a combination of these methods.
- **Full-Time Virtual Campus:** a school system or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time virtual program authorized under TEC, Chapter 30B.
- **Full-Time Hybrid Campus:** a school system or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time hybrid program authorized under TEC, Chapter 30B.

Targeted Outcomes

The applicant will:

- Develop high-quality implementation plans aligned to virtual and hybrid best practices and build staff capacity to support successful implementation and long-term sustainability.
- Demonstrate growth from the diagnostic assessment to the end-of-year (EOY) evaluation across the key components of high-quality virtual and hybrid programs defined in the framework.
- If already in operation, demonstrate continuous improvement from the diagnostic assessment to the EOY evaluation through stronger implementation of framework-aligned practices.
- Demonstrate positive student outcomes, strong student persistence, increased student learning, and expanded access to engaging, rigorous instructional opportunities through a high-quality virtual or

hybrid model.

- Demonstrate evidence of a high-quality virtual or hybrid model through indicators such as low student churn and positive student outcomes.
- For campuses, receive authorization to operate in the 2028-2029 school year following successful completion of Year 1 supports.
- Successfully launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or complete authorization requirements for a full-time virtual or hybrid campus.

Eligible Applicants

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

The eligible applicants are:

- School systems or open-enrollment charter schools serving K-12 students.
- School systems that did not participate in a previous cycle of the VHPA program.
- School systems with a current rating of A, B, or C at the time of application.
- Charters not yet serving students are not eligible.
- School systems that are not currently operating, authorized to operate, or seeking authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus for the 2027-2028 school year. School systems currently operating, authorized to operate, or seeking authorization may apply only if they propose a virtual or hybrid model that is substantially different from their current or planned model.

***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 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 approximately 14 applicants will be awarded through the Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA), including approximately 10 virtual or hybrid campus awards and 4 virtual or hybrid program awards.

Applicants are divided into two categories: Virtual or Hybrid Campus and Virtual or Hybrid Program. If an applicant's model is undecided, it will be placed in the Program category. Applicants will be evaluated and ranked within their category according to the selection process outlined in the Scoring and Review portion of

this document. Funding will be evenly distributed among selected applicants, with awards expected to be up to \$150,000 for Campus recipients and up to \$100,000 for Program recipients, subject to available funding.

Awards are distributed based on the applicant's model category: virtual or hybrid campus or virtual or hybrid program. VHPA LASO 5 funding and in-kind support are limited to Year 1 and are intended to support planning and readiness activities. Year 2 is not included in the initial award. School systems will receive Year 2 funding and in-kind technical assistance support only if they successfully complete all required Year 1 milestones and submit required artifacts in a timely manner. For virtual or hybrid campuses, failure to receive required authorization may result in Year 2 funding and technical assistance support not being awarded.

Applicants are scored based on a rubric.

Award Details

Year 1

Category	Estimated Number of Awards	Year 1 Direct Funding per school system	Year 1 In-Kind Support per school system	Total Year 1 Support per school system
Virtual or Hybrid Campus	~10	Up to \$150,000	\$56,100	\$206,100
Virtual or Hybrid Program	~4	Up to \$100,000	\$56,100	\$156,100

Year 2

Year 2 funding and support through the VHPA will be provided through a non-competitive renewal opportunity. Eligibility for Year 2 is contingent upon the successful achievement of program goals, compliance with applicable statutory requirements, and the timely completion of all required Year 1 milestones and artifacts. If a non-competitive renewal is authorized, eligible award recipients will be notified directly by program staff and provided with additional instructions and next steps.

Category	Estimated Number of Awards	Year 2 Direct Funding per school system	Year 2 In-Kind Support per school system	Total Year 2 Support per school system
Virtual or Hybrid Campus	~10	Up to \$80,000	\$93,285	\$173,285
Virtual or Hybrid Program	~4	Up to \$50,000	\$93,285	\$143,285

School systems may not change from campus to program once Year 1 funds have been accepted.

** 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 are selected according to their scores and ranked within two delivery format categories: campus and program. Those who have not decided on a format will be included in the program category for award consideration.

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 not 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 unrestricted 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.

There are no statutory required responses for this grant opportunity.

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. What type of virtual or hybrid option is the school system interested in developing through VHPA?
2. What grade levels will the school system serve with a virtual or hybrid program or campus?
3. What is the school system's current state of planning or implementation of a virtual or hybrid model?
4. What is the anticipated launch year for the virtual or hybrid model?
5. Does the school system intend to apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus?
6. Which best describes the school system's current level of governing board awareness or support for the proposed virtual or hybrid program or campus?
7. What is the projected student enrollment for the proposed virtual or hybrid program or campus in the anticipated launch year?
8. Describe how the enrollment projection was calculated for the virtual or hybrid model and submit evidence to support this.
9. What are the qualifications of the virtual or hybrid program or campus leader?
10. How will your virtual or hybrid program/campus align with the school system's broader strategic goals, improvement plans, and student needs?
11. What are the school system's greatest needs in designing and launching a virtual or hybrid program or campus?
12. Does the school system intend to contract with a Whole Program Provider for its virtual or hybrid program or campus?
13. What's the current state of the proposed instructional model?
14. Describe what knowledge or experience the school system's leadership team brings to designing and supporting high-quality virtual or hybrid instruction.

15. What is the primary reason the school system is pursuing a virtual or hybrid option?
16. Who from the school system is the primary contact for overseeing participation in the VHPA?
17. Who from the school system will be the Project Lead for VHPA? Who will be the Senior Project Sponsor?

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 Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA) Grant Program Guidelines.
3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the VHPA 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. 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.
7. 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.
8. The school system will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.

9. The applicant will regularly submit their expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on track for grant expenditures.
10. The applicant will participate in all required meetings and submit artifacts of implementation, at a monthly/quarterly cadence.
11. The applicant will submit a comprehensive launch plan and either implement a virtual/hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus that is expected to begin operating in the 2028-2029 school year.
12. The applicant understands that if they do not meet participation expectations or disengage from VHPA, they may have their membership from the VHPA terminated and forfeit any access to remaining funding.
13. The applicant will ensure that the designated program or campus leader possesses relevant experience or can exhibit the competencies necessary to lead a virtual or hybrid program or campus effectively.
14. The applicant will design and manage strategic initiatives that improve instructional quality and student engagement, and they are committed to building their capacity to support high-quality virtual and hybrid models.
15. As part of the program commitment for Year 1 of VHPA, the applicant will submit a comprehensive launch plan for a full-time virtual/hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus in the 2028-2029 school year.
16. 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.

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

Program Elements

Description of Program

The VHPA program aims to develop high-quality virtual and hybrid programs and campuses throughout Texas. School system teams will participate in a two-year structured program that includes cohort-based workshops, monthly coaching calls with technical assistance (TA) providers, and the completion of artifacts that document their work and progress in design and implementation. In the first year, teams engage stakeholders, define their vision and instructional design, and conduct pilots to prepare for program launch or campus authorization. In year 2, school systems set measurable goals, carry out action plans, and use continuous improvement to assess progress. They review data on student engagement, mastery, and attendance to evaluate program effectiveness.

Technical assistance providers collaborate with school systems to design high-quality virtual and hybrid courses, develop staffing plans that enhance digital instruction, and deliver professional development focused on effective online pedagogy. Additional support encompasses leadership training, operational consulting, and the implementation of strategies for community engagement and comprehensive student support. School systems will also engage in iterative planning and data-driven improvement cycles to establish rigorous and engaging virtual and hybrid learning opportunities. These efforts are grounded in purposeful design, with the goal of operating effective campuses that meet diverse student needs and are positioned to earn A or B accountability ratings.

Note: Year 2 funding and support through the VHPA will be provided through a non-competitive renewal

opportunity. Eligibility for Year 2 is contingent upon the successful achievement of program goals, compliance with applicable statutory requirements, and the timely completion of all required Year 1 milestones and artifacts. If a non-competitive renewal is authorized, eligible award recipients will be notified directly by program staff and provided with additional instructions and next steps. *For full-time virtual or hybrid campuses, failure to receive authorization could result in a funding reduction for year 2.*

Eligibility for continued participation in the VHPA requires meeting the requirements listed below, including successful and timely completion of all milestones and artifacts in Year 1 and Year 2.

- Establish a VHPA Team responsible for developing and implementing the full-time virtual or hybrid program or campus.
- Collaborate with a TEA-assigned technical assistance (TA) provider and participate in TA-supported activities such as cohort workshops, coaching calls, step backs, planning sessions, or other activities that support implementation planning and artifact development.
- Ensure adaptability and dedication in program model development to align with research-based best practices for high-quality virtual and hybrid learning environments.
- Ensure that program leads of awarded applicants have at least 16 hours of release time built into their weekly schedules to plan and create the virtual or hybrid program or campus.
- Launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus that will operate in the 2028-2029 school year.
- Ensure that any partnership with a private or third-party vendor preserves the school system's ability to design, adapt, and implement the virtual or hybrid program/campus to meet local needs.
- Disclose any vendor-imposed services or limitations that may affect program flexibility, instructional design, or operational decision-making.
- If a school system or charter school enlists a private or third-party provider to deliver education services or operate a virtual or hybrid campus, the school system or charter must engage with the designated technical assistance partner to develop a comprehensive provider selection plan. This plan must include:
 - Defined criteria for evaluating potential providers.
 - Detailed cost analysis and breakdown of services.
 - Consideration of the provider's historical performance such as student academic outcomes in similar programs.
 - Submission of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements outlining the responsibilities of both the provider and the school system or charter.
 - A system for monitoring progress, including required progress reports.

Clearly defined action items to be implemented if the provider fails to meet established successful criteria for the campus or program.

- The school system commits to completing all required artifacts and meeting milestones by the scheduled timeline specified by the VHPA, including:
 - Define a clear and compelling rationale for launching the virtual or hybrid model, including the specific student population or campus it will serve.
 - Present evidence of community interest in a virtual or hybrid learning option, including data

- collected through surveys, focus groups, or other engagement methods.
- Develop and implement plans to achieve program objectives, including an academic plan that outlines curriculum, instructional methods, approaches for monitoring student progress, and support strategies for special populations and at-risk students.
- Develop and iterate plans for staffing models, school culture, family engagement, and student support.
- Update operations such as staffing, schedules, finances, technology, and cybersecurity to support virtual or hybrid models.
- Provide a professional development plan for instructional staff that includes training specific to virtual and hybrid instruction, along with ongoing, job-embedded coaching to strengthen instructional quality and student engagement.
- Present evidence of training and development for teachers and leaders to ensure high-quality virtual or hybrid instruction.
- Use data to monitor student engagement and academic progress, ensuring alignment with grade-level standards and research-based instructional strategies.
- Engage in improvement cycle sessions using data to inform ongoing development. School systems will share data that reflects program implementation and outcomes. This may include student engagement, progress toward grade-level mastery in virtual and hybrid courses (BOY, MOY, EOY), teacher instructional practices and growth in serving virtual and hybrid learners, and leader support for professional learning communities and job-embedded coaching.
- Obtain formal approval from the school system's governing board to launch a virtual or hybrid program/campus. For virtual or hybrid campuses, ensure this approval is secured prior to applying for authorization.
- Submit a detailed plan or contract outlining the scope of services, responsibilities, and decision-making authority in any private or third-party vendor partnership supporting the virtual or hybrid program/campus (*if applicable*).
- Submit a comprehensive launch plan and either implement a virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus that is expected to begin operating in the 2028-2029 school year.
- The school system's VHPA program lead is required to attend meetings with TEA grant program staff and school system business/finance office staff who oversee grant expenditures and the drawdown process.

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:

1. The program or designated campus leader possesses relevant experience in leading virtual and/or hybrid learning environments or demonstrates the competencies necessary to do so effectively. This includes strategic planning, instructional leadership, and the ability to support student success in flexible learning models.
2. School system and campus administrators have experience designing and managing strategic initiatives that improve instructional quality and student engagement, and they are committed to

building their capacity to support high-quality virtual and hybrid models.

3. Instructional staff have foundational experience in digital instruction and will continue to strengthen their practice through a professional development plan that includes targeted training and ongoing, job-embedded coaching. This approach builds on existing qualifications to enhance instructional quality and student engagement.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

1. Collaborate with TEA and technical assistance (TA) partners by providing access to classrooms, tools, meetings, and data as needed to support program development and continuous improvement.
 - TEA and TA partners may observe instruction or internal meetings to inform technical assistance and better understand program implementation.
 - School systems will conduct a diagnostic to determine the status of their virtual and hybrid plans or programs and to set goals and action plans for progressing toward the target model.
 - School systems will present evidence of community interest in a virtual or hybrid learning option, including data collected through surveys, focus groups, or other engagement methods.
 - School systems will create or revise plans for master schedules, staffing and professional development, technology systems, student engagement, school culture, instructional design for diverse learners, and strategies for supporting special populations and at-risk students.
 - School systems will incorporate these elements within the comprehensive launch plan to guide program development and implementation.
 - School systems planning to operate a virtual or hybrid campus will utilize elements of the launch plan during the authorization application process.
 - By the end of Year 1 of VHPA support, launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus beginning the 2028-2029 school year.
 - School systems will complete all required artifacts and meet milestones with the scheduled timeline specified by the TEA VHPA staff.
2. Program artifacts include school systems teams engaging in improvement cycle sessions using data to inform ongoing development. School systems will share data that reflects program implementation and outcomes. This may include student attendance, engagement, progress toward grade-level mastery in virtual and hybrid courses (BOY, MOY, EOY), teacher instructional practices and growth in serving virtual and hybrid learners, and leader support for professional learning communities and job-embedded coaching. School systems acknowledge that TEA may share tools, training, and resources developed through VHPA participation across the VHPA network and with other Texas schools.
3. If a school system or charter school enlists a private or third-party provider to deliver education services or operate a virtual or hybrid campus, the school system or charter must engage with the designated technical assistance partner to develop a comprehensive provider selection plan. This plan must include:
 - Defined criteria for evaluating potential providers
 - Detailed cost analysis and breakdown of services
 - Consideration of the provider's historical performance

- Submission of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements outlining the responsibilities of both the provider and the school system or charter.
- A system for monitoring progress, including required progress reports
- Clearly defined action items to be implemented if the provider fails to meet agreed outcomes

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

Grant applicants must budget funds according to the required items listed below. Awards are up to the amounts listed and may fluctuate depending on the number of high-quality applicants selected for funding. The line item amounts represent the maximum amount that may be budgeted for each required category unless otherwise approved by the TEA VHPA Team.

All costs must be reasonable, necessary, properly coded, and directly tied to planning, launching, implementing, or improving the proposed full-time virtual or hybrid program or campus. Any exceptions, capital expenditures, or costs requiring prior approval must be approved by the TEA VHPA Team before funds are expended.

- Year 1, Programs
 - Leader release time for virtual/hybrid program planning: \$25,000
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$20,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000
 - High-quality instructional material and/or professional development support: \$20,000
 - Technology: \$20,000
 - School community engagement support: \$10,000
- Year 1, Campuses
 - Leader release time for virtual/hybrid program planning: \$60,000
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$20,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000

- High-quality instructional material and/or professional development support: \$35,000
- Technology: \$20,000
- School community engagement support: \$10,000

If the applicant qualifies for Year 2 support, the breakdown of expenses will be shared directly with applicant by the program team.

SBITA Debt Services

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

The table below provides illustrative examples of allowable expenditures and potential budget codes by category. The examples are not exhaustive and are intended for guidance only. Final allowability depends on the specific expenditure, appropriate coding, approved application, and alignment to the applicant's approved VHPA model and grant activities. While the budget codes shown are examples, how allowable costs are budgeted is ultimately a local school system decision.

Category	Illustrative Use Cases	Possible Budget Codes
Leader Release Time for Virtual/Hybrid Planning	Partial salary, release time, substitute coverage, or temporary coverage for the leader to participate in VHPA activities such as launch planning, instructional model design, and completion of activities to meet the required VHPA milestones and artifacts.	6100
Educator Stipends or Salary Support	Stipends or salary support for school system educators to adapt curriculum, redesign lessons, or develop courses for their virtual or hybrid program. Stipends or salary support for school system educators for designing professional development and training for the virtual or hybrid staff.	6100, 6200
Travel Expenses	Travel for required VHPA convenings, technical assistance sessions, implementation planning meetings, authorization planning meetings, implementation visits, and site visits to existing virtual or hybrid programs or campuses. <i>Travel expenses must be pre-approved by the TEA VHPA team.</i>	6400
High-Quality Instructional Materials and/or Professional Development Support	Purchase of digital instructional materials, virtual course content, curriculum adaptation, instructional coaching, online pedagogy training, PLC facilitation, and/or curriculum mapping. Purchase or payment of fees associated with professional development to execute the HQIM materials in a virtual or hybrid setting or to build capacity in staff around instructional strategies such as student engagement, accessibility, assessment, progress monitoring, or job-embedded support.	6200, 6300
Technology	Technology purchases that directly support the implementation of the virtual or hybrid model such as LMS enhancements, instructional software, digital assessment platforms, engagement or progress-	6300; 6600 with prior approval if

	monitoring tools, videoconferencing tools, attendance-monitoring systems, accessibility tools, teacher peripherals, platform integrations, or cybersecurity supports.	capitalized
School Community Engagement Support	Reasonable and necessary expenses related to engagement activities such as family information sessions, community input meetings, student orientation, parent/caregiver LMS training, translation and interpretation services, outreach materials, surveys, focus groups, communication tools, and approved staff support for engagement activities. Refreshments may be allowable when they are tied to a documented program-related engagement meeting; the cost is reasonable, and attendance is documented (agenda, sign-in sheets, etc.). However, food provided for awards, routine staff meetings, breakfasts, or primarily social events would not be allowable.	6100, 6200, 6400
SBITA Debt Service (If Applicable)	Qualifying subscription-based technology arrangements that directly support the approved VHPA model, such as an LMS, digital curriculum platform, student monitoring platform, instructional software, or similar technology.	6514 (Principal), 6526 (Interest)

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

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are allowable.

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

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

Stipends for Non-Employees Other Than Those Included in 6419

Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may be funded under the Grant program.

Stipends for non-employees will require pre-authorization in writing. To access the pre-authorization form for participant support costs, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

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:

Costs for travel are associated with TEA-required events, VHPA conferences organized by TA provider, school system-directed visits to existing virtual or hybrid programs that follow the target implementation model, or any other TEA-approved activities that assist with the planning and execution of virtual or hybrid programs or campuses.

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.

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)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Field trips
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Advisory Council
- Travel costs for students to conferences
- Hosting or Sponsoring Conferences
- Audit services for state-funded Grants
- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months)
- 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.

Upload a PDF summary (maximum two pages) that explains the data used to support your projected enrollment. Include the source of each data point or estimate. Do not include sensitive data, including student-level information.

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

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*.

School systems must meet all eligibility determinations to be considered for review. If a school system lists their category as “undecided,” the school system will be placed in the program category.

Criteria	Description	Points
Planning Stage of the Virtual or the Hybrid Model (Program Application Question 4)	School system’s current stage of planning and/or implementation for the virtual or hybrid programs.	7
Board Awareness and Support (Program Application Question 6)	School system indicates the governing board’s awareness, commitment, and support for the planning, implementation, and long-term sustainability of the proposed program.	8
Enrollment Demand and Community Interest (Program Application Questions 7, 8, and 9)	School system notes the projected demand for the proposed virtual or hybrid campus and the evidence used to validate enrollment interest and long-term program viability.	26
School system’s Leadership Team Experience (Program Application Questions 10 and 17)	The leadership team has demonstrated experience leading high-quality virtual or hybrid programs, implementing innovative instructional models, managing cross-functional teams, achieving strong accountability outcomes, and completing relevant professional learning in virtual or hybrid education.	14
School system’s Strategic Plan Alignment (Program Application Question 11)	The school system has a strong rationale of how the virtual or hybrid program/campus aligns with the school system’s broader strategic goals or improvement plans, including academic achievement, innovation, student needs, and long-term instructional transformation.	20
Virtual/Hybrid Instructional Model Development (Application question Q15)	The current stage of development of the proposed virtual or hybrid instructional model.	10

Total Standard Review Points possible: **85 Points**

Applicants are divided into two categories: virtual or hybrid campus, and virtual and hybrid program. If a model is undecided, it defaults to the program category. To be eligible for consideration for the grant, applicants are required to achieve a **minimum score of 60 points** on the program application questions. Applicants with the minimum score are ranked within their category. From the qualifying applicants, up to 15 from the campus

category and up to 10 from the program category will be invited to interview. In the case of a tie, all tying school systems will be invited to oral interviews.

Priority Points

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

Priority points do not apply to this grant.

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

Virtual Oral Interview: Based on application and priority as calculated above, the 15 highest scoring applicants from the campus category who meet the minimum cut score and the 10 highest scoring applicants from the program category who meet the minimum cut score will be invited to interview.

Applicants selected for the interview stage will be required to submit a completed VHPA budget template aligned to their proposed virtual or hybrid model.

Required attendees from the school system for the VHPA interview are the following:

- Senior Project Sponsor (Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, or Executive level administrator recommended)
- Proposed VHPA Project Lead (Virtual/Hybrid Program Leader, Principal) directly responsible for overseeing implementation of the virtual or hybrid model for the school system or campus

Scoring will be based on the school systems' (finalists') responses to questions from the following topics:

- Vision, purpose, and leadership experience and capacity
- School system's readiness for critical implementation elements and VHPA output requirements
- Data practices for student engagement and continuous improvement in a Virtual or Hybrid model
- Alignment of virtual/hybrid model with the overall school system context and goals
- Program sustainability

Interview scores will be added to the application score, and finalists will be ranked within each category.

If a school system qualifies for multiple initiatives, the applicant may 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
- Project Manager
- 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)