

## Frequently Asked Questions for IL

This document will provide frequently asked questions, to guide our partners in their decision-making process to determine which grants are the best fit, aligned to district goals and needs.

### General Questions and Resources

**Question:** Can you define acronym SBOE?

**Answer:** State Board of Education

**Question:** What are superintendent consults?

**Answer:** Superintendent Consultations are meetings between the School Improvement Team at TEA, the ESC, and district leadership to discuss historical data, improvement strategies, and appointing a District Coordinator of School Improvement. These meetings are occurring with non-term limited LEAs that have campuses identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement in 2024 federal accountability.

### Section A: Eligibility

**Question:** If we have 3 campuses (TS/ATS/Comp) we could apply for only 3 or could we include feeder campuses?

**Answer:** The only campuses that can apply are campuses that have a 2024 federal identification and are title-1 serving regardless of feeder pattern.

**Question:** An ATS-identified campus must be TI?

**Answer:** Yes, in order to apply for this grant, the campus must be federally identified in 2024 and title-1 serving. A list of eligible campuses can be found on the LASO Cycle 3 website: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/laso-cycle-3-eligibility-list>

**Question:** If we have a 5th campus that is not Title I (not listed on website) would they be able to participate since the grant would be capped and the non-TI is not getting "funded"?

**Answer:** No, they could not receive funding through this grant, however you can add ineligible (non-Title I campuses or non-federally identified campuses) to your contract with your approved provider using local funds.

**Question:** A campus is identified for School Improvement in ISAM, but not LASO list, why is that?

**Answer:** The campus must be federally identified in 2024 AND be title-1 serving to be on the eligibility list. If you have any questions about a specific campus, please reach out to [laso@tea.texas.gov](mailto:laso@tea.texas.gov) for next steps and additional guidance.

**Question:** The additional 4 campuses that can be awarded must be federally identified for improvement, correct?

**Answer:** Yes, they must be federally identified in 2024 and be title-1 serving. Additionally, award amounts will be determined based on a funding model of a maximum of five campuses, but approved providers are not limited to the number of eligible campuses that they serve through this grant.

**Question:** Eligible campuses are based on 2023-2024 federal identification? What if more campuses are identified next year?

**Answer:** There will be a LASO 4 with similar grants to this year and newly identified campuses will have the option to apply then. Your current campuses would be on a different timeline as they will have begun the work already.

**Question:** Our district has the ESF grant with years 2023-2025. Are we ineligible?

**Answer:** You are eligible, campuses are ineligible if they received the ESF-FSG 24-26.

## Section B: Application-Related Questions

**Question:**

**Answer:**

**Question:**

**Answer:**

**Question:**

**Answer:**

## Section C: Funding and Monitoring Questions

**Question:** How will this grant be monitored & evaluated by TEA's Federal Program Compliance and Federal Fiscal Monitoring?

**Answer:** This grant will not be evaluated or monitored by TEA's Federal Program Compliance Division. This grant may be monitored by TEA's Federal Fiscal Monitoring Division, but that has not yet been determined. As noted in the General and Fiscal Guidelines, TEA reserves the right to conduct a pre-award audit or post-award audit to determine if a subgrantee maintains a proper financial management system and to deny or terminate the award if it is determined that the subgrantee does not maintain a proper financial management system. Pages 29 and 30 of the General and Fiscal Guidelines address Financial Management Standards and Financial Accounting System requirements applicable to federal grants.

**Question:** Can you mention the percentage that goes to the vendor, and which one would be best for a district with HQIM already?

**Answer:** 70% needs to go to the vendor. If you already have an HQIM and are not planning to switch to Bluebonnet learning, the IL pathway would be best fit. SFI pathway will only support LEAs adopting Bluebonnet Learning.

**Question:** Who does the IL training if the \$20,000 isn't spent on an SBOE vendor?

**Answer:** The \$20,000 is provided for product training from the publisher of an SBOE approved HQIM product. The Instructional Leadership training must be provided by an IL Pathway Provider on the State Approved Provider List.

**Question:** Is there an expectation for expenses to be paid during the pre-award period (prior to the NOGA being issued in late spring 2025)?

**Answer:** No expenses are required prior to the NOGA being issued. However, allowable expenditures can be back dated to March 1, 2025, the start date of the grant.

**Question:** Since these are federal funds, are there any other ways to access the Title I, 1003 School Improvement Funds that are issued by an entitlement?

**Answer:** Title I, section 1003 School Improvement Funds are split between two competitive grants, the Instructional Leadership Grant and the Strong Foundation Implementation School Improvement PLC Supports Grant. There are no Title I, 1003 School Improvement Funds being used for a formula fund, like the School Improvement Grant 23-24.

**Question:** Can you discuss supplement not supplant and how to avoid supplanting the IL grant? For example, we already contract with a program provider for some services using local funds. We would like to write a new scope of work with the same provider to target additional needs. Would covering the supplemental services of the second scope of work under the IL grant be considered a supplant?

**Answer:** The purpose of the Supplement, Not Supplant provision is to help ensure that federal grant funds are expended to expand or increase the level of services (i.e., supplement), rather than being diverted to cover expenses that the LEA would have paid out of other funds in the event the federal funds were not available (supplanting). Each specific example must be processed by the LEA on a case by case basis and the burden of proof falls to the LEA to prove that they are not supplanting. If you need more support here, please to go to your Chief Grant Officer or Legal Office for guidance on your specific situation.

**Question:** Is the ESF Focus Grant merging into this grant (Instructional Leadership Pathway)?

**Answer:** We have discontinued the ESF-FSG grants and will not have any new ESF-FSG grants in the future. Sec. 1003 Title 1 School Improvement Funds will be used for the Instructional Leadership Grant (the same funds that previously funded ESF-FSG).

**Question:** Can 30% of funds be used for Title I campuses that are not CSI, ATS, or TSI (just a regular Title I campus with no federal identification)?

**Answer:** No, they cannot. Funds must be used on campuses with a federal identification and that are title 1 serving.

## Section D: IL Program-Specific Questions

**Question:** Can you please elaborate on the role of a principal manager? Could this be the Executive that oversees that particular campus?

**Answer:** Yes, provided that the executive is a district administrator and is willing to engage in their own one-on-one coaching with the approved provider AND coach the principal of the campus in question, that Executive would be eligible.

**Question:** What are the pathways again for IL?

**Answer:** Instructional Leadership Packages offered within this grant include: (1) Complete Instructional Leadership Package (Everything in Option 3 below plus HQIM internalization and alignment) with product support, (2) Complete Instructional Leadership Package without product support, (3) Schoolwide culture routines, observation & feedback, and data-driven instruction, and (4) Observation & feedback and data-driven instruction. Additional details can be found within program guidelines.

**Question:** An LEA has adopted Amplify, Eureka, and Carnegie through LASO 2. Are the OER materials significantly different from these HQIMs?

**Answer:** Each product has a variable amount of difference. The Amplify products are the most different (40%) and the Carnegie and Eureka Products are less different. If you maintain use of the those OER products and choose NOT to adopt Bluebonnet Learning, you are eligible for the IL grant, not the SFI grant.

**Question:** Does the strong foundations implementation grant provide aspects of instructional leadership?

**Answer:** Strong Foundations Implementation provides direct grant funds to LEAs for technical assistance to support high-fidelity implementation of the Texas open education resource (OER) instructional materials, including high-quality professional learning for teachers, instructional coaches, school leaders/campus administrators, and district leaders on effectively implementing OER. Additional details can be found on the LASO 3 website: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/laso-cycle-3#il>

**Question:** Will you define "Complete Instructional Leadership Package" again please?

**Answer:** Yes, that includes two years of job-embedded professional development (i.e. face-to-face training, implementation support, and one-on-one coaching) for schoolwide culture routines, HQIM internalization and alignment, observation & feedback, and data-driven instruction.

**Question:** To apply for this, we don't have to use a product that has been through IMRA process, correct?

**Answer:** In order to apply for the complete instructional leadership package, you do need to adopt an HQIM product that has been through IMRA, OR be currently using a Covid Emergency Release (CER) version of the OER products. If you are not planning to adopt, you could be eligible for the IL pathways that do not include materials (observation and feedback only, or observation and feedback and schoolwide culture routines)

**Question:** Can we apply for different pathways for different campuses and get the full amount for each campus? For example, can we apply for the full IL package for one campus and the package for O/F, DDI for another campus and each campus could be awarded the full amount available for that package?

**Answer:** An LEA can apply for multiple packages but will only be awarded one package per LEA to ensure there is coherence in the district level strategy.

**Question:** What if my district has already engaged in and completed portions of TIL with our ESC? How would already completed work impact the grant expectations?

**Answer:** You can work with your ESC to customize your training and implementation supports provided you are still able to meet all grant assurances and stay within the program guidelines.

## Section D: IL SAPL-Specific Questions

**Question:** Has the list of approved providers been published yet? If not, when will it be available?

**Answer:** Yes, you can access the State Approved Provider List for LASO Cycle 3 here: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/state-approved-provider-list-sapl>

**Question:** Would a district who applies for SFI (ex. in math) and Instructional leadership for literacy need to use the same approved provider?

**Answer:** Yes, and that approved provider would need to be the same for both Strong Foundations and Instructional Leadership. Given the importance of coherence in capacity building, it is required that an LEA work with same provider for both OER and non-OER instructional material support.

**Question:** We have been working with a consultant who is not on the provider list that our teachers and leaders have built trust with. Is there any wiggle room regarding the approved list of providers?

**Answer:** Unfortunately, there is not.

**Question:** If we are already engaging one of the approved providers for the beginning of this work, could we still apply to continue/sustain instructional leadership work?

**Answer:** Yes, you can apply to continue your instructional leadership work with your approved provider as long as you are not adopting an OER Edition 1 (Bluebonnet Learning) product. If you are adopting an OER Edition 1 (Bluebonnet Learning) product, you would need to apply to the Strong Foundations Implementation pathway.