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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

TCLAS Decision 4

2022-2024 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 5

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Decision 4 Assurance Changes

TEA is in the process of developing and issuing an official errata for several TCLAS Decision 4 requirements. Please carefully review the following questions and answers that reflect changes in program requirements. TEA will notify you once the official errata has been posted.

- [A-3](#): MOU submission requirements
- [A-10 and A-13](#): Candidate changes; reallocating, reducing, and declining funds; budget amendments
- [B-3](#): Certification-only candidates and EPP cohorts
- [E-3](#): Summer institute attendance requirements

Frequently Asked Question Overview

The TEA GYO team will periodically update this FAQ document with questions received from the field. Updates to this document will be e-mailed to the GYO listserv and posted to [TEA’s GYO website](#).

Notice on Submitted Questions

We received several questions through the submission form linked above that were already included in past FAQs. Please review the entire document carefully if you do not see your specific question.



Section A: General Questions

Question A-1

Our district was awarded different amounts for 4A, 4B, and 4C. What does this mean for us?

Answer A-1

This depends on what was included in your application. Please refer to your application and page 21 of the [TCLAS Guidance Document](#).

Question A-2

Our LEA originally turned down funding for 4C and we currently have a greater demand from paraprofessionals for 4A than we originally anticipated. Can we recover the money we turned down for 4C and apply it to 4A?

Answer A-2

No. Once an LEA declines funding, TEA is unable to increase funding or issue new awards within TCLAS Decision 4.

Question A-3

Does the MOU have to be approved by our LEA's local board? Also, must we submit it to TEA?

Answer A-3

TEA does not require that your MOU be approved by the LEA's local board. Each LEA should abide by local rules, regulations, and procedures.

TEA is waiving the requirement that LEAs submit MOUs to TEA for approval by May 31, 2022. Instead, the LEA is required to retain documentation of the MOUs locally. TEA will issue an official errata regarding this change in the near future. LEAs are still expected to secure MOUs according to the following assurances in the [TCLAS guidance document](#).

- Participants and candidates must commit with an MOU to remain in the LEA for an agreed upon length of time in a full-time teaching role as a condition of receiving the stipend (page 48).
- The applicant must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from an Accredited, Accredited-Not Rated, or Accredited-Warned Educator Preparation Program that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to participants (page 49).

Question A-4



What is the expectation for “paid release time and schedule flexibility” for Decision 4A candidates?

Answer A-4

LEA and campus leaders should provide reasonable and necessary supports for a paraprofessional to complete their degree and certification course requirements while engaged in the GYO program. TEA does not set any minimum requirements around the amount of paid release time or schedule flexibility since paraprofessional duties, course schedules, and work schedules vary across campuses and LEAs. LEAs may use the indirect and administrative costs to find substitute coverage for candidates.

Question A-5

If an LEA was awarded Cycle 3 or Cycle 4 of Grow Your Own, does this impact the TCLAS Cycles 5 award?

Answer A-5

No. LEAs can be part of overlapping Grow Your Own grant cycles. Please note, each cycle has its own set of program guidelines and requirements.

Question A-7

For the [Qualtrics Candidate Submission](#) survey, where can we find a candidate’s TEA/Unique ID?

Answer A-7

Unique Identification Numbers (ID) can be found in TEAL.

Question A-8

We received a Microsoft Excel template titled “TCLAS – Decision 4 – GYO – Cycle 5 – Candidate Information – Dec 2022.” To whom do we submit this spreadsheet?

Answer A-8

LEAs do not need to submit the spreadsheet to TEA. This is for your records, so you have a copy of who is in your TCLAS Grow Your Own Cycle 5 cohort. All LEAs will enter select candidate information into the [Qualtrics Candidate Submission](#) survey by March 1, 2022.

Question A-9

When will our LEA receive funding?

Answer A-9



All LEAs should receive funding following the issue of Notice of Grant Award (NOGA). As of February 24, 2022, 95% of applicants have received the NOGA for the TCLAS Grant via email to the Authorized Official. If the LEA is unable to access the NOGA, a copy can be obtained through the Expenditure Reporting System on the [TEAL login](#). The Expenditure Reporting system is also where the LEA will access funds. Please email TCLAS@tea.texas.gov if you have additional questions regarding the NOGA.

Question A-10

What happens if the number of participants we have for 4A or 4B is different than what we submitted in our TCLAS Qualtrics application?

Answer A-10

Many LEAs have found the number of participants they have been able to recruit for Decision 4A or 4B is different than what they originally anticipated and submitted in their TCLAS Qualtrics application.

Common scenarios include the following.

- The LEA has been able to recruit and confirm **fewer bachelor plus certification** candidates than originally submitted in the TCLAS Qualtrics application.
- The LEA has been able to recruit and confirm **fewer certification-only** candidates than submitted in the TCLAS Qualtrics application.
- The LEA has a **different combination of bachelor plus certification and certification-only candidates** than originally submitted in the TCLAS Qualtrics application. For example, the LEA anticipated it would have one bachelor plus certification candidate and five certification-only candidates. However, it would like to move forward with two bachelor plus certification candidates and two certification-only candidates.

If an LEA's number or type of participants changes for either Decision 4A or 4B, the LEA may **reallocate** the funds within that sub-decision (e.g., within 4A) or across any Decision 4 sub-decisions the LEA has been awarded (e.g., from 4A to 4C). If a district is certain it will **reduce the number of candidates**, please refer to A-13 for additional next steps.

If an LEA reallocates the funding due to a change in the type or number of participants, it will need to (1) submit a [Candidate Change Form](#) to TEA within 60 days of any participant changes and (2) follow the spending guidelines on page 21 of the [TCLAS Guidance Document](#), including:

- 4A spending limits associated with (a) tuition, fees, and living stipends, and (b) administrative and indirect costs (also refer to question B-7 in this document)
- 4B stipend amounts for Education and Training teachers
- Limits on the number of stipend recipients for 4A (6 per LEA) and 4B (2 per campus)
- All other spending limits included on page 21 of the TCLAS Guidance Document

Please note the following requirements regarding formal budget amendments.



- A formal budget amendment is necessary only if **over 25% of an LEA’s total TCLAS ESSER III award** is being adjusted. “25% of an LEA’s total ESSER TCLAS award” includes any other TCLAS decision points an LEA was awarded. You may need to consult with colleagues to determine the total amount of your LEA’s TCLAS ESSER III award and whether an amendment is needed. If you determine a budget amendment is needed, please refer to question A-11.
- A formal budget amendment is not required if **less than 25% of your total TCLAS ESSER III award** is being adjusted.

Upcoming errata: The following assurance was included in the **original TCLAS** guidance document: *The applicant must file budget amendments within 30 days of notification that a participant or candidate is unable to continue with their degree or certification program.*

In the near future, TEA will issue an official errata and the **new requirement** will read: The applicant must submit a [Candidate Change Form](#) within 60 days of any changes to their stipend recipients for the GYO program. This includes changes to the total number or type of stipend recipients.

Question A-11

What is the process for submitting a formal budget amendment if we are adjusting more than 25% of our total TCLAS ESSER III award?

Answer A-11

After a grant recipient receives a Notice of Grant Award for an approved application, the grantee may realize a need to make modifications to planned allowable activities or estimated budget costs. Some changes are within the grantee’s power to make without seeking TEA approval. Other changes, however, require the grantee to amend the approved grant application and receive approval of the changes.

To determine whether a planned change to the grant program requires an amendment to the application, please refer to TEA’s [When to Amend the Application guidelines](#). Amendments must be submitted to TEA by the Last Amendment Due Date listed on the TEA Grant Opportunities webpage, which is June 3, 2024.

Question A-12

Can we add qualified candidates to 4A or 4B after March 1, 2022?

Answer A-12

Yes, LEAs may add participants to 4A or 4B after March 1, 2022 if those candidates meet all the [pre-requisites for stipend recipients](#) and all other grant requirements. LEAs, however, cannot request additional funds be added to their grant.



The intention is for districts to retain participants in the GYO program. However, if an LEA changes the number of participants in their GYO program, it must submit a Candidate Change Form (refer to A-10 for more information) and may do so through the end of the grant. Please retain documentation of any participant replacements or additions locally.

Question A-13

How can an LEA reduce or fully decline Decision 4 funding?

Answer A-13

If your LEA would like to reduce or fully decline Decision 4 funding, please **submit an email to the following email addresses:**

- anisha.dandona@tea.texas.gov
- Megha.Kansra@tea.texas.gov
- TCLAS@tea.texas.gov
- CC: GYOgrant@tea.texas.gov

Please ensure the email includes the following:

- An attached letter, written on official district letterhead, notifying TEA that your LEA is requesting this change
- An explicit note of the specific TCLAS decisions declined (e.g., "Decision 4A") or reduced
- The Superintendent or Authorized Official's signature

Section B: Decision 4A Questions

Question B-1

How do LEAs fund paraprofessional tuition and fees? Are candidate stipends disbursed through payroll or accounts payable?

Answer B-1

To some extent, this is a district decision. Please confer with your district business office, and refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) regarding payment for completion:

- If the paraprofessional is a district employee, and if the district will pay the tuition on their behalf, budget this under **contracted services (6200)**.
- If the paraprofessional is a district employee who will pay their own tuition and then receive reimbursement distributions, budget this under **contracted services (6200)**.
- If the LEA will pay the university directly for tuition and fees, this falls under **contracted services (6200)**.



- All living stipends paid directly to candidates will be coded as **payroll costs (6100)**.

Question B-2

Is it mandatory for LEAs to grant 4A stipend recipients paid release time? Must LEAs allow stipend recipients to attend class during the workday?

Answer B-2

Each LEA is expected to allow schedule flexibility. An LEA may choose to provide 4A candidates paid release time and allow them to attend class during the workday. The type of candidate support needed likely depends on district- and campus-specific context, including the candidate's responsibilities and schedule. The LEA should provide schedule flexibility, as needed, so each candidate is able to fulfill the requirements of the grant.

Question B-3

We are wondering if the following specific assurance can be waived. *"All certification-only candidates will be certified by the same partner Educator Preparation Program (EPP) as a cohort managed collaboratively by the LEA and EPP."*

Answer B-3

Yes, this requirement has been waived by TEA. TEA will issue an official errata in the near future. It is up to the discretion of the LEA whether certification-only candidates will be certified by the same partner Educator Preparation Program (EPP) as a cohort or not.

Question B-4

The [Grow Your Own Pre-Requisite for Stipend Recipients Document](#) states that, *"Candidates must already have a minimum of 75 credit hours towards a bachelor's degree."* By which date does this statement apply?

Answer B-4

All candidates must have a minimum of 75 credit hours towards a bachelor's degree prior to the start of the employing district's Fall 2022 semester.

Question B-5

Do all paraprofessionals seeking bachelor's degrees have to go through the same college or university? Is our MOU process limited to only one institutional partner?

Answer B-5



No. More than one college or university is allowed. Each LEA must complete an MOU with each Educator Preparation Program (EPP) certifying the candidates. If a candidate is completing bachelor's degree from one university and attending a different institution to earn a teaching certification, the LEA only needs to secure an MOU with the EPP. All EPP's must have a status of Accredited, Accredited-Not Rate, or Accredited-Warned.

Question B-6

Which components of the MOU pertain to Decision 4A?

Answer B-6

MOUs Required for Decision 4A:

Between the LEA and each paraprofessional candidate receiving a stipend (maximum of 6 per LEA).

Between the LEA and each EPP or alternative certification program (maximum of 6 per LEA).

Question B-7

What are our options for awarding funds for Decision 4A?

Answer B-7

The funding amount for 4A is split into two categories: (1) tuition, fees, and living stipends and (2) indirect plus administrative costs for the LEA.

For Bachelor's degree and certification candidates:

The \$19,000 awarded for candidates completing both a bachelor's degree and certification is split in the following ways:

- (1) \$18,000 to cover tuition, fees, and living stipends and
- (2) \$1,000 to cover the LEA's indirect and/or administrative costs related to the grant.

For certification only candidates:

The \$8,000 awarded for candidates pursuing certification only is split in the following ways:

- (1) \$7,500 for tuition, fees, and living stipends and
- (2) \$500 to cover the LEA's indirect and/or administrative costs related to the grant.

The stipends are to be delivered to the candidate and/or university at least once each year of participation.

Each LEA will outline in their MOU the process for reimbursing candidates or paying universities directly on behalf of the candidate. Any funding out of the \$18,000 or \$7,500 that is not needed to cover tuition



and fees is considered an additional living stipend for the candidate. Funding from this amount should not be transferred to administrative or indirect costs. Refer to question and answer B-1 for information regarding payroll and contracted services budget categories.

Question B-9

Can we issue 4A candidate stipends in one lump sum payment at the end of the year?

Answer B-9

You may choose to pay 4a candidates in one lump sum payment at the end of each academic year. Please make sure that is clearly stated in the MOU. The vision of the grant is to provide Texas paraprofessionals with financial relief during the grant timeline as this is a barrier to certification and degree completion for many. The \$18,000 stipend for candidates pursuing their bachelor's degree plus certification should be approximately \$9,000 each year. The \$7,500 stipend for candidates pursuing only certification should be approximately \$3,750 each year.

Question B-10

Can Decision 4A paraprofessional begin coursework in the Spring of 2022?

Answer B-10

Yes, Decision 4A paraprofessional stipend recipients may begin coursework and certification work this Spring of 2022 semester. The earlier they complete their requirements the better for them and for your district. Decision 4B teacher stipends and Decision 4C Education and Training programs must begin in the Fall of 2022.

Question B-11

Can a paraprofessional complete a degree in an area other than teaching prior to enrolling in an ACP or do they need to get their degree in teaching?

Answer B-11

A paraprofessional candidate does not need to earn a bachelor's in education. They are allowed to complete their current degree and earn a teaching certification upon graduation.

Question B-12

Is there a checklist with concrete grant requirements for Decision 4A candidates?

Answer B-12



Yes, there are several places with concrete requirements. The [Grow Your Own Pre-Requisites for Stipend Recipients](#) is the most comprehensive list. Pages 21 and 49 of the [TCLAS Guidance Document](#) also list grant requirements.

Questions B-13

Can the Decision 4A stipend be used to cover program costs for paraprofessionals to go through an alternative route to certification program?

Answer B-13

Yes. The stipend amount is \$7,500.

Question B-14

Does the teacher for the Principles of Education & Training course need to have a master's degree to teach the course?

Answer B-14

No. A master's degree is only necessary if the teacher intends to teach a course for dual credit.

Question B-15

Is there a list of the approved EPPs for the Grow our Own program?

Answer B-15

Per page 49 of the [TCLAS Guidance Document](#), the applicant must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from an Accredited, Accredited-Not Rated, or Accredited-Warned [Educator Preparation Program](#) that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to participants.

Question B-16

If a 4A candidate recipient drops out of the program, is the LEA responsible for recouping any stipend funds already paid out to the participant?

Answer B-16

No, TEA will not ask for partial funding back from stipend recipients who drop out of the program.

Question B-17

At what point in time can districts start paying stipends to Decision 4A candidates? Are LEAs allowed to pay the entire \$7,500 in one year?



Answer B-17

Decision 4A candidates may begin to receive reimbursements after the Notification of Grant Award (NOGA). Candidates finishing their Decision 4 requirements in year one may receive full reimbursement of the entire \$7,500 if the district chooses to do so.

Question B-18

Has there been a change to the 75-hour minimum requirement?

Answer B-18

No. Please see Question B-4 for more guidance.

Section C: Decision 4B Questions

Question C-1

Please explain the difference between the \$5,000 and \$10,000 stipends for Decision 4B.

Answer C-1

The \$5,000 award is designated as a two-year stipend for any certified educator who is teaching non-dual credit courses. This amount breaks down to \$2,500 per year or \$1,250 per semester. The \$10,000 award is designated as a two-year stipend for any certified educator (with a master's degree) who is teaching courses in which high school students can earn dual credit. This amount breaks down to \$5,000 each year or \$2,500 each semester.

Question C-2

Can the Decision 4B stipend be used to cover program costs for certified educators to receive an additional certification through an alternative route to certification program?

Answer C-2

Decision 4B certified educators' stipends are rewarded for teaching Education & Training courses. The certified educator can then decide how to spend the stipend.

Question C-3



We now have Education and Training teachers that want to get their master's degree. Can we move part of our Decision 4A award to 4B and 4C?

Answer C-3

This may be possible. Refer to A-9 for more information and requirements.

Question C-4

If a teacher instructs two sections of Human Growth and Development, do they qualify for the stipend if that is the only course in the Education & Training track that they teach?

Answer C-4

An educator that only teaches Human Growth and Development does not satisfy the minimum teaching requirements for a stipend. As stated in the [Pre-requisites for Stipend Recipients](#) document, "Participants must be the teacher of record for at least one section of the Principles of Education, Instructional Practices, or Practicum in the 2022–2023 school year and at least two sections in the 2023–2024 school year."

Section D: Decision 4C Questions

Question D-1

Who provided the curriculum for the Education and Training courses?

Answer D-1

The TEA is partnering with a vendor to develop high quality instructional materials for the Education & Training courses. Feedback from internal reviewers, subject-matter experts, and Texas Education and Training teachers is incorporated throughout the development of the materials.

Question D-2

Does each campus need to offer Principles of Education & Training if we will offer Instructional Practices and Practicum?

Answer D-2

As stated on page 49 of the [Guidance Document](#), the LEA must assure that each high school campus within the participating LEA will implement at least the Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2022–2023, and at least both stated courses in 2023–2024, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both or either course.

Question D-3



What is the dual credit course name that aligns with the instructional practices and the practicum course?

Answer D-3

EDUC 1301 and EDUC 2301.

Question D-4

Can the teachers of the E&T courses be a new hire for the 2022-2023 school year?

Answer D-4

No. As stated in the [Grow Your Own Pre-Requisites for Stipend Recipients](#), E&T stipend recipients must be employed as a teacher within the eligible LEA during the 2021–2022 school year.

Question D-5

According to the Education & Training Program of Study on TEA website, it shows that Principles of Education & Training can be taken the first year OR Principles of Human Services for this career pathway. Is it ok then for students to take Principles of Human Services their freshman year then Instructional Practices their junior year and the Practicum in Education and Training their senior year?

Answer D-5

Yes, this course sequence is permissible.

Question D-6

What is the service ID number for the courses?

Answer D-6

The [Education and Training Program of Study](#) overview contains service ID numbers for the courses required as part of the GYO grant. Page 12 of the [Texas Education Agency Program of Study](#) document provides more specifications for the four service IDs associated with the Practicum in Education & Training courses.

Question D-7

Does each LEA have to offer Education & Training (E&T) courses for dual credit?

Answer D-7

E&T courses do not have to be offered for dual credit.

Question D-8



Where can we find information or guidance about recruiting students to our Education & Training courses?

Answer D-8

TEA recorded a Student Recruitment Panel on April 12, 2021. Please review the recording [here](#).

TEA has also provided marketing materials for download and distribution on the [GYO page](#) of the TEA Educator initiatives website.

Section E: Summer Institute Questions

Question E-1

Who pays for the required Summer Institute?

Answer E-1

LEAs are advised to use up to \$3,000 per campus of the total 4C award amount to send teachers and other required or encouraged staff to the institute. Refer to answer E-2 regarding a virtual option for institute.

Question E-2

Will Summer Institute be in-person or virtual?

Answer E-2

There are two options for participation in the 2022 Summer Institute for the Education & Training Pathway.

Option A: In-Person Institute

- *Dates:* June 27-29, 2022
- *Location:* TBD in the Greater Austin area
- *Details:* This event is capped at the first 400 registrants.

Option B: Virtual Institute

- *Dates:* July 18-20, 2022
- *Location:* Virtual (Zoom)
- *Details:* This event is not capped.

Confirmation of Participation



1. TEA asked all LEAs to complete an institute [preference survey](#) before February 11, 2022.
2. TEA will approve district participation for in-person or virtual institute by February 25, 2022.
3. TEA will communicate approvals and any next steps by February 25, 2022.

Question E-3

The TCLAS Guidance Document lists E&T course teachers, campus principals, and college/career counselors as required participants at Summer Institute. Can TEA provide any flexibility on this requirement?

Answer E-3

Summer Institute will include an overview of the GYO grant, district team action planning and training on the E&T curriculum. It is important that campus-based GYO teams attend.

TEA is providing the following flexibilities for attendance and will soon issue an official errata. The updated attendance requirements are as follows:

- **E&T Teachers (Days 1–3):** Summer Institute attendance must include each E&T course teacher who will receive a stipend through the GYO grant. E&T teachers are required to attend each of the three days of summer institute.
 - If a district has been approved to attend the in-person institute and a teacher cannot attend on those dates, the teacher must attend the virtual institute option to remain in compliance.
- **Campus Principals (Day 1):** Each participating GYO campus must send a member of the instructional leadership team—typically the principal— responsible for overseeing the GYO program to day one of Summer Institute. Attendance on days two and three is optional.
 - If the individual described above is unable to attend day one of Summer Institute for a particular campus, the LEA may choose to send a campus-based substitute to fill in. The LEA must ensure that the substitute shares all pertinent information back with the appropriate individual leading GYO.
- **College/Career Counselors (Day 1):** Each participating GYO campus must send a college/career counselor, or other individual responsible for E&T course scheduling and enrollment, to summer institute.
 - If neither of the individuals described above are available to attend day one of Summer Institute for a particular campus, the LEA may choose to send a campus-based substitute to fill in. The LEA must ensure that the substitute shares all pertinent information back with the appropriate team member responsible for E&T course scheduling and enrollment.



As of February 14, 2022, TEA is still processing participation counts for Summer Institute. LEAs may formally register all institute participants later this spring, and TEA will communicate information regarding this process.

Question E-4

If we chose the virtual institute, is it guaranteed? How will we know if there was space for our participants and what is the timeline for notification?

Answer E-4

Yes. You will receive confirmation on February 25, 2022.

Question E-5

We were previously awarded the Cycle 4 GYO Grant, our administrator and counselor participated in the Summer Institute last year. Is participation required again for this year?

Answer E-5

Yes, this is still a requirement. In the case that an administrator or counselor is unable to attend, please refer to question and answer E-3 for possible substitutions. The 2022 Institute has a different agenda and outcomes than previous years.

Question E-6

If the in-person Summer Institute cap of 400 participants is met, and my LEA does not qualify to attend in-person, will we be automatically registered for the virtual option?

Answer E-6

Yes. All LEAs will be notified on February 25, 2022 as to whether they will attend Summer Institute in-person or virtually.

Question E-7

How do we register our staff for Summer Institute and make hotel reservations?

Answer E-7

LEAs will receive information this spring, likely in late March or early April, regarding the Summer Institute registration process and suggestions for booking hotels. Through the registration process, grant managers will submit among other information, the names, titles, and contact information for everyone from their LEA that will attend Summer Institute.