Texas Education Agency

To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	**November 20, 2025**
SUBJECT:	**Release of the Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC, Cycle 13, Year 1 Grant**
CATEGORY:	**Division of Expanded Learning Models**
NEXT STEPS:	**Visit the TEA Grants Opportunity page and apply by 2/17/2026**

This To the Administrator Addressed letter is announcing the competitive opportunity for the 2026-2027 Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC), Cycle 13, Year 1 grant.

The Request For Applications (RFA) is available on the TEA Grant Opportunities Page.

Background

The Federal Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic and enrichment opportunities during afterschool and summertime, particularly for students attending high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math, offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs, and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

In Texas, 21st CCLC operates as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE) afterschool and summer program and includes rigorous attendance and operation requirements. **State evaluations consistently show that when students meet minimum attendance expectations for Texas ACE, it positively impacts performance in reading, math, and CTE course completion, and lowers rates of chronic absenteeism.**

Overview

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) released a new competitive application for the 21st CCLC Grant (21st CCLC) on Friday, November 14th, 2025. Awarded applicants will receive funding for the Texas ACE program beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.

Eligible Entities

- School systems, including local educational agencies (LEAs), independent school districts (ISDs), and open-enrollment charter schools
- Regional education service centers (ESCs)
- Tribal organizations (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)
- Community-based organizations (CBOs), including Faith-based organizations (FBOs)
- Other public or private entities
- A consortium of two or more eligible organizations

Grant Period

- Initial Budget Period: September 01, 2026, through August 31, 2027.
- Total Project Period: September 01, 2026, through August 31, 2031.

Funding Details
Approximately $52,000,000 is available for this grant program, and it is anticipated that approximately 40 grants will be awarded. Grant awards are expected to range from $150,000 to $2 million each year for the five-year project period.

The projected federal budget for the GAN (Grant Award Notice) that will fund Cycle 13, Year 1, is unknown. If appropriations by the United States Congress are not received, Cycle 13 will not be funded, and no awards will be issued by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Annual funding after Year 1 ("continuation funding") is contingent on satisfactory progress of prior year compliance with requirements, achievement of stated service and performance targets, general budget approval by the commissioner of education, and appropriations by the United States Congress.

Next Steps

Interested organizations should review the RFA and full timeline on the TEA Grant Opportunities Page. More information on Texas ACE can be found on TEA's Texas ACE webpage.

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. (Central Time), February 17, 2026, to be considered for funding. TEA will only accept applications submitted via the eGrants system. All applying organizations must have or obtain TEAL and eGrants accounts to apply for this opportunity. See the Program Guidelines for this opportunity for more information.

For questions, contact 21stCentury@tea.texas.gov.