

LASO Cycle 4 (2025-2026)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2026-2027 Navigating Excellence through Targeted Supports (NEXT) Grant

Program Guidelines

Authorized by GAA, Article III, Rider 83, 89th Texas Legislature.
Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Initiative

Grant Application Due Date
December 3, 2025; 5:00 p.m. CST



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Grant Program Guidelines

Grant Name as it will appear on the TEA Grant Opportunities Page	Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Grant
Application Due Date	December 3, 2025; 5:00 p.m. CT
Program Authority	GAA, Article III, Rider 83, 89th Texas Legislature. Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Initiative.

Introduction

TEA, as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA), Program Guidelines, is to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

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 you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² 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. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Overview of the IDC Process

The following steps provide a high-level overview of the process for responding to a grant opportunity, including submitting an application, and being selected for funding:

1. TEA publishes IDC application and supporting documents on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#).
2. Eligible applicants submit the grant application via Qualtrics by the specified deadline in this document.
3. Grant 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 eGrants funding application including assurances and a budget summary to receive funding. Note: All data submitted in the grant 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.

Contact for Clarifying Information

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), *TEA Contacts*.

The following TEA staff member should be contacted with questions:

Grant Program Contact

Program manager name	Chris DeWitt
Program manager title	Director, Division of System Support
Program manager email	Christopher.Dewitt@tea.texas.gov

Funding Contact

Program manager name	Competitive Grants Unit
Program manager title	Grants Administration Division
Program manager email	Competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov
Program manager phone	(512) 463-8525

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	\$1,750,000
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	\$1,750,000

* Should additional funding become available for this program, the agency may add it to the base amount indicated above and fund additional qualifying awardees till all funding is exhausted.

Timeline

For all dates related to the grant, 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.

Date	Event
September 16, 17, 2025	General Webinar schedule Tuesday, September 16, 2025 (9:30-10:30 am CT)- Option 1 Wednesday, September 17, 2025 (3:00-4:00 pm CT)- Option 2
October 3, 2025	Grant application available
October 13, 16, 2025	NEXT Program Webinar schedule Thursday, Oct 16, 2025 (12:30-1:30 pm CT)- Option 1 Friday, Oct 17, 2025 (9:30-10:30 am CT)- Option 2
October 26, 2025	FAQ deadline
November 3, 2025	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
December 3, 2025	Due date for the IDC Qualtrics application. The IDC application must be received by the TEA by 5:00 p.m., Central Time. LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on October 3, 2025. Please see the LASO website for more information. See General and Fiscal Guidelines , LOI Application Due Date and Time
December 4, 2025- January 30, 2026	Application review period, including interviews if necessary See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Review Process
February 2, 2026	Anticipated award announcement
February 2, 2026	eGrants ADC and Application opens for awarded applicants
March 2, 2026	Due Date for eGrants Application
March 1, 2026	Beginning date of grant (if selected for funding) See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
March 30, 2027	Amendment due date (if selected for funding)
June 30, 2027	End date of grant (if selected for funding)

Grant at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant is authorized by GAA, Article III, Rider 83, 89th Texas Legislature. Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Initiative.

Where to Submit the Grant Application

LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on October 3, 2025. Please see the [LASO website](#) for more information.

Purpose of Program

The Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Initiative (“NEXT”) is designed to support low-performing **elementary school campuses** at school districts and open-enrollment charters to implement high quality math and/or reading language arts curriculum and instruction, aligned targeted tutoring, and targeted community and parent engagement.

Eligible Applicants

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

The eligible applicants are:

- Campuses rated D or F on 2025 TEA Accountability and
- Campuses that **are not** federally designated as CSI, TSI, or ATS
- Campuses that serve grades PK or Kindergarten through 5th grade

Education Service Centers (ESCs) are not eligible to apply

Eligibility List

There is an eligibility list and it is posted on the [LASO Cycle 4 webpage](#) in the NEXT initiative Resources.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed for this grant program.

Application Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines: Continuation Funding, Fund Management, and Use of Funds](#).

It is anticipated that 5 applicant(s) will be awarded up to \$125,000 per campus. Once granted, grantees that meet all requirements may be eligible for non-competitive continuation funding for up to 2 years.

** Should additional funding become available for this program, the agency may add it to the base amount indicated above and fund additional qualifying awardees till all funding is exhausted.*

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be awarded based on rank order of the following priority points:

1. Districts with a Commissioner-appointed board of managers*, monitor, or conservator for academic performance.*
2. Districts who have participated in Strong Foundations
3. Districts with a fully approved Teacher Incentive Allotment system
4. Districts with at least one campus with an ADSY calendar

Campuses will be based on the highest number of priority points until all awards are made. In the case of a tie, grants will be awarded to the campus with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

** All districts with a state appointed board of managers and/or with at least 5 years of unacceptable accountability ratings*

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cost Share/Match Requirement.

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this grant program.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration's [Training and Other Resources](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision does apply to this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

NOTE: Administrative funds include **both** direct administrative costs **and** allowable indirect costs.

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.

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.

Grant Application

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.

The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program.

The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. Districts must adopt High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) in math and RLA that are full-subject approved based on the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process.
2. Districts must adopt Math Supplemental Curriculum for blended learning products.
3. Campuses must implement a master schedule that includes time for full implementation of HQIM and high-impact tutoring.

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 agree to all statutory and program-specific assurances outline the section below.

Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances

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

- The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this Grant will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- 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 Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports (NEXT) Program Guidelines.
- 3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports (NEXT) 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 School System will regularly submit their expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on-track for grant expenditures.
10. The School System will participate in all required meetings and submit evidence of implementation at least monthly, or as requested by TEA.
11. The grantee will designate and provide a district-level project manager who will be available to dedicate approximately 50% of his or her time to the NEXT planning and implementation requirements and who has decision making authority to make campus-level decisions.
12. The School System agrees to designate and share with TEA and vendors a campus level lead/sponsor for communication for logistics and usage monitoring.
13. Grantees will submit fidelity of planning deliverables before the end of the planning year, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Campus master schedule
 - b. Assessment calendar
 - c. Stakeholder engagement plan
 - d. Professional learning calendars
14. Grantees will participate in required communities of practice and any additional grant program meetings.
15. Grantees will work in good faith with the TEA-vetted and matched school action Technical Assistance provider and agency-provided technical assistance.
16. Grantees will attend and participate in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing best practices through the TEA NEXT program office.
17. Grantees will participate in Quarterly Parent Labs (at least four per year) for parents and caregivers to deepen their understanding in how to support their student(s) in reading, writing, and math.
18. Grantees will provide dedicated time for teachers, instructional coaches, assistant principals, and principals to receive grant-related coaching and support.
19. Grantees will adopt and fully implement IMRA-approved HQIM in reading and math.

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

Program Elements

Description of Program

The Navigating Excellence Through Targeted Supports Initiative (“NEXT”) is designed to support low-performing **elementary school campuses** at school districts and open-enrollment charters to implement high quality math and/or reading language arts curriculum and instruction, aligned targeted tutoring, and targeted community and parent engagement.

Grantees will receive intensive support to

1. Audit and diagnose root causes to low-performance.
2. Ensure all educators have a deep understanding of high-quality instructional materials and research-based instructional strategies.

3. Build and inspire a coalition of support for instructional and operational shifts, including strong family and parent connections.
4. Implement rigorous IMRA-approved tier 1 HQIM and evidence-based supplementary instruction.
5. Make strategic changes to campus operations (including staffing patterns, compensation, and/or scheduling) in the form of funding and technical assistance.
6. Closely monitor fidelity of implementation to drive continuous improvement efforts.

Grantees that complete all required planning year requirements may be eligible for 1-2 years of continuation funding to support implementation.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

1. The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance and evaluation measures:
 - a. The grantee must submit strategic planning deliverables such as a master schedule, assessment calendar, stakeholder engagement plan, professional learning calendars, etc.
 - b. The grantee will submit blended learning product usage, if applicable. This includes but is not limited to student progress on selected online curriculum, unit assessment data from OER curriculum, year-over-year teacher retention and satisfaction data, and annual reflection and revision plans.
 - c. The grantee will submit data related to the fidelity of implementation of High-Quality instructional Materials, using a tool approved by TEA.
 - d. The grantee will receive at least biannual Fidelity of Implementation walkthroughs by TEA-approved Technical Assistance providers using a pre-determined walkthrough protocol aligned with NEXT requirements.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

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

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

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

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

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Payroll costs
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials

- In-state travel as necessary to meet the program requirements of this grant. Travel costs must follow the travel guidance provided at the beginning of this Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section.
- Costs for travel for students to conferences
- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — allowable costs include SBITA, but there are other non-allowable debt service options (see unallowable)
 - a. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
 - b. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)

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.

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.

Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences

Conferences may be hosted or sponsored under the Grant program.

Conferences must be managed to minimize costs to the Grant award. The following types of conferences may be allowable:

- NEXT-grant related conferences or convenings

Hosting or sponsoring of conferences will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Justification for Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences form, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

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.

- The cost of membership in any civic or community organization

- An advisory council
- The cost of membership in any civic or community organization
- Field trips
- Stipends for non-employees

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:
 - a. Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - b. Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
 - c. Interest on Debt Costs - (6523)
- Audit services for state-funded Grants

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with your Qualtrics application:

Required Program-Related Attachments

The applicant must submit with the application the following required program-related attachments.

1. School System Board of Trustees-approved SY2026-27 Additional Days School Year (ADSY) Calendar with at least 200 days
2. School System Board of Trustees Resolution approving the SY2026-27 ADSY Calendar

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fiscal-Related Documentation Required to Be on File, for a general description of fiscal-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

No fiscal-related attachments are required for this Grant program.

Adding Attachments

The instructions in the following sections describe how to attach files to an eGrants application, if applicable.

General Instructions

The size of each attachment cannot exceed 10MB. If you have a larger file, use a different scanning setting or zip the file to make it take up less space.

The only supported browser is Google Chrome. If you are using another browser, please change to Google Chrome before attaching files.

Documents only need to be attached once. Do not attach duplicate documents when completing an amendment. Remove an existing attached document prior to attaching a new version.

Naming Attachments

Name the files you are going to attach with no spaces (for example, 501C3letter.doc or 5013C_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.

Ziping 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*

Standard Grant Review Criteria	Description	Maximum Points Available
Eligibility Determination Part I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campuses rated D or F on 2025 TEA Accountability and • Campuses that are not federally designated as CSI, TSI, or ATS • Campuses that serve grades PK or Kindergarten through 5th grade 	
Priority Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10 points: school systems with a Commissioner-appointed board of managers*, monitor, or conservator for academic performance. ○ 10 points: school systems who have participated in Strong Foundations ○ 10 points: school systems with a fully approved Teacher Incentive Allotment system ○ 10 points: school systems with at least one campus with an ADSY calendar ○ 10 points: school systems with 5-day school weeks. <p>TEA will sort campuses by priority points total and rank by Overall 2025 A-F Scale Score, lowest to highest. (i.e., rank all campuses with 50 points by scale score, then all campuses with 40 points by scale score, etc.)</p> <p>In the case of a tie, grants will be awarded to the campus with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students.</p>	
Total Standard Review Points Possible		50 points

Priority Points

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

1. 10 points: school systems with a Commissioner-appointed board of managers*, monitor, or conservator for academic performance.
2. 10 points: school systems who have participated in Strong Foundations
3. 10 points: school systems with a fully approved Teacher Incentive Allotment system

4. 10 points: school systems with at least one campus with an ADSY calendar
 5. 10 points: school systems with 5-day school weeks.
- TEA will rank campuses by priority point total.
 - TEA will then rank campuses by Overall 2025 A-F Scale Score, lowest to highest. (i.e., rank all campuses with 50 points by scale score, then all campuses with 24points by scale score, etc.)
 - TEA will award the first 5 campuses based on this list.
 - Tie-breaker: TEA will award campuses with the highest eco-dis %.

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

Interviews will not be required for the NEXT grant.