



Frequently Asked Questions

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.

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General Questions and Resources

Refer to the General Webinar FAQ deck [here](#), for information on Program Guidelines, Webinar Decks, Guidance Docs, and more.

Below are the FAQs related to the PREP Grow Your Own Program.

Section A: Program Overview

If an applicant applies for both PREP GYO and Preservice Residency programs, but does not have any residents or employees, will the school system still be able to participate in the programs?

- Per TEC §21.906(c), school systems may participate in the PREP GYO program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program. For LASO Cycle 4, the only preservice program available is the PREP Preservice Residency program, so applicants for the PREP GYO program must also apply for the PREP Preservice Residency program. Through the verification of participation process around April to May, school systems will indicate estimated numbers of participants and receive a preliminary award notice which will serve as their approval for the program(s). Then, on an annual basis, school systems will be asked to submit identification information for participants their campus placements. More information will be shared regarding the specifics and timelines on reporting and program monitoring.

Do applicants have to apply for a preservice program in order to apply for the PREP GYO program?

- Yes, per TEC §21.906(c), school systems may participate in a grow your own partnership program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program. For LASO Cycle 4, the only partnership preservice program available to apply for is the PREP Preservice Residency program. Starting in LASO Cycle 5, the PREP traditional and alternative certification programs will become available to implement in the 2027-28 school year.

Section B: Application and Submission

Can school systems apply to the PREP allotment programs next year?

- Yes, school systems may apply to the PREP allotment programs next year as part of LASO Cycle 5.

Can school systems apply for PREP GYO if they don't have an established teacher residency program?

- All eligible school systems may apply. Please note that since participating in PREP GYO requires approval of the PREP Preservice Residency program, the applicant will need to apply to both and will need to reference the relevant requirements for the PREP Preservice Residency program.

Who is eligible to apply for the PREP GYO Program? (updated 11/10/25)

- School systems, which include districts and eligible charter schools, are eligible to apply to each of the PREP Programs. Each eligible applicant is subject to PREP Program Allotment statutorily-based funding caps described in each of the programs' guidelines.

If we don't have employees ready to participate by Fall 2025, can we re-apply for the allotment at a later point? (updated 11/10/25)

- Yes, school systems may decide to apply in a future cycle of the PREP Program Allotment.

Do applicants need to indicate the IHE/EPP partner in the application? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, applicants will not need to indicate the IHE/EPP partner in the application. During the verification of participation process around April to May, TEA will ask school systems to submit written partnership agreements. More details on the timeline and guidance are to come.

When do school systems need to submit the established written agreement to TEA? (updated 11/10/25)

- TEA will ask school systems to indicate participating employees in the verification of participation process around April to May, during which time TEA will also be asking school systems to submit written partnership agreements. More details on the timeline and guidance are to come.

Can school systems submit an existing memorandum of understanding to satisfy the written agreement requirement? (updated 11/10/25)

- School systems may modify an existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) to satisfy the written agreement requirement, ensuring that it articulates requirements specific to the programs. It is important to note that a pre-existing MOU likely does not already contain all the salient PREP requirements and assurances. TEA will be providing more guidance in the form of a template and examples.

In future cycles of the PREP GYO program, can school systems partner with an alternative certification program to qualify for participation in PREP GYO? (updated 11/10/25)

- Starting in LASO Cycle 5, applicants may apply for any of the three available PREP Preservice programs: Traditional, Residency, and/or Alternative Certification.

What if my school system does not have any employees that can participate in the PREP GYO Program? (updated 11/10/25)

- TEA will ask school systems to indicate participating employees in the verification of participation process around April to May. If a school system has zero participating employees, then they will not generate an allotment.

Is the board required to approve the application? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, the PREP GYO program does not have any requirements around board approval of the application. School systems may wish to consider board approval for the purposes of alignment and understanding of PREP GYO requirements.

The GYO application is only allowing me to select one option for #3. Is it possible to support both programs with the funds? (updated 12/2/25)

- Yes. The first option allows applicants to select for supporting (A) employees with completing their degree and teacher certification. Selecting the second option indicates interest in supporting both the (A) employees and (B) high school education and training programs.

Section C: Funding and Compliance

Who generates allotment funding for the PREP GYO Program?

- Per TEC §21.906(b), the grow your own partnership program must be designed to form partnerships that support: (1) high school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers; or (2) district or school employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor's degree to enable the person to become a classroom teacher while employed by the district or school. Such employees may include paraprofessionals, instructional aides, and other employees who have zero or some college credit hours. Per TEC §48.157(b)(4), allotment funding is generated based on the number of employees. Teachers of record may not be considered for the PREP Grow Your Own Program. Employees who already have a degree or teaching certificate would not be considered for PREP GYO but could seek a year-long residency through the PREP Preservice Residency Program. Starting in LASO Cycle 5, the PREP traditional and preservice alternative certification programs will become available to implement in the 2027-28 school year.

How can the PREP GYO program funding be used?

- PREP GYO funding will flow directly to the school system and can be used at the school system's discretion for program implementation. The school system may use funds to support IHE tuition costs, costs to provide structured advising to the employee so they can successfully complete their bachelor's degree, costs for employee release time, distributing a stipend or offsetting the salary for the employee that successfully completes the degree and enrolls in an EPP, high school Education & Training programming, and other PREP GYO program costs.

When will school systems be asked to indicate the number of participants?

- There will be a verification of participation process around April to May during which school systems will indicate the number of participants and submit written partnership agreements. TEA will be providing guidance and templates for the written partnership agreements. More details on the timeline and runway to come.

How is the high needs/rural factor determined?

- Per TEC §48.157(c), the high needs and rural factor is the lesser of: (1) the average of the point value assigned to each student at a district campus under Sections 48.112(e) and (f); or (2) 4.0. For those who are familiar with the Teacher Incentive Allotment, Sections 48.112(e) and

(f) reference the same sections of statute used for the PREP GYO program. More guidance in the form of a tool is forthcoming.

Can school systems use both PREP GYO and Preservice Residency funding to support the same individual?

- School systems may strategically stack funding to support the same individual (see recorded webinar for detailed example) by starting with the PREP GYO program, transitioning into the PREP Preservice Residency program, and generating success-based funding through completion of both programs' requirements.

Would employees who already have a degree generate allotment funding for the PREP GYO program? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, per TEC §21.906 (b)(2), school systems participating in the PREP GYO program must support employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor's degree. Only employees who do not already have a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate would generate allotment funding for the PREP GYO program. Employees who already hold a bachelor's degree may be considered for a PREP Preservice Program.

Who does the PREP GYO funding flow to? (updated 11/10/25)

- All PREP GYO funding will flow directly to the school system to allocate as needed for any PREP GYO implementation needs. This may include distributing funds to the employees who have successfully earned their degree and enrolled in an EPP.

How much allotment funding does one PREP GYO employee generate? (updated 11/10/25)

- Each participating employee generates \$8-12,000 of total funding with 50% up front and 50% success-based. Up front, each employee minimally generates \$4,000 with an additional \$0-2,000 depending on their campus high needs/rural factor. For the success-based funding, the remaining half is dependent on the employee's successful completion of their degree through an accredited IHE and enrolling in an accredited EPP.

Can allotment funding be used for high school student programming? (updated 11/10/25)

- Yes, PREP GYO funding can be used to support any PREP GYO programming needs including high school implementation.

Can PREP GYO funds be used exclusively to fund high school programming? (updated 11/10/25)

- Since the allotment is generated based on the number of participating employees, the school system will need at least one participating employee to generate funding. The PREP GYO funds may then be allocated at the school system's discretion to support any PREP GYO implementation needs, including tuition costs for employees and high school students.

Is the success-based funding dependent on high school programming? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, success-based funding is dependent on the employees' completion of their degree at an accredited IHE and enrolling in an accredited EPP.

When does the success-based funding flow? (updated 11/10/25)

- Success-based funding is dependent on the employees' completion of their bachelor's degree and at least enrolling in an accredited EPP. On an annual basis, TEA will be requiring participating school systems to submit information for reporting and program monitoring. The information will be used to help calculate allotments. More information about the timeline for reporting and program monitoring will be shared.

At what frequency does the allotment funding flow? (updated 11/10/25)

- PREP Allotment funds will flow through the foundation school program (FSP) according to their payment class schedule. TEA anticipates sharing timelines and specifics for FSP funding, along with timelines for sharing accounting directions for districts, during the Verification of Participation Form window, in early spring 2026.

If an employee does not complete the bachelor's degree and at least enroll in an EPP within three years of beginning the PREP GYO program, does the school system need to pay back the initial funding flow? (updated 11/10/25)

- If an employee does not complete their bachelor's degree and at least enroll in an accredited EPP within three years of beginning the PREP GYO program, then that employee does not generate the success-based funding. TEA will not take back the initial funding that flows to the school system.

How does the high needs/rural factor impact the total allotment? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC §48.157(c), the high needs and rural factor is the lesser of: (1) the average of the point value assigned to each student at a district campus under Sections 48.112(e) and (f); or (2) 4.0. The high needs and rural factor is then multiplied by \$1,000 and added to the base allotment of \$8,000 to determine the amount generated by the participating employee.

Is the high needs/rural factor based on the campus where the employee is at the onset of the program or when they are placed and employed? (updated 11/10/25)

- School systems will be asked to indicate the employees and their campuses in the annual reporting and program monitoring processes. More information on specifics and timelines will be shared regarding reporting and program monitoring.

Can the same employee generate PREP GYO allotment funding each year as they finish out their degree? (updated 11/10/25)

- The school system will receive the initial and success-based funding for each paid employee. Those are paid out only twice (at the onset and after the completion of the BA/enrollment in the EPP) and not yearly.

Is an educational aide serving as a teacher of record on a School District Teaching Permit eligible for participation in the Grow Your Own Program? (updated 11/17/25)

- No. Educational aides serving on a School District Teaching Permit are not eligible to participate in the PREP Grow Your Own Program. Employees participating in the program may not be employed as teachers of record (TEC, 21.906).

Section D: Implementation and Monitoring

Are the high school students counted as part of the 40 participants?

- No, high school students are not included as part of the 40 participant cap per school system. As a reminder, the PREP GYO allotment funding is dependent on the number of participating employees, and the funding generated can be used towards both employees and high school students.

Can school systems partner with a different EPP for the PREP GYO program from the PREP Preservice Residency program?

- Yes, the partnering EPP could be different for the PREP GYO program from the one for the PREP Preservice Residency program.

Will TEA be providing sample partnership agreements for the submission requirement?

- Yes, TEA will be providing guidance and templates for the written partnership agreements. Please stay tuned for more information to come.

Will school systems be required to implement for both types of participants, employees without a degree and high school students?

- Given that allotment funding for the PREP GYO program is generated by the number of participating employees, school systems participating in the PREP GYO program must implement programming for employees without a bachelor's degree. School systems may also use PREP GYO funding to support and implement high school Education & Training programming.

Do the participating employees have to complete the bachelor's degree before enrolling in the EPP?

- No, participating employees do not have to complete the bachelor's degree prior to enrolling in the EPP. The employee may complete the degree or enroll in the EPP first depending on their trajectory and needs.

Do the number of participating residents for PREP Preservice Residency have to match the number of employees for PREP GYO?

- No, the number of participating residents for the PREP Preservice Residency program do not have to match the number of employees for the PREP GYO program. They may vary based on different local contexts and implementation.

What are the requirements for the high school Education & Training CTE program of study? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC §21.906, school systems participating in the PREP GYO program who are implementing the high school Education & Training CTE program of study must design partnerships that support high school students with:
 - completing Education & Training courses
 - receiving authentic opportunities to practice teaching under supervision of one or more cooperating teachers
 - guidance and other transition supports as they begin an undergraduate degree program that offers a route to teacher preparation
- As a reminder, the PREP GYO allotment funding is generated based on the number of participating employees, not high school students. The success-based funding for completion of a bachelor's degree and enrolling in an EPP also refers solely to the participating employees, not high school students.

What are the PREP GYO Program sections of Texas Education Code? (updated 11/10/25)

- The relevant sections of the PREP GYO program in Texas Education Code include §21.906 for program requirements and §48.157 for funding.
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm#21.906>
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.48.htm#48.157>

Are participants in the PREP Preservice Residency and Mentorship programs required to first participate in PREP GYO? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, participants in the PREP Preservice Residency and Mentorship programs are not required to first participate in the PREP GYO program.

In LASO Cycle 5, which PREP preservice programs will applicants need to apply and be approved to participate in the PREP GYO program in the 2027-2028 school year? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC §21.906(c), school systems may participate in the PREP GYO program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program. In LASO Cycle 5, applicants may apply for the PREP Preservice Traditional, Residency, and/or Alternative programs. To participate in the PREP GYO program, the applicant must be approved to participate in at least one of these programs. As a reminder, the current cycle, LASO 4, only includes the PREP Preservice Residency Program.

Will the school system be required to document or show effectiveness of the employee's cooperating teacher? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC 21.906(f), the school system may only pair a student or employee participating in the program with a cooperating teacher who agrees to participate in that role. The school system, their institution of higher education and educator preparation program partners may need to develop and align on cooperating teacher guidelines. On an annual basis, TEA will be requiring

participating school systems to submit information for reporting and program monitoring. More information about the specifics for reporting and program monitoring to come.

If an employee completes the PREP GYO program, do they have to choose a certification pathway through one of the PREP allotment programs? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, it is not required for employee to participate in a certification pathway through one of the PREP allotment programs. They must, however, ensure the employee enrolls in an accredited EPP. As a best practice, in thinking about building a teacher pipeline and long-term talent management strategy, partnerships are encouraged to potentially structure participation in PREP across all the programs for quality teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship support.

Is there an approved list of IHE/EPPs for school systems to partner with for the PREP GYO program? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, there is not a set list of IHEs or EPPs that school systems must partner with for PREP GYO. School Systems must partner with an accredited Institute of Higher Education. In the spring, when the school system verifies participation in the program, they will submit a written agreement with their accredited IHE partner. Additionally, employees must enroll in an accredited EPP to generate the success based funding.

What are the requirements for providing employees with scheduled release time? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC §21.906(d)(2)(A), participating school systems must provide employees "scheduled release time to support the completion of a bachelor's degree." Specific requirements around the scheduled release time will be expanded upon in rule. TEA anticipates posting rules for the PREP Program Allotment for public comment during the 2025-26 school year, which would become effective prior to the start of the 2026-27 school year. TEA also anticipates sharing specific dates related to rulemaking in the coming months.

Can the participants be teachers of record? (updated 11/10/25)

- Per TEC §21.906(g) and (h), students and employees in the PREP GYO program may not serve as a teacher of record except for the limited purpose of gaining experience in the position. The student's or employee's amount of time serving in that position may not exceed the amount of time during which the teacher of record for the students has the primary or sole responsibility of providing instruction or supervision to those students.

Do participating employees need to have previously been employed at the school system to generate allotment funding? (updated 11/10/25)

- No, employees do not need to have been previously employed at the school system to generate allotment funding. School systems may wish to prioritize employees who have been previously employed due to their familiarity with the school system's context and student population.

Do participating employees need to be employed in a role with instructional support? (updated 11/10/25)

- Yes, per TEC §21.906(d)(2)(D), school systems must provide employees with a job assignment that includes instructional support for students enrolled in the school system.

When will the alternative certification preservice program become available? (updated 11/10/25)

- The PREP traditional and alternative certification preservice programs will become available starting in LASO Cycle 5 for implementation in the 2027-28 school year.

Is there a required salary for PREP GYO participants? (updated 11/17/25)

- No, there are no requirements around salary and amounts for employees participating in the PREP GYO program.

How might the EPP support school systems with PREP GYO Program implementation? (updated 11/17/25)

- Through the required written partnership agreement, school systems participating in the PREP GYO program may articulate and establish how the EPP partner may support with meeting requirements and program implementation. All parties are strongly encouraged to engage in collaboration that leads to the development of a mutually beneficial partnership.

How does the Educational Aide Exemption factor into the PREP GYO Program? (updated 12/2/25)

- The Educational Aide exemption would not interfere with, but could complement, the implementation of the PREP GYO program. Given that the program is an opportunity to exempt educational aides from tuition/fees at Texas public institutions, school systems may wish to consider how to allocate PREP GYO funding to other potential financial needs.

Can the number of participants be adjusted after the allotment is awarded? (updated 12/2/25)

- TEA will be requiring participating school systems to submit information on an annual basis for reporting and program monitoring, including the submission of the number of PREP program participants and campus placements. More information about the timeline and specifics for reporting and program monitoring will be shared.

Is it accurate to view PREP GYO funding as "seed" money for moving an aspiring teacher through the preparation continuum? (updated 12/2/25)

- Yes, as named in the webinars, the Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) aims to strengthen the quality of teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship, leading to increased educator effectiveness and retention. The PREP GYO program can be seen as the first step for recruiting aspiring teachers, providing opportunities and support leading up to the quality preparation through a preservice program.

For PREP GYO, what are the IHE partner requirements? (updated 12/2/25)

- The IHE partner must be accredited.

Are school systems participating in the PREP GYO program required to partner with the same IHE/EPP for degree completion and EPP enrollment? (updated 12/2/25)

- No, the partnering accredited IHE for degree completion can be a different entity for the EPP that participating employees enroll in. As a reminder for success-based funding, the employees must enroll in an accredited EPP.

Section E: Support and Resources

There are no additional resources available at the moment.

Section F: Contact Information

Who should I contact for questions?

- For additional information, please email GYO@tea.texas.gov.