TEA ®
Texas Education Agency

LASO Cycle 4 (2025-2026)
Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2026-2027 School Action Fund Planning and Implementation Grant Program Guidelines

Authorized by Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003

LASO CYCLE 4

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	2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation
Application Due Date	December 3, 2025; 5:00 p.m. CT
Program Authority	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003

Introduction

TEA, as the pass-through entity[1], is the grantee[2] from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities[3] 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 subgrantees[4]. 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.

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[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	School Action Fund
Program manager title	School Action Fund Manager
Program manager email	schoolactionfund@tea.texas.gov
Program manager phone	(512) 463-8525

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	Approximately $6,225,000 in direct-to-LEA grants Approximately $2,500,000 in in-kind support
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	Approximately $6,225,000 in direct-to-LEA grants Approximately $2,500,000 in in-kind support
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	0%
Amount of nonfederal funds	$0

* 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 9, 10, 2025	**SAF Program Webinar schedule** Thursday, October 9, 2025 (9:30-10:30 am CT)- Option 1 Friday, October 10, 2025 (2:00-3:00 pm 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 4 website for more information.
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
April 1, 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 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003.

Where to Submit the Grant Application

LASO individual application links will be emailed to Superintendents on October 3, 2025. Please see the LASO 4 website for more information.

Purpose of Program

The School Action Fund (SAF) awards grants that support whole-school strategies districts use to increase access to high-quality schools, meet community needs, and address chronic underperformance. The ultimate goal of the SAF grant is to give more students access to A/B-rated campuses and for more families to have access to the schools they need, want, and deserve in their communities. The 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant will support Restart Action grantees (School System-Run ACE model Planning only) eligible for Resource Campus designation to achieve that designation by the end of the grant period. More information about Resource Campus designation can be found here.

Eligible Applicants

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Eligibility for Funding.

Eligible applicants are school systems that apply on behalf of schools that are Title I-serving schoolwide designated by September 15, 2025, and are Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-Identified campuses, based on school year 2024-2025 ratings. For new schools, there must be clear Title I, Part A eligibility and intent to obtain Title I-serving status for school year 2027-2028 and beyond. NOTE: Campuses must be SAF grant-eligible at the time of application, and, if awarded a SAF grant, remain Title I-serving schoolwide for the entire grant period.

To be eligible for Restart and Create new Actions, a campus may not have received any School Action Fund (SAF) grants, including TCLAS Decision 10 and any LASO SAF grants, since 2019-2020 (Planning, Continuation, or Implementation). For Reassign actions, previous SAF grantees in Cycles 1 – 6 and TCLAS may apply for the 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant.

If a campus qualifies for multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, the school system will be invited to an interview to determine the best fit of grants.

TEA reserves the right not to award a grant to a campus or school system that is identified by TEA as a high-risk grantee.

A maximum of six (6) total SAF grants will be awarded to any individual school system. A maximum of four (4) awards of any one action will be awarded to any individual school system.

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 SAF initiative Resources.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are allowed only in the case of the school systems participating in the Redesign Rural Collaboration Action.

Application Funding

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines: *Continuation Funding, Fund Management, and Use of Funds.*

It is anticipated that approximately 27-30 applicants will be awarded up to $150,000-$350,000.

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

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be selected in rank order by selected action.

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

Direct Administrative Costs

TEA limits the amount of direct administrative costs for this Grant program to no more than 8% of the total Grant award.

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, *Administrative Costs*.

Indirect Costs

For this federally funded Grant, the Grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to its current approved restricted indirect cost rate

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, *Administrative Costs*.

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

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. Per TEC §22.0834, 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.
2. Develop comprehensive support and improvement plans under ESEA section 1111(d)(1) for schools receiving funds under this section.

3. Support schools developing or implementing targeted support and improvement plans under ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A), if funds received under this section are used for such purpose.
4. Monitor schools receiving funds under this section, including how the local educational agency will carry out its responsibilities under clauses (iv) and (v) of ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(B) if funds received under this section are used to support schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans.
5. Use a rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partners with whom the local educational agency will partner.
6. Align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with funds received under subsection (b)(1).
7. As appropriate, modify practices and policies to provide operational flexibility that enables full and effective implementation of the plans.

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 address within the application how they will achieve the following:

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of all Actions

1. Grantees will work in good faith with the TEA-vetted and matched school action Technical Assistance provider and agency-provided technical assistance.
2. Grantees will implement the school action and model with fidelity. This may mean identifying practices, goals, and metrics at awarded campuses that are different than other campuses in the School System. These practices and metrics must be articulated in a Performance Agreement (for District-Run actions) OR a Partnership Performance Contract (for Partner-Managed actions) that is signed by the campus leader and the district Superintendent and/or School Board **by May 31, 2027**.
3. Grantees will attend and participate in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing best practices through the TEA School Action Fund (SAF) program office.
4. The grantee's Board of Trustees must complete TEA-approved Board training by Gate 3 of the **first year of the awarded grant**.
5. Applicants applying for Implementation grants must have completed planning the school action with a TEA-approved Technical Assistance provider before being awarded a School Action Fund award in March 2026, and be ready to fully implement the Action in Fall 2026.
6. Any campus that is closing or potentially being repurposed as part of a school action must adhere to, and comply with, rule §97.1066: Campus Repurposing and Closure. (More information can be found here.)
7. School systems must commit to guaranteeing that school leaders of awarded campuses have at least 20 hours of release time built into their weekly schedules to plan and create the ESF-aligned school design and educational model.

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Partner-Managed Actions

8. Partner-Managed awardees must implement high-quality authorizing practices which rigorously evaluate Operating Partner (OP) applicants' likelihood of success, and include a review of OP applicants' plans to implement high quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined in these Program Guidelines).

9. A Call for Quality Schools (CQS) must be released no later than June 30, 2026.

10. Applicants selecting "Partner-managed" actions must commit to the adoption of TEA's Texas Partnership model authorizing tools and resources, including Performance Contracts, unless otherwise approved by the TEA.

11. Grantees awarded "Partner-managed" actions must register for the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy (TALA) **by December 18, 2026 and complete TALA training by June 18, 2027**.

12. School Systems may apply for a Restart Action with a Partner-Managed governance structure **ONLY** for campuses that received an overall "F" rating (or, an equivalent, as defined by TEA) the year prior to becoming a partnership school, per Texas Partnerships requirements. ONLY these campuses may be eligible for the pause in accountability sanctions outlined in the TEA Texas Partnerships Guide available at txpartnerships.

13. Grantees awarded a "Partner-Managed" action must meet all funding requirements defined by Texas Partnerships, including allocating all federal, state, and local funds due to the campus, in alignment with Texas Partnership Guidelines.

14. Grantees awarded "Partner-Managed" actions must evaluate how Operating Partner applicants will implement with fidelity high-quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined in these Program Guidelines) during the Call for Quality Schools process. More information about a Call for Quality Schools process can be found in the TEA's Authorizer's Handbook available on the Texas Partnerships website.

Requirements for School Action Fund Applicants/Grantees of Create New School Actions

15. "Create new school" Action applicants must select and designate a campus leader no later than **June 5, 2026**, and commit to that campus leader's full participation in the New School Design Fellowship program beginning Summer 2026.

16. Applicants must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066.
    NOTE: Campus "phase-out" is not provided or supported by the 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant.

17. "New Schools" established without tested grade levels must be paired with another campus in the same school system or the overall school system for accountability purposes by March 2027, as per guidelines in Chapter 7 of the 2025 Accountability Manual (or, a later version if published).

18. New schools may open in one of two ways: i) open in a co-located facility or the new school may open in a newly constructed facility or a previously unoccupied building.

19. A "new" school may be created through the conversion from a District-Run campus to an Innovation Partner-Managed school.

20. Applicants selecting "Create a New School" school actions must include the new campus in its Title I ESSA plan in time for Year 1 Continuation/Implementation, or first school year the new school opens.

21. The applicant assures enrollment at a "New School" will prioritize students previously attending, or zoned to, a Title I-serving and Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-identified school (2024-2025 ratings).

Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Provisions and Assurances.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the Program Guidelines.
4. The applicant assures to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
5. The applicant assures that they accept and will comply with Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances requirements.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

9. 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.

10. The school system will maintain current contact information in AskTED to ensure timely communication.

11. The school system will regularly submit their expenditures (monthly preferred, quarterly at minimum) to remain on-track for grant expenditures.

12. Use a data-informed, both quantitative and qualitative, evaluation process and criteria for selecting the school action model for the specific campus to be supported with this grant.

13. If a specific campus has not yet been identified, use a data-informed evaluation process— incorporating both quantitative and qualitative criteria—and establish an appropriate timeline for identifying the campus for school action. This should include a rationale for naming a specific campus by Gate 2 of Year 1 (one) of the awarded grant.

14. Align the school action with the school system's overall strategy for support and intervention in low-performing schools and/or the school system's strategy for expanding high-quality school choices for students and families.

15. Assure that senior leaders of the school system and campus have been, and will be, involved in the decision to select the school action for the campus(es) and to apply for this School Action Fund Planning and Implementation Grant, and that they will continue to be involved throughout the grant period.

16. Assure that the applicant school system has worked, or will work, with members of the school community (staff, families, community leaders) to communicate plans and solicit input into the school action planning and implementation process.

17. Identify a school system-level staff member to manage the planning and implementation grant who is both qualified and experienced in project and program management.

18. The school system's School Action Fund Project Manager must attend regular meetings with the TEA SAF Team program staff.

19. School system-level (Central Office) Business/Finance Office staff member responsible for overseeing grant expenditures and draw down processes must attend at least two meetings per semester with the School System's (Applicant) School Action Fund Project Manager and the TEA SAF Team program staff.

20. Implement with fidelity high-quality instructional materials (HQIM, as described in these Program Guidelines) in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation on the awarded campus(es).

21. Implement strategic scheduling (such as ADSY, extended day/year, and/or blended learning programs that require operational and staffing shifts to rethink and maximize time and flexibility) and accelerated instruction, on the awarded campus(es) in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation as defined by TEA, unless otherwise approved or stated by TEA.

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

Program Elements

Description of Program

School Actions are whole-school strategies districts use to increase access to high-quality schools, meet community needs, and address chronic underperformance. By providing technical assistance and grant funds to support school actions for individual campuses, TEA also supports school districts to take strategic actions that both improve schools and provide communities, parents, and families with the schools and programs they want, need, and deserve. The 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation will support Restart Action grantees (School System-Run ACE model Planning only) eligible for Resource Campus designation to achieve that designation by the end of the grant period? More information about Resource Campus designation can be found [here](#).

School Actions may be School System-Run or managed by an operating partner, as defined by Texas Partnerships/SB 1882 requirements. School System-Run campuses must implement a TEA-supported school model as outlined below. School Systems applying for a Partner-Managed award must implement high-quality authorizing practices, including a review of the plan to implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined later in these Program Guidelines), that result in a high-quality campus.

School Systems that receive a 2026-2027 School Action Fund (SAF) Planning grant on behalf of eligible campuses may apply for up to two one-year continuation grants for funding, resources, and support to implement the school action(s) on the awarded campus(es). School Systems must satisfactorily complete all required elements, meet all milestones of the 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant, and all Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances outlined in this document to be eligible for a non-competitive Continuation grant. (See below Program Descriptions for more details of each action.)

In School System-Run actions, grantees must meet all universal requirements for success: selection of a TEA-codified, ESF-aligned, evidence-based school model; development of a master calendar that maximizes instructional staff and time; selection, assignment, and empowerment of a campus leader with a track record of success to lead the planning and implementation of the school action and model; and implementation of high quality instructional materials (HQIM, as defined in these Program Guidelines) and research-based instructional strategies (RBIS).

Applicants may apply for Implementation grant(s) in the 2026-2027 School Action Fund–Planning and Implementation grant if they have completed planning the school action with a TEA-approved Technical Assistance provider before receiving a School Action Fund award in March 2026. Applicants for Implementation grants must clearly demonstrate their readiness to fully implement the action at the awarded campus(es) in Fall 2026.

To learn more about school actions and model playbooks, please visit the Center for School Actions' [website](#).

During the application process, school systems follow the decision process below based on individual campus needs.

STEP 1: Select one of the 4 Actions below for each eligible campus

1. Restart Action

School systems reconstitute campus leaders and a majority of staff, and implement a new whole-school educational model, including high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines) in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses, to turnaround a chronically underperforming campus. School systems implement the selected school model in all grade levels in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation.

2. Create a New School Action

School systems create a new school that may be co-located in a School System facility and is phased-in one grade level at a time **OR** opened with all grade levels in a new facility or a facility that was unoccupied by a school in the previous year. New schools must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066; recruit, select, and hire a new empowered campus leader and staff; and implement an evidence-based educational model, including high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines), in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation. New schools must be designated Title I-serving in Year 1 (one) of implementation and throughout the grant period.

School Systems may also apply for a Create New School Action to convert an existing school to an Innovation Partnership-Managed campus or launch a brand-new Innovation Partnership-Managed campus.

NOTE: Phase-out support is not provided by the 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant.

3. Reassign Action

School Systems work with their communities to thoughtfully close school(s) and reassign students to existing A/B-rated campuses (according to 2024-2025 ratings, or, an equivalent, as defined by TEA) or new schools. Districts closing an existing campus must follow TAC rules regarding CDCN requirements (County District Campus Number), including TAC 97.1066: Campus Repurposing and Closure. The 2026-2027 School Action Fund-Planning and Implementation grant's Reassign Action must be implemented prior to the school year in which the school may receive its 4th unacceptable rating. School systems provide transition support for families, students, and staff.

Receiving schools must be designated Title I-serving in Year 1 (one) of implementation and throughout the grant period and must implement high-quality instructional materials (as defined later in these Program Guidelines), in **both** Reading Language Arts and Mathematics classes/courses in Year 1 (one) of Continuation/Implementation.

STEP 2: Select one of 2 Governance Structures for each eligible campus

1. School System-Run

The campus is directly run and supported by the School System (Applicant). All staff members of the campus are employees of the School System. The grant-awarded campus is allowed flexibility from school system policies and practices in order to enact the school action/model, and implement high quality instructional materials (HQIM). This flexibility is documented in School Design Plans, Performance Agreements, and Implementaton Plans, and is approved by the Superintendent and/or the Board of Trustees.

2. Partner-Managed

School Systems authorize an Operating Partner to manage the school through an SB 1882 partnership, which is either a Turnaround Partnership (available for F-rated campuses only, or, an equivalent, as defined by TEA) or an Innovation Partnership. The School System launches a Call for Quality Schools (CQS) no later than June 30, 2026 to recruit, evaluate, and approve a high-quality operator to plan and implement the school action(s). The Call must require that Operating Partners implement high quality instructional materials, or HQIM, as defined later in these Program Guidelines. More information about Texas Partnerships can be found here.

STEP 3: Select a school model.

For each eligible School System-Run campus, select one of the evidence-based, codified school models from those found below.

School Systems planning and/or implementing Turnaround or Innovation Partnerships campuses with Operating Partners should select the Partner-Managed campus option.

1. ACE (School System-Run, Restart Action **only**)
    - Campuses that are eligible for Resource designation will be required to meet all expectations for Resource designation by the end of the 2nd (second) year of implementation.
    - More information about Resource designation may be found here.
2. Advanced STEM (School System-Run, Create new school Action only; Elementary and Middle schools)
3. Partner-Managed **$**
    - Turnaround – available only to F-rated campuses (refer to the TEA Texas Partnerships website)
    - Innovation – available to A, B, and C-rated campuses, or brand new schools

$ Models that may yield additional sustained funding opportunities.

School Model/Designation Playbooks for #'s 1-3 above are found on the Center for School Actions' website.

High Quality Instructional Materials Requirements

For School Action Fund grantees, high quality instructional materials (HQIM) include at least Math and English Language Arts/Reading materials and are curricular resources that, in the state of Texas, meet the criteria below:

1. Ensure **full coverage of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)**.
2. Align to the **English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)** and **prekindergarten guidelines**.
3. Provide **evidence-based best practices** in the relevant content areas of reading language arts (RLA), math, science, and social studies.
4. **Support all learners**, including students with disabilities, Emergent Bilinguals (EB), and students identified as gifted and talented.
5. Meet **grade-level suitability** requirements.
6. Be **free from factual error**.
7. Enable **frequent progress monitoring** through embedded and aligned assessments.
8. Provide teacher and student-facing lesson materials with implementation supports.
9. Follow **Manufacturing Standards and Specifications for Textbooks (MSST)** for physical and electronic materials.
10. Receive **approval from the SBOE** through the Instructional Materials Review and Approval (IMRA) process.

All SAF grantees **must** implement HQIM at the school action campus by the beginning of Year 1 (one) of continuation/implementation. Authorizers (Partner-Managed grantees) must demonstrate evidence of evaluating and approving the academic model proposed by the operating partner, including HQIM in the Call for Quality Schools.

Qualifications and Experience

The applicant agrees to provide data on the qualifications and experience of the existing or future staff members, as required per the program guidelines as follows:
The school system must select a qualified Project Manager at the school system-level (Central Office) who has access to C-suite decision-makers, and who has the authority to implement activities related to this grant. This staff member must be identified and in place no later than March 1, 2026 (beginning of the 2026-2027 School Action Fund–Planning and Implementation grant).

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

Grantees must establish goals which will allow student performance and achievement to result in the SAF North Star Goal of A/B rating after two years of Continuation/Implementation. These goals must be identified for Measurable Progress and written as SMART goals. Each grant year will have either four or five "Gates": 0-4, or 1-4. There will be specific "Deliverables" due in each Gate. The section below includes a representative sample, but not all, Deliverables.
Note: Deliverables and Gates may be adjusted based on feedback and need in an ongoing continuous improvement process.

School System-Run Actions, Planning Deliverables
o School Design Plan
o Project Plan
o Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan
o TEA-approved Board of Trustees Governance Training and/or Coaching
o Performance Agreement, signed and approved by Campus Leader, Superintendent and/or Board of Trustees
o Master Schedule
o Two-year Implementation Plan, including Goals and Campus Budget

Partner-Managed Actions, Planning
o Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan
o Authorizer TALA Participation (completed)
o LEA Board-approved District Authorizing Policy
o Call of Quality Schools, including HQIM and RBIS as requirements
o Operating Partner Approval Process

o School System Board of Trustees approval of Operating Partner
o School System Board of Trustees approval of Partnership agreement, Performance Expectations and Contract Terms
o Approved SB 1882 Benefits Application
o Monitoring Plan
o Implementation plan

School System-Run Actions, Implementation
o Project/Implementation Plan
o Classroom observations/walkthrough schedule and leadership team and teacher assignments
o Baseline data for Math, ELAR, and sub-population SMART goals
o PLC and professional development schedules, and agendas/topics
o Data Survey: BOY/MOY/EOY CBA data and/or Formative Assessment Data for Math and RLA
o Spring semester Professional Development calendar, topics
o Data analysis meetings and Learning Acceleration Plans (DDI) based on BOY data
o SAF Fidelity of Implementation Review/s (independent third party ESF-aligned review)
o Data analysis meetings and Learning Acceleration Plans

Partner-Managed Actions, Implementation
o Implementation Plan
o TALA Training (if not completed by Authorizer within last two years)
o Operating Partner updates on progress toward goals outlined in the Partnership Contract (quarterly)
o Authorizer Progress Monitoring Plan and Reports
o Data review meetings and reports

Project Evaluation and Modification

By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the required evaluation reports in the format and time requested by TEA. Grantees/school systems will collect and analyze relevant data from PEIMS, if it is available, and submit the data reports to TEA.
Specific critical success factors and milestones will be developed in a manner deemed appropriate by the TEA.

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

Completion of ongoing progress monitoring through quarterly Gates and Deliverables, including Student Performance and Achievement goals, as established by the TEA. Upon grant award, TEA will provide awardees with the SAF Progress Monitoring Rubric (PMR) and access to data upload systems/platforms on or around April 6, 2026. School systems must complete the SAF Progress Monitoring Rubric (PMR) with support from their matched school action technical assistance provider. Progress will be monitored by the TEA SAF Team on a regular basis.

A School Action Fund Fidelity of Implementation (SAF FOI) Evaluation (ESF-aligned independent third-party fidelity of implementation quality review) will be completed by Texas Tech University, or another TEA-

Approved organization, during the Fall semester of Year 1 (one) of Continuation or Implementation, unless otherwise determined by TEA. The SAF FOI Evaluation will be conducted by an organization not connected to the grantees' School System(s) or TEA-matched technical assistance providers. The SAF FOI Evaluation will focus on the implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), research-based instructional strategies (RBIS), and the aligned and relevant school action and model.

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
- Professional and contracted services
- Consumable and durable supplies and materials
- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — allowable costs include: The bullets below are for SBITA, but there are other debt service possibilities. If SBITA costs (6514 and 6526) are unallowable for the Grant program, delete and move to the Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds list. If 6512, 6522, and 6523 are allowable debt service costs, move them from the Unallowable section to here.
    a. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
    b. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)
- The school system's (Central Office) Project Manager must attend monthly meetings with the TEA SAF grant program staff and the school system's (Central Office) Business/Finance Office staff responsible for overseeing grant expenditures and draw down processes must attend at least two of these meetings per semester.
- Grant applicants must establish grant budgets that align with the following requirements for use of funds and include all **required** budget line items below. It is expected that grantees will closely adhere to the categories and amounts listed in the Budget Guidance section below. Exceptions and capital expenditures must be pre-approved by the TEA SAF Team.

    School System-Run Actions, Planning
    o   Planning Year School Leader release time to complete planning activities: 80,000
    o   School System Central Office Administrator / Innovation Officer Position: 20,000
    o   High-quality instructional materials and support: 25,000
    o   Educator Stipends and Salaries: 25,000

ο Travel expenses: 15,000
ο School community engagement support: 15,000

Partner-Managed Actions, Planning
ο School System Central Office Authorizer Administrator / Innovation Officer Position: $20,000
ο Operating Partner Organization Start-up/Transition Funding: $130,000
ο Travel expenses: $15,000
ο School community engagement support: $15,000

School System-Run Actions, Implementation
• School System Central Office Administrator / Innovation Officer Position: $20,000
• High quality instructional materials and support: $50,000-75,000
• Educator Stipends and Salaries: $100,000-125,000
• Travel expenses: $15,000
• School community engagement support: $15,000-25,000

Partner-Managed Actions, Implementation
ο School System Central Office Authorizer Administrator / Innovation Officer Position: $20,000
ο Operating Partner Funding: $225,000-300,000
ο Travel expenses: $15,000
ο School community engagement support: 15,000-25,000

Other Allowable Operating Costs Requiring Specific Approval in the Grant Application (6400)

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs are allowable with prior approval from the TEA SAF Team.

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.

Only the following travel costs may be allowable for these positions:

• Travel expenses for TEA required events, school action convenings hosted by TA provider organization, LEA-directed trips to visit similar in-state model-specific successful campuses, or other TEA-approved activities to support school action planning and implementation. Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization

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.

- Advisory Council
- Field trips
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences
- Travel costs for students to conferences
- Stipends for non-employees
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Debt service (lease-purchase)
- Personal computing, electronics, and other devices (purchased in a quantity that will create an excess of a one-to-one technology ratio for students or faculty and staff)
- Textbooks or curricular materials (purchased in a quantity that will create an excess of a one-to-one resource ratio for students or faculty and staff

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)

Federal Grant Requirements *

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded Grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement does not apply to this federally funded Grant program.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded Grant program.

Attachments

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

Required Program-Related Attachments

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Required Program-Related Attachments, for a general description of program-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

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

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.

Zipping 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	Confirm: Title I-serving in SY 2025-2026 and throughout the SAF grant, if awarded **and** Comprehensive Support-identified, Targeted Support-identified, or Additional Targeted Support-identified	0
Eligibility Determination Part II	Not prior recipient of any School Action Fund grant from 2019-2020 and beyond	0
Priority Points	Low Student Academic Achievement/Performance; Economically Disadvantaged Campus; Previous SFI grantee **and** implemented Bluebonnet Learning materials for both Mathematics and Reading; Evidence of established Office of Innovation or Transformation; Campuses within School Systems with a state appointed Board of Managers and/or with at least 5 years of unacceptable accountability ratings; Approved and implemented TIA system; Board of Trustees-approved and implemented ADSY calendar School Systems with 5-Day school weeks (See Program Review and Scoring section below for details)	50
Virtual Oral Interview	LEA and campus leaders with the TEA program leads (See Oral Interviews for Funding section below for details)	100
Total Standard Review Points Possible		**150**

Priority Points – see comment for guidance

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Priorities for Funding.

All eligible School Action Fund (SAF) grant applications will be evaluated based on the methodology below using school year 2024-2025 accountability ratings (or, an equivant, as defined by TEA).

• Priority Points based on campus and School System context; up to a maximum of 50 points per campus:

   o 5 points each low achieving campus (less than 40% of students "Meets" combined Math + RLA STAAR, based on 2024-2025 STAAR data),
   o 10 points each economically disadvantaged campus (greater than 80% of students at the campus are identified as economically disadvantaged),
   o 10 points each School System that has previously been awarded a Strong Foundations Implementation grant **and** has implemented Bluebonnet Learning materials for both Mathematics and Reading Tier I instruction by SY2024-25,
   o 5 points per School System that has an Office of Innovation/Transformation, with a clearly designated leader and identified on School System-level organizational charts. NOTE: This is different from being a District of Innovation,
   o 5 points for each School System with a state appointed Board of Managers and/or with at least 5 consecutive years of unacceptable accountability ratings,
   o 5 points for each School System with a TEA-approved Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) **o**r Enhanced Teacher Incentive Allotment (E-TIA) system, that has been implemented no later than SY2024-25,
   o 5 points for each School System with a Board of Trustees-approved and implemented ADSY calendar with at least 200 school days
   o 5 points for School Systems implementing 165 or more instructional days during year 1 of Continuation/Implementation.

TEA will rank order campuses by priority points within each action.

• Virtual Oral Interview with district and campus leaders: up to 100 points per campus

Awards will be determined according to the following methodology:

1. Confirm Eligibility: Applicants will complete the LASO application and indicate the school action(s), governance structure(s), and model(s) the School System (Applicant) is applying for each eligible campus. Title I-serving and Comprehensive/Targeted/Additional Targeted-identification status will be confirmed.

2. Virtual Interview: Based on Priority Points as calculated above, the top 50 campuses will proceed to the virtual Interview. In the case of a tie, campuses with the higher economically disadvantaged percentage will go to the Interview. (For new schools and campuses that have not yet been identified, the School System's (Applicant's) average will be considered.)

3. Determine Finalists: Applicants must meet at least 80% of overall points (Priority and Oral Interview points) to be considered for a grant award.

4. Determine Awards: Awards will be granted to all of the finalists for each action until funds are expended, with priority for funding in the order listed below:

1. Restart Actions

2. Create new Actions

3. Reassign Actions

5. Finally, awards will be made as funding allows based on the prioritization of actions as noted above. Any remaining funds may be awarded to applicants who scored less than 80%, in rank order with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students on a campus, while keeping the maximum of six awards of grants and a maximum of four awards of any one action per individual School System in place.

In the case of a tie between applicants at the end of available funding, the grant will be awarded to the applicant with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students at the campus.

NOTE: A maximum of six awards will be awarded across all actions to any individual School System (Applicant). No more than four awards of any one Action will be awarded to an individual School System (Applicant).

Oral Interviews for Funding

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, *Oral Interviews for Funding*.

All finalists for SAF grant awards will be invited to attend a virtual interview. If a campus qualifies for multiple Curriculum and Instruction bundled grants, the applicant will be invited to an interview to determine the best fit of grants. Applicants must include the following individuals in the oral interview process:

• Superintendent, or Superintendent designee
• Selected (or, proposed) SAF grant Project Manager
• Chief Financial Officer
• Senior district leader directly responsible for overseeing the potentially selected campus(es)
• Campus-level leader with track record of success selected to lead the school action planning process (if identified)

The interviews will cover the topics below.

School Action Selection, and multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, if qualified (**50 points**)
• Evaluation process and criteria for selecting the school action and campus leader
• Alignment of school action with overall district strategy for school improvement
• Support from Board of Trustees and district leadership, including Human Resources/Talent, Finance/Budget, Curriculum and Instruction (Teaching and Learning; Academics)

Readiness to Plan/Implement, including multiple Curriculum and Instruction grants, if qualified (**50 points**)
• Understanding of school action requirements and planning activities

- Awareness of school action implementation challenges and mitigation strategies
- Plans for engaging technical assistance organizations
- Presence of existing practices and policies to support school action planning and implementation, such as Human Resources/Talent, Finance/Budget, Curriculum and Instruction (Teaching and Learning; Academics