

LASO Cycle 4 (2025-2026)

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities

2026-2028 Virtual Hybrid Accelerator Grant

Program Guidelines

Authorized by GAA, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Texas Education Code Sec. SB 569 30B.201 and 30B.202.



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	Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator
Application Due Date	December 3, 2025; 5:00 p.m. CT
Program Authority	Authorized by GAA, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Texas Education Code Sec. SB 569 30B.201 and 30B.202.

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 members should be contacted with questions:

Grant Program Contact

Program manager name	Ann Rajan
Program manager title	Director of Virtual and Hybrid Education
Program manager email	ann.rajan@tea.texas.gov
Program manager phone	512-463-8916

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	\$2,900,000
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	\$2,900,000

* 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 17, 21, 2025	VHPA Program Webinar schedule Friday, October 17, 2025 (2:00-3:00 pm CT)- Option 1 Tuesday, October 21, 2025 (11:00-12:00 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 website for more information. See General and Fiscal Guidelines , 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
January 31, 2028	Amendment due date (if selected for funding)
April 30, 2028	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, 89th Texas Legislature, Strategy A.2.1, Texas Education Code Sec. SB 569 30B.201 and 30B.202.

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 Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA) enables school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to design and launch high-quality virtual and hybrid programs or campuses, as defined under Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 30B. The goal of the program is to establish schools that are intentionally structured to achieve A or B accountability ratings and deliver rigorous, engaging instruction tailored to meet the diverse needs of students across Texas. Through VHPA, school systems will receive funding and technical assistance (TA) to develop flexible, personalized learning models that support students requiring adaptable education pathways. The program also enables school systems to implement innovative staffing strategies, expand course offerings, and increase access to high-quality instruction statewide.

VHPA is a two-year program. By the end of the first year, participating school districts and open-enrollment charter schools must either launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus that will operate in the 2027–2028 school year. School systems that meet all engagement and deliverable requirements in Year 1 may use this participation to satisfy the planning year requirement for virtual and hybrid campuses outlined in Senate Bill 569. For virtual or hybrid campuses, failure to receive authorization could result in a funding reduction for year 2 of VHPA and TA support

- **Full-Time Virtual Program** is an educational option where students attend almost entirely online, receiving instruction and content primarily via the Internet, either synchronously or asynchronously, with minimal to no in-person attendance.
- **Full-Time Hybrid Program** is a full-time educational option where a student attends in-person classes for less than 90% of instructional time. Instruction can be delivered online (synchronously or asynchronously), in person, or through other methods. Hybrid programs may be organized so that courses are delivered partly in-person and partly online or scheduled such that students attend both virtual and in-person classes within the same school day, or through a combination of these methods

- **Full-Time Virtual Campus:** a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time virtual program authorized under TEC, Chapter 30B.
- **Full-Time Hybrid Campus:** a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time hybrid program authorized under TEC, Chapter 30B.

Eligible Applicants

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

The eligible applicants are:

- School districts or open-enrollment charter schools serving K-12 students
- All participants of a previous VHPA program are not eligible to apply.

Education Service Centers (ESCs) are not eligible to apply

Eligibility List

There is not an eligibility list for this grant

Shared Services Arrangement

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

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed

Application Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines: Continuation](#)

Funding, Fund Management, and Use of Funds.

It is anticipated that 10-14 applicants will be awarded up to \$230,000.

Awards are distributed based on model category of program or campus.

The awarded amount covers the two-year program, which includes both a planning phase and an implementation phase. Eligibility for continued participation in the VHPA requires successful and timely completion of all deliverables in Year 1 and Year 2. For virtual or hybrid campuses, failure to receive authorization could result in a funding reduction for year 2 of VHPA and TA support.

Award Information

Category	Estimated Number of Awards	Award Amount (Max & Breakdown)
Virtual or Hybrid Programs	~4	Up to \$150,000 (Year 1: \$100,000; Year 2: \$50,000)
Virtual or Hybrid Campuses	~10	Up to \$230,000 (Year 1: \$150,000; Year 2: \$80,000)

** Should additional funding become available for this program, the agency may fund additional qualifying awardees till all funding is exhausted.*

There may be an opportunity for a non-competitive renewal of this grant, contingent upon the successful achievement of programmatic goals and/or specific provisions outlined in the funding statute. Should a non-competitive renewal be authorized, all eligible award recipients will be notified directly by program staff with further instructions and next steps.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants are selected according to their scores and ranked within two delivery format categories: campus and program. Those who have not decided on a format will be included in the program category for award consideration.

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 not 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

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 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.

There are no statutory required responses for this Grant opportunity

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:

1. Who from the school system is the primary contact for overseeing participation in VHPA?
2. What grade levels will the school system serve through this grant?
3. Is the school system selecting a program, campus, or has it not yet determined the delivery format for virtual or hybrid instruction?
4. What is the planned program format for the school system: virtual, hybrid, or has the delivery method not been determined?
5. How does the school system envision instruction being delivered in the program?
 - a. Asynchronous only
 - b. Synchronous only
 - c. Both asynchronous and synchronous
 - d. Undecided
6. Will the school system be in Year 1 of the school system wide adoption of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) in core subjects?
7. What is the current or anticipated student enrollment number in the virtual or hybrid program or campus?
8. Describe how the school system calculated the enrollment number above.
(i.e., current number of students enrolled, number of interested students via family survey)
9. Which best describes where the school system is in the virtual/hybrid program?

☐ We are in the planning phase and currently do not have a virtual/hybrid program, but intend to launch in SY26-27

☐ We have a plan and will be ready to launch a virtual/hybrid program this school year (SY26-27) with some additional support

☐ We are currently running a virtual/hybrid program and would like feedback and support to build on it to launch a more robust program in SY27-28

☐ We are in the planning phase and currently do not have a virtual/hybrid program but intend to apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus in the SY27-28.

☐ We have a plan and will be ready to launch a virtual/hybrid program this school year (SY26-27). With some additional support, we plan to apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus in the SY27-28.

☐ We are currently running a virtual/hybrid program and would like feedback and support to build on it and establish a virtual or hybrid campus in SY27-28.

☐ We are exploring virtual and hybrid learning options within our school system but unsure about the program type and timeline to launch.

10. Describe how your virtual or hybrid program/campus aligns with the school system's broader strategic goals or improvement plans.
11. Describe what knowledge or experience the school system's leadership team brings to designing and supporting high-quality virtual or hybrid instruction.
12. Describe what research, data, or stakeholder input informed the school system's decision to pursue a virtual or hybrid model.
13. Which best describes the school system's key areas of need for the virtual/hybrid program?

Note: Answers provided will not limit the type of support the school system will receive if accepted into the program. Instead, this information will be used to better understand the school system's key area of need.

- Aligned, effective vision and model that is responsive to family and student needs
 - Family engagement, communication, and/or recruitment plan
 - Staffing and/or teacher/staff recruitment plan
 - Plan for communicating clear administrator, teacher, student, and family roles within a virtual/hybrid model (and wherever needed, support for shifting mindsets)
 - Instructional framework for designing high-quality virtual and hybrid courses aligned to research-based practices
 - Student attendance and engagement plan
 - School Culture and student well-being plan
 - Plan for supporting special populations and at-risk students
 - Student onboarding sessions, including learning strategies and support for cultivating mindsets rooted in the science of learning, self-directed learning skills, how to use digital tools, and help-seeking during asynchronous and/or synchronous instruction
 - Teacher development (PD and ongoing job-embedded coaching) to deliver high-quality instruction and learning experiences in a virtual/hybrid model
 - High-Quality Instructional Materials (for core curriculum and adjusted for virtual/hybrid learning)
 - Data collection and progress monitoring systems
 - Technology Strategy and Data Privacy Framework (including hardware, connectivity, digital tools, and cybersecurity policies)
 - Master schedule that is appropriately set up for virtual or hybrid learning
14. Describe which additional topics, areas of support, or identified gaps would be most helpful to strengthen the school system's virtual or hybrid model.
 15. Describe which curriculum the school system is currently using or planning to use for virtual learning for core courses.

16. Which content is the school system considering when adopting new instructional materials or curriculum for virtual learning? (choose all that apply) **Note:** *Curriculum adoption is not a requirement of the program, but rather an optional support; the response to this question will help us better understand the school system's needs.*
17. Who from the school system will be the Senior Project Sponsor for VHPA?
18. Who from the school system will be the Senior Project Lead for VHPA?
19. Is the school system partnering with a third-party vendor or partner to run the virtual or hybrid program?

Statutory and Program-Specific Assurances

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

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 Program Guidelines.
3. 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.
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 submit a comprehensive launch plan and either implement a virtual/hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus that is expected to begin operating in the 2027-2028 school year.
11. The school system understands that if they do not meet participation expectations or disengage from VHPA, they may have their membership from the VHPA terminated and forfeit any access to remaining funding.
12. Ensure that the program or designated campus leader possesses relevant experience or can exhibit the competencies necessary to lead a virtual or hybrid program or campus effectively.
13. Design and manage strategic initiatives that improve instructional quality and student engagement, and they are committed to building their capacity to support high-quality virtual and hybrid models.
14. As part of the program commitment for Year 1 of VHPA, submit a comprehensive launch plan for a full-time virtual/hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus to operate in 2027-2028 school year.

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

Program Elements

Description of Program

The VHPA program aims to develop high-quality virtual and hybrid programs and campuses throughout Texas. School system teams will participate in a two-year structured program that includes cohort-based workshops, monthly coaching calls with technical assistance (TA) providers, and the completion of deliverables that document their work and progress in design and implementation. In the first year, teams engage stakeholders, define their vision and instructional design, and conduct pilots to prepare for program launch or campus authorization. In year two, school systems set measurable goals, carry out action plans, and use continuous improvement to assess progress. They review data on student engagement, mastery, and attendance to evaluate program effectiveness.

Technical assistance providers collaborate with school systems to design high-quality virtual and hybrid courses, develop staffing plans that enhance digital instruction, and deliver professional development focused on effective online pedagogy. Additional support encompasses leadership training, operational consulting, and the implementation of strategies for community engagement and comprehensive student support. School systems will also engage in iterative planning and data-driven improvement cycles to establish rigorous and engaging virtual and hybrid learning opportunities. These efforts are grounded in purposeful design, with the

goal of operating effective campuses that meet diverse student needs and are positioned to earn A or B accountability ratings.

Note: For full-time virtual or hybrid campuses, failure to receive authorization could result in a funding reduction for year 2

Eligibility for continued participation in the VHPA requires meeting the requirements listed below including successful and timely completion of all deliverables in Year 1 and Year 2

- Establish a VHPA Team responsible for developing and implementing the full-time virtual or hybrid program or campus.
- Collaborate with a TEA-assigned technical assistance (TA) provider and participate in TA-supported activities such as cohort workshops, coaching calls, step backs, planning sessions, or implementation deliverables
- Ensure adaptability and dedication in program model development to align with research-based best practices for high-quality virtual and hybrid learning environments.
- Ensure that program leads of awarded applicants have at least 16 hours of release time built into their weekly schedules to plan and create the virtual or hybrid program or campus.
- Launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus that will operate in the 2027-2028 school year.
- Ensure that any partnership with a private or third-party vendor preserves the school system's ability to design, adapt, and implement the virtual or hybrid program to meet local needs.
- Disclose any vendor-imposed services, limitations that may affect program flexibility, instructional design, or operational decision-making.
- If a district or charter school enlists a private or third-party provider to deliver education services or operate a virtual or hybrid campus, the district or charter must engage with the designated technical assistance partner to develop a comprehensive provider selection plan. This plan must include:
 - Defined criteria for evaluating potential providers
 - Detailed cost analysis and breakdown of services
 - Consideration of the provider's historical performance such as student academic outcomes in similar programs
 - Submission of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements outlining the responsibilities of both the provider and the district or charter
 - A system for monitoring progress, including required progress reports
 - Clearly defined action items to be implemented if the provider fails to meet established successful criteria for the campus or program
- The school system commits to completing **all required deliverables and meeting milestones by the scheduled timeline** specified by the VHPA, including:
 - Define a clear and compelling rationale for launching the virtual or hybrid program, including the specific student population or campus it will serve.
 - Present evidence of community interest in a virtual or hybrid learning option, including data collected through surveys, focus groups, or other engagement methods.

- Develop and implement plans to achieve program objectives, including an academic plan that outlines curriculum, instructional methods, approaches for monitoring student progress, and support strategies for special populations and at-risk students.
- Develop and iterate plans on staffing models, school culture, family engagement, and student support.
- Update operations such as staffing, schedules, finances, technology, and cybersecurity to support virtual or hybrid models.
- Provide a professional development plan for instructional staff that includes training specific to virtual and hybrid instruction, along with ongoing, job-embedded coaching to strengthen instructional quality and student engagement
- Present evidence of training and development for teachers and leaders to ensure high-quality virtual or hybrid instruction.
- Use data to monitor student engagement and academic progress, ensuring alignment with grade-level standards and research-based instructional strategies.
- Engage in 3 improvement cycle sessions using data to inform ongoing development. School systems will share data that reflects program implementation and outcomes. This may include student engagement, progress toward grade-level mastery in virtual and hybrid courses (BOY, MOY, EOY), teacher instructional practices and growth in serving virtual and hybrid learners, and leader support for professional learning communities and job-embedded coaching.
- Obtain formal approval from the school system's governing board to launch a virtual or hybrid program/campus. For virtual/hybrid campuses, ensure this approval is secured prior to applying for authorization
- Submit a detailed plan or contract outlining the scope of services, responsibilities, and decision-making authority in any private or third-party vendor partnership supporting the virtual or hybrid program/campus (*if applicable*).
- Submit a comprehensive launch plan and either implement a virtual/hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a virtual or hybrid campus that is expected to begin operating in the 2027-2028 school year.
- The school system's VHPA Program lead is required to attend meetings with TEA grant program staff and district business/finance office staff who oversee grant expenditures and the draw down process.

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:

1. The program or designated campus leader possesses relevant experience in leading virtual and hybrid learning environments or demonstrates the competencies necessary to do so effectively. This includes strategic planning, instructional leadership, and the ability to support student success in flexible learning models.
2. District and campus administrators have experience designing and managing strategic initiatives that improve instructional quality and student engagement, and they are committed to building their capacity to support high-quality virtual and hybrid models.

3. Instructional staff have foundational experience in digital instruction and will continue to strengthen their practice through a professional development plan that includes targeted training and ongoing, job-embedded coaching. This approach builds on existing qualifications to enhance instructional quality and student engagement

Performance and Evaluation Measures

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

1. Collaborate with TEA and technical assistance (TA) partners by providing access to classrooms, tools, meetings, and data as needed to support program development and continuous improvement.
 - TEA and TA partners may observe instruction or internal meetings to inform technical assistance and better understand program implementation.
 - School systems will conduct a diagnostic to determine the status of their virtual and hybrid plans or programs and to set goals and action plans for progressing toward the target model.
 - School systems will present evidence of community interest in a virtual or hybrid learning option, including data collected through surveys, focus groups, or other engagement methods
 - School systems will create or revise plans for master schedules, staffing and professional development, technology systems, student engagement, school culture, instructional design for diverse learners, and strategies for supporting special populations and at-risk students.
 - School systems will incorporate these elements within the comprehensive launch plan to guide program development and implementation.
 - School systems planning to operate a virtual or hybrid campus will utilize elements of the launch plan during the authorization application process
 - By the end of Year 1 of VHPA support, launch a full-time virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization to operate a full-time virtual or hybrid campus beginning the 2027-2028 school year.
 - School systems will complete all required deliverables and meet milestones with the scheduled timeline specified by the TEA VHPA staff.
2. Program deliverables include school systems teams engaging in 3 improvement cycle sessions using data to inform ongoing development. School systems will share data that reflects program implementation and outcomes. This may include student engagement, progress toward grade-level mastery in virtual and hybrid courses (BOY, MOY, EOY), teacher instructional practices and growth in serving virtual and hybrid learners, and leader support for professional learning communities and job-embedded coaching. School systems acknowledge that TEA may share tools, training, and resources developed through VHPA participation across the VHPA network and with other Texas schools.
3. If a district or charter school enlists a private or third-party provider to deliver education services or operate a virtual or hybrid campus, the district or charter must engage with the designated technical assistance partner to develop a comprehensive provider selection plan. This plan must include:
 - i. Defined criteria for evaluating potential providers
 - ii. Detailed cost analysis and breakdown of services
 - iii. Consideration of the provider's historical performance
 - iv. Submission of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or other formal agreements outlining the responsibilities of both the provider and the district or charter

- v. A system for monitoring progress, including required progress reports
- vi. Clearly defined action items to be implemented if the provider fails to meet

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

Grant applicants must create budgets that meet the required line items listed below and follow the Budget Guidance section. Any exceptions or capital expenditure need prior approval from the TEA VHPA Team.

- Planning Year, Programs
 - Leader release time for virtual/hybrid program planning: \$25,000
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$20,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000
 - High-quality instructional material and professional development support: \$20,000
 - Technology: \$20,000
 - School community engagement support: \$10,000
- Implementation Year, Programs
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$15,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000
 - High-quality instructional material and professional development support: \$20,000
 - Technology: \$10,000
- Planning Year, Campuses
 - Leader release time for virtual/hybrid program planning: \$60,000
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$20,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000
 - High-quality instructional material and professional development support: \$35,000
 - Technology: \$20,000
 - School community engagement support: \$10,000
- Implementation Year, Campuses
 - Educator Stipends or Salary support: \$20,000
 - Travel Expenses: \$5,000
 - High-quality instructional material and professional development support: \$35,000
 - Technology: \$20,000

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.

Stipends for Non-Employees Other Than Those Included in 6419

Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may be funded under the Grant program.

Stipends for non-employees will require pre-authorization in writing. To access the pre-authorization form for participant support costs, 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:

- Costs for travel associated with TEA-required events, VHPA conferences organized by TA provider, school system-directed visits to existing virtual or hybrid programs that follow the target implementation model, or any other TEA-approved activities that assist with the planning and execution of virtual or hybrid programs or campuses.

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.

- Field trips
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Advisory Council
- Travel costs for students to conferences
- Hosting or Sponsoring Conferences
- Audit services for state-funded Grants
- 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)
- Interest on Debt Costs (6523)

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.

Zippping 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 (1)	School districts or open-enrollment charter schools serving K-12 students	0
Eligibility Determination (2)	School districts or open-enrollment charter schools that did not previously participate in VHPA.	0
Delegation of Campus or Program Category	The school system has indicated campus or program as the planned delivery format. If “undecided,” the school system will be placed in the program category	0
School System’s Strategic Plan Alignment (Program Application Question 10)	The school system has a strong rationale of how the virtual or hybrid program/campus aligns with the school system’s broader strategic goals or improvement plans, including academic achievement, innovation, and long-term instructional transformation.	10
School System’s Leadership Team Experience (Program Application Question 11)	The leadership team demonstrates relevant experience and expertise in designing and supporting high-quality virtual or hybrid instruction, including backgrounds in instructional design, digital learning, professional development, and strategic implementation.	10
Stakeholder Interest Data (Program Application Question 12)	The school system demonstrated sufficient interest in establishing virtual or hybrid options based on stakeholder engagement data such as surveys, focus groups, and pilot programs.	10
Priority Points	Explanation of priority points listed below	5
Virtual Oral Interview	School system and campus leaders with the TEA program team	65
Total Standard Review Points Possible		100

*In the case of tying applicant(s) for the final funding spot, the applicants will be ranked in order from highest to lowest economic disadvantage to determine the final award selection.

Applicants are divided into two categories: virtual or hybrid campus, and virtual and hybrid program. If a model is undecided, it defaults to the program category. To be eligible for consideration for the grant, applicants are required to achieve a minimum score of 20 points on the program application questions. Applicants with the minimum score are awarded priority points and then ranked within the category. From the qualifying

applicants, up to 15 from the campus category and up to 10 from the program category will be invited to interview. In the case of the tie, all tying school systems will be invited to oral interviews .

Priority Points

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Priorities for Funding. 2 points for School Systems implementing 165 or more instructional days

2 points for School System that has a Board of Managers* installed

1 point for TEA classification as rural

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

Oral Interviews for Funding

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

Virtual Oral Interview: Based on application and priority as calculated above, the 15 highest scoring applicants from the campus category who meet the minimum cut score and the 10 highest scoring applicants from the program category who meet the minimum cut score will be invited to interview.

Required attendees from School System finalists are the following:

Senior Project Sponsor (Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, or Executive level administrator recommended)

Proposed VHPA Project Lead (Virtual/Hybrid Program Leader, Principal) directly responsible for overseeing implementation of the virtual or hybrid model for the school system or campus

Scoring will be based on the School Systems (finalists) responses to questions from the following sections

- 15 points | Vision, purpose, and leadership experience and capacity
- 15 points | School system's readiness for critical implementation elements and VHPA output requirements
- 10 points | Data practices for student engagement and continuous improvement
- 10 points | Alignment of virtual/hybrid model with the overall school system context and goals
- 5 points | Program sustainability
- 5 points | Knowledge of the purpose of VHPA, participation requirements, and expected deliverables over a two-year period.
- 5 points | Support from district leadership and school board

The points shown are the maximum number of points per section