



**2022-2023 Teacher Leadership Cycle 3 (Policy Fellowship)**  
**Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, November 19, 2021**

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **ESSA, Title II, Part A**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to [loiapplications@tea.texas.gov](mailto:loiapplications@tea.texas.gov).

The LOI application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, November 19, 2021**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **February 21, 2022 - July 31, 2023**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Pre-Award costs are not permitted for this grant.**

**Required Attachments**

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Reference the Priority Points section of the Program Guidelines for information regarding optional attachments.

**Amendment Number**

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

**Applicant Information**

Organization  CDN  Campus  ESC  DUNS

Address  City  ZIP  Vendor ID

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

**Certification and Incorporation**

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the LOI application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the LOI application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- LOI application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name  Title

Email  Phone

Signature  Date

**Shared Services Arrangements** Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are NOT PERMITTED for this grant.**Statutory/Program Assurances**

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- 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 LOI 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 provides assurance 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 provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2022-2023 Teacher Leadership Cycle 3 (Policy Fellowship) Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2022-2023 Teacher Leadership Cycle 3 (Policy Fellowship) Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 5. The applicant provides assurance 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 agrees to all applicable program-specific assurances as described in the 2022-2023 Teacher Leadership Cycle 3 (Policy Fellowship) Program Guidelines.

## Summary of Program

In detail, respond to each prompt below: (1) Describe the Teacher Policy Fellowship that will be implemented with grant funds. What is the LEA's theory of action related to this program? Why is teacher voice important? (2) How is this grant program aligned to the mission, vision, and goals of your LEA? (3) Describe the specific LEA needs this grant will help address and how the fellowship will help address these needs.

We believe that if we commit to ensuring teachers are empowered to engage with stakeholders and policymakers at the school, local, and state levels then their voices will lead to meaningful change for our students and keep great teachers in the classrooms. This program provides a unique opportunity for our teachers to learn how to utilize their voices towards positive district practices outcomes that will benefit our community and schools. Given the need for teacher leadership within our community we are pursuing the opportunity to work with an external provider, and TEA, to enable the growth of our teacher leaders. To that end, we are seeking a program that will allow us to create Teacher District Practices Fellowships (TDPFs). We will create a job description for clear roles and responsibilities for TDPFs and provide TDPFs with 8 skill building trainings on how to engage and support teacher stakeholders, provide a scope and sequence for the trainings and meetings, support TDPFs in conducting focus groups, and support TDPFs in presenting recommendations to our senior LEA leadership. This program will enable us to foster not only leadership from our teachers, but it will enable them to better serve our students and community as a whole. By empowering effective teachers to engage in the formation, creation, and implementation of policy and practices, we are ensuring that our most salient voices are not left out of the conversation. This grant will enable our teachers to engage in these conversations, advocate to stakeholders, build consensus, and ultimately ensure that we are enacting the best possible initiatives and policies for our district. The mission of RHISD is to educate students by creating an environment of high expectations, innovation, and strong partnerships. Our vision is academic excellence and success. We feel that through Teacher District Practices Fellowships we are able to focus on practices that will create high expectations of teachers and classroom implementations that will therefore impact student academic success. Investing in our teachers through this Teacher District Practices Fellowship Program will empower our district to demonstrate our continued commitment to their professional growth. We believe the best teachers are those that are most fully engage inside and outside of the classroom. This program grants us the unique opportunity to provide leadership opportunities that otherwise may have pulled a great teacher away from the profession. Theory Of Action: We will start by setting clear expectations with intentional vision and goal setting. We will then prioritize and increase instructional excellence and coherence of the instructional core: standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and evaluation and feedback through expanding district practices. Then we will grow Teacher District Practices Fellows capacity by creating and engaging in ongoing collaborative learning to improve recommendations for areas with the Teacher Incentive Allotment such as student growth measures and teacher observation practices. Finally, we will develop and sustain structures and systems to accomplish TDPF goals. All of this will be supported by building capacity through training, coaching, and thought partnership with our external provider.

## Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for the LEA staff and the approved partners projected to be involved in the implementation of this grant. Be sure to include at least the following individuals: the LEA's grant manager, the LEA leaders that will meet at least quarterly with the teacher fellows, teacher fellows, the approved partner (LEA partner), and any other personnel responsible for implementing the grant.

Lisa Leal, Human Resource Administrator, will serve as our grant manager. She also serves as coordinator of TIA and will be meeting with the teacher district practice fellows quarterly. Mrs. Leal's 11 years of experience at Rio Hondo ISD has provided her the opportunity to know the community and develop strong relationships with teaching staff. She has served as teacher at the high school, dean of instruction at the elementary, assistant principal at the middle school, and principal at the intermediate campus. Our Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Campus Principals will be involved in our quarterly meetings to every extent possible. Our external provider has extensive experience working with schools, districts, regional service organizations, and states across the country. Since their inception, they have partnered with more than 275,000 educators across 8,500 schools in 20 states, including more than 75 educator preparation programs. Their efforts have been both top-down and bottom-up, often working with individual schools or with state departments of education to assist in developing systems, training and resources to best support educators in their state. Our external provider's partnership with Texas dates back to 2000 when Texas began implementation of the external partners signature teacher leader initiative, in a number of schools. This implementation expanded over the next decade across Texas and the nation, and our external provider partnered with multiple Texas districts to implement using federal Teacher Incentive Fund (now Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program) funding. The experience and lessons learned implementing human capital management systems and teacher and school administrator leadership models will enable our external provider to support our district by asking the right questions and being a strong thought partner considering policy and impact on Texas teachers. Our external provider has collaborated on specific practices such as communication plans, transparent qualifications, and support for teachers' eligibility for leadership side-by-side with Texas districts



## Goals and Strategies

Describe your LEA's major goals for this grant, aligned to the purpose and goals of the grant program as described in the Program Guidelines (see the Purpose of Program and Performance and Evaluation Measures sections). Describe what activities and strategies will be implemented to meet those goals. List the name and role of the individual ultimately accountable for achieving these goals.

In service of our continued commitment to empowering our teachers to use their voices towards improving of our district, we are seeking a program that will prepare our Teacher District Practices Fellows (TDPFs) to make recommendations for our district-wide (TIA or other initiative) plan. To do this, we want to partner with a program that will leverage their innate leadership abilities, grow their capacity to (1) strengthen leadership pipelines, (2) improve teacher retention, (3) improve student outcomes, (4) and increase opportunities for teachers to meaningfully influence policy and program design and implementation at the local level.

Improve Teacher Retention and Student Outcomes Activities/Strategies:

1. Foundational Leadership - Development and leveraging of their strengths in leadership
  2. Collaborative Partnerships: Facilitating Growth in Others - Build relationships within school that impact instruction and enhance student learning
  3. Data-Driven - Utilizing data and reflection to consider potential growth measures aligned to district needs
  4. Instructional Expertise - Capitalizing on experience and review of potential teacher pipeline and retention plans
  5. Professional Advocate - Reflecting on experience to determine an advocacy plan of action for the TIA plan
  6. Engaging Stakeholders - Conduct meetings, surveys, and a focus group of stakeholders to gain feedback and buy in
  7. Change Management and Communication - Examine and determine what district level communication looks like
  8. Informing District Leadership - Develop and present a recommendation for LEA leadership
- Lisa Leal, human resources administrator will be responsible for achieving grant goals.

## Progress Monitoring and Evaluation Measures

Describe how and when your LEA will monitor progress towards the goals you described in the previous section. Describe how and when will your LEA identify, collect, and analyze performance data related to the metrics you described. Name specific sources of data, processes, and tools your LEA will use.

Our process will recruit teacher fellows that reflect the diversity of our district so that meaningful impact is made through the recommendations of TDPFs. Our TDPFs will keep recorded activity logs and fill out feedback forms after every training that documents their work as a teacher fellow by collecting reflections on the following: What do you need from your district/campus to continue to grow as a teacher fellow? What support/learning do you need from our external provider to ensure effective participation as a teacher fellow? TDPFs will be asked to reflect on any topics/conversations they feel would be effective for the next collaborative session and rank on a scale from 1 to 5 how prepared they feel to conduct diverse stakeholder feedback activities. All reflections will be kept in a Google Folder and be reviewed by our external provider and District Leadership. We will track the number of teacher fellow applicants and those selected to participate in the grant by the number of teacher fellows per race/ethnicity as reported in PEIMS. Evidence of teacher fellow growth over the course of the year will be monitored using the Teacher Fellows rubric provided by TEA. TDPF growth will be measured using the Teacher Fellows Rubric provided according to inputs, outputs and impact indicators through self-reflection and quarterly progress check ins with District Leadership. Appraisal data for TDPFs will be reviewed and post conference appraisal conversations will include feedback on TDPF progress. We will analyze survey data provided by TEA and administered to teacher fellows three times per year and will create a next steps action plan to assure progress. Self-assessment of progress will also take place using sections of the Implementation Guide identified by TEA up to four times between the start and end dates of the grant. Strong relationships that will be developed through our TDPF process will improve teacher retention. We will monitor and submit the percentage of teacher fellows that return to our district in teacher, instructional coaching, principal, or assistant principal positions in the year following the fellowship and submit the teacher identification numbers of its fellows to allow TEA to track their long-term retention. TDPFs will analyze data and trends from initiatives and policies and share the results with stakeholders. These presentations and other deliverables will be kept in the Google folder for sharing as applicable. We will submit high-quality evidence of impact by teacher fellows aligned to the rubric provided by TEA and monitor and submit a high-quality scope and sequence for the eight teacher fellow trainings, including dates, objectives, a brief description, and measures of success for each session. A culminating presentation for our Board of Trustees and learning community will celebrate the progress made throughout the TDPF process.

**Budget Narrative**

Once you have completed your Budget Workbook (Application Part 2), answer the following questions: (1) How many teacher fellows will you hire and how much compensation will you provide each? (2) What are the anticipated costs for partnering with your approved partner? What services will they provide? (3) How will your LEA sustain this Teacher Policy Fellowship after the grant funding ends?

Rio Hondo ISD anticipates hiring four Teacher District Practices Fellows who will individually receive a stipend of \$1500.00 for their extra efforts and participation. Our external partner supports would include 9 days of direct training aligned to the proposed outcomes for policy fellows as well as the necessary on-going management and support systems necessary to ensure District Teacher Practices Fellows receive the support they will need throughout the school year for an approximate cost of \$23,000.00 plus applicable travel. Our district is committed to sustaining the TDPF process as part of our culture and will embed this system and its structures to promote teacher voice in authentic ways as we continue to improve and progress with subsequent improvement initiatives and policy actions. We are committed to continue to connect teachers and create opportunities for authentic input that will inform district policy and initiative choices that positively influence decision making for the long term. We would like to sustain this fellowship after the grant funding ends, however, if funds are not available after the grant; it is hoped the experiences and practices that have been established will continue to positively impact student growth and teacher retention.

We will use \$1000.00 of grant money for supplies and materials to purchase chrome books for teacher fellows to utilize throughout the program implementation.

**Program Requirements**

**1. Teacher Fellow Recruitment:** Describe your plan for implementing a targeted recruitment process for teacher fellows. Describe the steps you will take to ensure the fellowship applicant pool is diverse (i.e., mirrors the student population and represents, to the extent possible, the varied teaching assignments within your LEA). Describe any goals you have related to the number of teachers that apply and are selected for the fellowship.

To recruit the best possible candidates, we will collaborate with our school leaders to develop an initial list of potential TDPFs that possess both interpersonal skills and leadership potential. We will then, in consultation with the school leader, analyze student and classroom level data to determine how well the candidate has met our expectations for improving student outcomes. Throughout the process, we will make use of objective rubrics and systems to ensure that no internal biases inhibit our selection process. We will assure that the candidates reflect our diverse student population and that TDPF candidates represent a variety of grade level and content area expertise. As TDPF candidates participate in our selection process, our district will hold an introductory meeting for those who are interested and vetted by campus leadership. We will develop a clearly defined letter that articulates expectations of the role for the identified candidates and ask that interested, vetted candidates complete a survey that will serve as our application. A research-based rubric will assess their fit to ensure that our selection is objectively the most qualified to represent our district. The application will also require a cover letter and resume to determine interest and experience with our desired initiative focus. Finally, we will hold individual interviews with questions based on the TEA Teacher Fellows rubric to complete the process. A selection committee composed of members representative of the district will synthesize the process and determine the final fellows. As suggested in the Teacher Leadership Grant Cycle 3 guidance, our district will select 4 teachers. The TDPF team will represent our teaching and student population and will be present to include and collect stakeholder feedback across our district.

**2. Teacher Fellow Selection & Onboarding:** Describe in detail the following: (a) How will you ensure fellows understand the benefits, rigors, and time demands of participating in the fellowship? (b) What are the criteria and evidence you will use when selecting teacher fellows? (c) Describe your selection process. Include a sequence of activities, approximate dates, and individuals involved in the selection process. (d) How and when will you onboard teacher fellows so they are set up for success in their role?

a) Because we will leverage multiple touch points throughout the recruitment process through a variety of stakeholders, we will be able to ensure that all potential fellows are well aware of the benefits, rigors, and time demands of participating in the fellowship. We will ensure that all of our recruitment activities are prepared with the requisite information to discuss these items and ensure that all candidates are fully aware of their commitments.

b) By 5/6/22 - Job description created

By 5/31/22 - Initial school leader lists due and introductory meeting is held for candidates.

By 6/17/22 - All school leader nominees contacted by mail and personally; application is live By 7/15/22 - Fellowship applications are due

By 8/5/22 - Teacher data analyzed and Fellows selected for interviews selected By 8/12/22 - Interviews completed By

8/19/22 - Selection committee determine final list of fellows By 8/23/22 - Fellows informed about selection

By 8/26/22 - Deadline for fellows to accept position By 9/2/22 - Fellows onboarded By 9/30/22 - LEA leader orientation

During the selection process we will prioritize ensuring that our selected District Teacher Practices Fellows represent the student population of our district.

c) Onboarding of fellows would take place prior to 9/2/22. This orientation would be designed to prepare the fellows both for the work and the mindset they will need to be successful. We will provide them with a clear timeline of activities as well as what they can expect throughout the process.



**Program Requirements (Cont.)**

**3. Teacher Fellow Role:** (a) What is/are the anticipated area(s) of focus for the teacher fellows? What pressing LEA issues or needs will the fellows provide input on? Reference the *Fellowship Areas of Focus* document. (b) Who are the possible LEA leaders fellows will meet with on a quarterly basis? Include their names, positions, and expertise related to the fellows' anticipated area(s) of focus. (c) What will be the main responsibilities of your teacher fellows? Reference grant requirements, though make sure your answer is unique to your LEA context.

Our district will focus on the development and leveraging of TDPF's strengths in leadership through the lens of Teacher Incentive Allotment focus areas which are student growth measures and teacher observations. We will use an approved provider to train and facilitate TDPF capacity to: Facilitate growth in others by building relationships within the school that impact instruction and enhance student learning, use data to reflect and consider potential growth measures aligned to district needs in implementing solid lessons for positive teacher observation practices and practices that positively impact student growth, capitalize on experience and review of potential teacher pipeline and retention plans, reflect on experience to determine an advocacy plan of action for the TIA, conduct meetings, surveys, and a focus group of stakeholders to gain feedback and buy in, examine and determine what district level communication looks like and develop and present a recommendation for LEA leadership.

In Rio Hondo ISD, we are at the beginning stages of developing our TIA plan; the feedback we are already receiving shows us that we need to gather teacher voice in this practice. Having TDPS in place, will be crucial in collecting transparent and clear teacher input.

Our superintendent, assistant superintendent and principals will be involved in implementing the TIA. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and district principals are very supportive of this initiative and are excited to identify appropriate student growth measures to accurately evaluate student growth. They have been engaging in calibrations and are enthusiastic to ensure we are calibrated not only as a campus, but as a district.

**4. Teacher Leader Training & Support:** (a) What will be the content, frequency, and duration (total hours), of your teacher leader training over the course of school year (may include summers)? (b) How will you measure success of the training sessions? (c) Describe any support teacher fellows will receive outside trainings (e.g., feedback and coaching, logistical support for focus groups).

Our external provider will focus bi-monthly 8-hour trainings on: Foundational Leadership, Collaborative Partnerships, Data-Driven Action, Instructional Expertise, Professional Advocate, Engaging Stakeholders, Change Management and Communication, and Informing District Leadership. These sessions in which TDPFs would learn the requisite skills to complete aligned work products and conduct focus groups will be focused on the area of focus (District Selected). Our external provider will provide guidance so that during scheduled bi-monthly 8-hour sessions without the provider present, TDPFs are empowered to create deliverables that inform our district initiative of focus. Our external provider will conduct ongoing support and coaching as needed with both LEA leaders and TDPFs. Trainings are designed with both instructive and workshop times embedded so that collaboration with the provider will inform next steps for coaching between structured sessions. Further, fellows will keep an activity log of conversations regarding leadership and (District Initiative) throughout the year. Stakeholder focus groups with a teacher survey follow up with questions and space to ask questions designed by the TDPFs will be conducted with assistance of the district to collect responses. TDPFs will create a presentation on findings and present to campuses and to the district advisory committee and school board. Each training, and related work product, will serve as its own measure of success in both completion and quality. We will provide TDPFs with a clear set of expectations, timelines, and deliverables from the beginning of the program to ensure that their work as a classroom instructor is enhanced. TDPFs will be able to backwards plan their school year to ensure that they can fully commit the time necessary to be successful in the TDPF program and in the classroom. TDPFs will be provided release time once per month to fulfill their role and our external provider will provide clear and consistent training that allows for the TDPFs to successfully build the skills necessary to create and present their final report. While onboarding TDPFs our external provider will align meeting schedules, duration, and expectations to ensure that all participants are able to be as productive and take as much away as possible.

**Program Requirements (Cont.)****5. Sustainability Plan: Describe your LEA's plan for sustaining the Teacher Policy Fellowship after grant funding ends.**

Rio Hondo ISD will make every effort to continue the TDPF program even after grant funds are used. We will leverage other funding including the 10% district level TIA funds for TDPF stipends. Including teacher voice in our district will continue to be practiced as a part of our district culture. We believe that the additional capacity built by the Teacher District Practices Fellows will in and of itself help to sustain this program. This additional capacity will be built both in the TDPF themselves and in our district decision making and communication systems. By empowering teachers to become both classroom and community leaders, we are preparing them to lead ever increasing teacher ownership in the years to come. TDPFs will be advocates and leaders across numerous avenues in the years after this fellowship as our district utilizes their expertise for stakeholder engagement. Our fellows will possess an understanding of how their voices and the voices of fellow teachers can impact district policy that leads to student success.

Our district is committed to sustaining the Teacher Fellow process as part of our culture and will embed this system and its structures to promote teacher voice in authentic ways as we continue to improve and progress with subsequent improvement initiatives and policy actions. We are committed to continue to connect teachers and create opportunities for authentic input that will inform district policy and initiative choices that positively influence decision making for the long term. We are excited to implement TDPF's to support our district teachers in implementing appropriate teacher observation practices and student growth practices as we implement the Teacher Incentive Allotment this upcoming school year.



**Equitable Access and Participation**

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this program.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this program.
- Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>

**PNP Equitable Services**

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

- Yes  No

*If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.*

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the program?

- Yes  No

*If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.*

**5A: Assurances**

- The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

**5B: Equitable Services Calculation**

1. LEA's student enrollment	<input type="text"/>
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	<input type="text"/>
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	<input type="text"/>
4. Total current-year program allocation	<input type="text"/>
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the program's defined limit	<input type="text"/>
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	<input type="text"/>
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	<input type="text"/>
<b>LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)</b>	<input type="text"/>

**Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose** (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the [Administering a Grant](#) page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

*You may duplicate this page*

**Amended Section**

**Reason for Amendment**