



2023–2025 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter C and D)
COMPETITIVE GRANT Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, January 13, 2023

NOGA ID

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA will only accept grant application documents by email, including competitive grant applications and amendments. Submit grant applications and amendments as follows:

Competitive grant applications and amendments to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov

Authorizing legislation:

Grant period: **Pre-award costs:**

Required attachments:

Amendment Number

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

1. Applicant Information

Name of organization

Campus name CDN Vendor ID ESC UEI

Address City ZIP Phone

Primary Contact Email Phone

Secondary Contact Email Phone

2. 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 grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- Grant application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification
- Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances
- ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name Title Email

Phone Signature Date

Grant Writer Name Signature Date

Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization. Grant writer is **not** an employee of the applicant organization.

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- ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

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3. Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) **are/are not** permitted for this grant.

Check the box below if applying as fiscal agent.

- The LEA or ESC submitting this application is the fiscal agent of a planned SSA. All participating agencies will enter into a written SSA agreement describing the fiscal agent and SSA member responsibilities. All participants understand that the "Shared Services Arrangement Attachment" must be completed and signed by all SSA members, and submitted to TEA before the 80% reserve on the NOGA is lifted.

4. Identify/Address Needs

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
To replicate a high-quality K-8th grade charter school in our geographic area that will allow more educationally disadvantaged students to improve their academic outcomes in English language arts.	Successfully apply to TEA for a new charter campus, replicate another high quality K-8th grade school to help more educationally disadvantaged students in our geographic area in English language arts, and successfully apply for grant funding to provide financial assistance for planning, program design and initial implementation for the charter school to be replicated.
To replicate a high-quality K-8th grade charter school in our geographic area that will allow more educationally disadvantaged students to improve their academic outcomes in mathematics.	Successfully apply to TEA for a new charter campus, replicate another high quality K-8th grade school to help more educationally disadvantaged students in our geographic area in mathematics, and successfully apply for grant funding to provide financial assistance for planning, program design and implementation.

5. SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

In Spring 2025, students who are assessed on State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) will achieve 15% masters, 45% meets and 75% approaches on reading/ELA and Math tests.

6. Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

STAAR interim #1 on-line test
 Reading - early November
 Math - early November

(STAAR Interim Assessments are provided now through TEA to school districts at no cost. They are on-line assessments that align to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and that help educators monitor student progress and predict student performance on STAAR. Interim tests are shorter in length vs. actual Staar tests and are adaptive in nature.)

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8. Measurable Progress (Cont.)

Second-Quarter Benchmark

STAAR interim #2 on-line test
 Reading - late January
 Math - early February

(STAAR Interim Assessments are provided through TEA to school districts at no cost. They are on-line assessments that align to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and that help educators monitor student progress and predict student performance on STAAR. Interim tests are shorter in length vs. actual STAAR tests and are adaptive in nature.)

Third-Quarter Benchmark

Full length Mock STAAR Test online-
 Reading- Late March
 Math- Late March

Since TEA only offers 2 Interim Testing opportunities for Reading and Math, district specialists will create full length Mock STAAR tests through the TFAR (Texas Formative Assessment Resource). This will enable students to take Mock tests on-line, through the same platform they use for the Interim and real STAAR Tests.

7. Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

After each quarter benchmark, the district reading and the district math coach will meet with the campus principal to thoroughly review the project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify the program. Data will be reviewed for patterns or trends and include comparison analysis of grade levels and subjects of the other two district campus benchmarks. If the benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, the district coaches and campus principal will use the evaluation data to help pinpoint the specific areas not showing progress, (specific classroom, grade level etc . .) and then do a deeper dive into this area to determine the root cause or barrier to progress. (Instruction without rigor, less on-task instruction, sub-standard testing environment, curriculum, materials and equipment etc. . .) Once the root cause is determined, the correct adjustments will be made followed by more targeted coaching from the teacher coaches and campus principal.

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8. Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee 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 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 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 Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023–2025 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter C and D) Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance that they accept and will comply with [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#) requirements.
- 5. 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.
- 6. The applicant provides assurance that their financial accounting system adheres to the following requirements:
 - a. accommodates the minimum 15-digit account code mandated by the FASRG;
 - b. generates information needed for PEIMS reporting; and
 - c. ensures adequate accountability of state and federal funds.

If the applicant’s financial accounting system is not approved by TEA, the applicant assures that it will budget and acquire an acceptable accounting system and training with these grant funds. Additionally, the applicant will be required to submit proof of an acceptable accounting system prior to receiving continued and/or additional funding.
- 7. The applicant provides assurance that it will maintain clear documentation and data for the school and students served by this grant program, will comply with any reporting and evaluation requirements that may be established by the TEA, and will submit the reports in the format and manner requested by TEA’s Division of Financial Compliance. Grantees will be required to cooperate with the team that has been contracted to evaluate the use of the grant funds.
- 8. The applicant provides assurance that it has on file a certificate of occupancy or the equivalent, for the instructional facility. At any time, should the TEA Charter School Administration Division request a copy, the applicant will provide such copy immediately.
- 9. According to Title IV, Part C of ESSA, to receive federal grant funds of any type, including U. S. Department of Education funds, the charter school must meet the following definition. By signing Attachment #1 and submitting the application, the authorized official of the public charter school certifies that each of the statements in the definition is true and that the school is in compliance with this definition. A charter school is not eligible to receive any federal funds at any time, formula or discretionary, from TEA if it does not comply with this definition.

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8. Statutory/Program Assurances (Cont.)

10. Open-enrollment charter holders applying on behalf of a high-quality campus approved by the commissioner of education must comply with the following: The applicant provides assurance that the existing charter, as approved by the applicable state authorizer (the State Board of Education or the commissioner of education), and the Application for High-Quality Campus Designation, under which the new charter school campus was approved by the commissioner of education, are incorporated by reference into this grant application and address statutory requirements in compliance with PL 114-95, Title IV, Part C, ESSA.

11. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C: The applicant provides assurance that the campus charter school will:
a. Maintain documentation which clearly demonstrates the supplementary nature of these funds;
b. be established according to and in compliance with TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, Sections 12.051-12.065;
c. be designated as a campus charter in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) organizational database, AskTED, prior to operating as a campus charter, and
d. be permitted to govern autonomously, as evidenced by the day-to-day decision makers at the campus charter school and their input with regard to the school's curriculum, calendar, budget, and daily operations. This autonomy will be above and beyond the degree of flexibility and autonomy afforded to traditional campuses within the district.

12. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C, must also comply with the following: As per Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, Section 5204(f)(4)(B), a LEA may not deduct funds for administrative fees or expenses from a subgrant awarded to an eligible applicant, unless the eligible applicant enters voluntarily into a mutually agreed upon arrangement for administrative services with the relevant LEA. Absent such approval, the LEA shall distribute all subgrant funds to the eligible applicant without delay.

13. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C, for the purpose of replicating an existing high-quality charter school, must also comply with the following: The applicant provides assurance that the school district will:
a. participate in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy (TALA) program;
b. review and adopt the Texas Education Agency's model Chapter 12, Subchapter C authorizer policies and charter application (Model District Authorizing Policy and Model Local Campus Partner Application can be found at https://txpartnerships.org/tools/);
c. annually publish its authorizer policies;
d. submit its updated authorizer policies and charter application to TEA, along with the exact web address where this information is posted on the district's website, by October 1, 2023;
e. work with a high-quality charter management organization (CMO) or create an innovation management organization (IMO) that will have its own independent board, separate and apart from the school district's board of trustees, to oversee management of the originating campus and its replication; and
f. work with a high-quality charter management organization (CMO) or create an innovation management organization (IMO) that will have an Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer (CMO) who is responsible for management of the originating campus and its replication.

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9. Statutory Requirements

1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the eligible applicant, any partner organizations, and charter management organizations, as applicable, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners.

There are no roles and responsibilities of any partner organization or charter school management organization, including administrative or contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. The STEP Charter School district has sole responsibility for the eligible charter campus applicant and will oversee the development and campus opening.

2. Describe the quality controls agreed to between the eligible applicant and the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA), such as a contract or performance agreement, how a school's performance in the state's accountability system and impact on student achievement (which may include student academic growth) will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA) will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school.

As a longtime Texas charter school open enrollment operator, STEP Charter School is well aware of the quality controls that exist between the district, its campuses and the state's accountability system and impact on student achievement. The state accountability system and the impact on student achievement (which may include student academic growth) will be one of the important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's district or a particular campus charter. TEA will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a district charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of a school as part of the charter contract. Furthermore, TEA make revoke a particular charter campus based on multiple years (3 currently) of insufficient academic standing from the state accountability system.

3. Describe how the autonomy and flexibility granted to the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus is consistent with the definition of a charter school in Section 4310, including how the proposed charter school campus will have a high degree of autonomy over budget and operations and personnel decisions. Include a detailed description of the ways in which the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus will be permitted to govern autonomously, as evidenced by the day-to-day decision makers at the campus and their input with regard to the school's curriculum, calendar, budget, and daily operations. For a charter school campus authorized by the local board of trustees pursuant to TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, describe how this autonomy is above and beyond the degree of flexibility and autonomy afforded to traditional campuses within the school district.

All STEP Charter campuses have a high degree of autonomy over budget and operations and personnel decisions. Each campus has their own personal discretionary budgets from the district that are fair and proportional to the number of students enrolled. The new campus will have autonomy over the resources they choose that follow the district curriculum and the learning resources and materials they purchase for their campus. The daily operations may also differ from other campuses, but the district school calendar will remain the same. The new campus will also recruit and hire their own personnel separate from the other district campuses, although some district recruiting and hiring resources may overlap for the benefit of the particular campus.

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9. Statutory Requirements (Cont.)

4. Describe how the eligible applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of the proposed charter school campus.

STEP Charter will solicit and consider input from parents and members of the community upon implementation by hosting campus open house events which include an information about the school and feature direct input from parents and community members through questions and answer sessions (in English and Spanish) listening to their needs and how STEP Charter can help serve them. These open houses will be advertised locally through print, social media and signage out front as an invitation to potential parents and members of the community. STEP Charter will solicit and consider input from members of the community on the operation of the proposed charter school by inviting parents and community members to attend yearly campus Comprehensive Needs Assessment meetings as federally required to seek their input in the development of the Campus Improvement Plan. The first of these will take place the summer before school begins operations. STEP Charter will also continue to seek partnerships with the local community members in the new campus and as required under Title III provisions currently in place. STEP Charter will solicit and consider input from parents on the implementation and operation of the school by advertising to local community families through reaching out to apartment complexes, community gatherings and local businesses.

5. Describe the eligible applicant’s planned activities and expenditures of grant funds to open and prepare for the operation of the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus, and how the eligible applicant will maintain financial sustainability after the end of the grant period.

STEP Charter is well aware that this grant funding is limited to the planning phase of the new campus and only up to the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase, which starts the day the charter school campus begins to serve students. No ongoing operational expenses for a campus are permitted with this funding. Open date: Aug 2024 Payroll: Maintenance, Janitorial and Technology \$30,000, June-August 2024 Teaching assistants and front office staff \$35,000 June-August 2024 Campus Principal \$75,000 January - August 2024. Professional and Contracted Services: April 1st 2023-August 2024 \$140,000 Minor Structural, AC-Heating, Plumbing, Electrical - \$250,000 Leasing Costs \$50,000 Security Fencing and Alarm System - \$100,000 Playground Equipment. Supplies and Materials – April 1st 2023- August 2024 \$150,000 Classroom Furniture and Equipment, \$30,000 Office Equipment, \$40,000 Student Computers STEP Charter will maintain financial sustainability through a combination of state funding with ADA from newly enrolled campus students (beginning Sept 2024), Federal Title I,II,III,IV and IDEA B funding generated through new campus enrollment and using current existing district enrollment revenue or the district's current fund balance in the beginning.

6. Describe how the eligible applicant will support the use of effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate the proposed charter school campus.

STEP Charter School will support the use of effective parent, family and community engagement to operate the proposed charter school campus by developing and implementing a: 1) A Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Campus Improvement plan involving parents and community members. 2) Title I Part A School Program Plan to be reviewed with timely and meaningful consultation among teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, other appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members. 3) School–Parent compact - a written agreement jointly developed that outlines how families, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and families will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. 4) Parent and Family Engagement Policy that is jointly developed with parents and family members, provides parents with technical assistance and is evaluated yearly with the input of parents in languages they can understand and identifies any barriers to school participation by parents.

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9. Statutory Requirements (Cont.)

7. Describe the eligible applicant’s plan for meeting the transportation needs of the students at the proposed charter school campus.

As with our other two other existing campuses, STEP Charter School does not offer any transportation services to and from school. We do offer extended hours of operation however, with additional before school hours from 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and after school from 3:20 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. so that working families can drop off and pick-up their children at more flexible hours. STEP Charter campuses are urban neighborhood schools located in population dense areas of Houston. The vast majority of our students come from short distances and many walk to our schools.

8. Describe and justify any requests for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the eligible applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school, and a description of any state or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes to be waived or otherwise not apply to the school.

STEP Charter is requesting no waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions.

9. Statutory Requirements, Subchapter C Applicants ONLY

In addition to the eight requirements listed above, campus charters established under TEC, Subchapter C, Campus Charter Schools, must also address each of the following requirements (numbers 9-13):

9. Describe the educational program* at the proposed charter school campus, including: a. how the program will enable all students to meet challenging state student academic achievement standards; b. the grade levels or ages of children to be served; and c. the curriculum and instructional practices to be used. *If the district has partnered with an entity to replicate a high-quality charter school model, the description of the educational program should include the name of the high-quality charter school that is being replicated, along with additional pertinent information to demonstrate that the charter school meets the definition of a high-quality charter school.

N/A

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9. Statutory Requirements Subchapter C Applicants ONLY (Cont.)

10. Describe how the district authorizer will monitor the proposed charter school campus in recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and meeting the needs of all students, including children with disabilities and English learners.

N/A

11. Describe the manner in which an annual independent financial audit of the campus is to be conducted. The campus charter must have a plan for an audit that is separate and apart from the district's annual financial audit.

N/A

12. Describe the manner in which the campus will provide information necessary for the school district in which it is located to participate, as required by TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, or by SBOE rule, in public education information systems (PEIMS).

N/A

13. Describe the manner in which the district will flow other federal and state funds to the proposed charter school campus. Describe the timelines for flowing the federal and state funds to the campus that will ensure students are promptly receiving the benefit of services that appropriate federal and state funds can provide.

N/A

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TEA Program Requirements

1. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2023–2024.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Replicating District-Authorized															

Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.

Total Staff **Total Parents** **Total Families** **Total Campuses**

2. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2024–2025.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Replicating State-Authorized		30	30	30	30	30	30								180

Total Staff **Total Parents** **Total Families** **Total Campuses**

3. Provide the number of students to be served in 2023 -2024 who would otherwise attend an F-rated campus (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serves the same grade levels as the proposed charter school. Please click on the [All Campuses by Rating](#) for more information.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
<input type="text"/>															

Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.

Total Staff **Total Parents** **Total Families** **Total Campuses**

4. Provide the names and nine-digit county/district/campus numbers of the F-rated campuses (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serve the same grade levels as the proposed charter school that you will be impacting as described above. Please click on the [All Campuses by Rating](#) link for more information.

#	District Name	Campus Name	9 Digit CDC Number
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.

5. Qualified Opportunity Zone: Provide the census tract number if the proposed campus will be located in a [Qualified Opportunity Zone](#). The school will be located within a mile of this area and will actively recruit students from this section

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10. 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 grant.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- 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"/>

11. PNP Equitable Services

PNP Equitable Services **does not apply** to this grant.

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12. Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

Payroll Costs

1.	Main, Janitorial, Tech	\$30,000
2.	Teaching Assistants, Front Office Staff	\$35,000
3.	Principal (January - Sept)	\$75,000
4.		
Payroll Subtotal:		\$140,000

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Contractors - Minor Structural, AC-heating, Plumbing,Electrical	\$140,000
7.	Rent	\$250,000
8.	Security - Fencing, Alarm System	\$50,000
9.	Playground Equipment	\$100,000
Professional and Contracted Services Subtotal:		\$540,000

Supplies and Materials

11.	Classroom Furniture and Equipment	\$150,000
12.	Office Equipment	\$30,000
13.	Student Computers	\$40,000
Supplies and Materials Subtotal:		\$220,000

Other Operating Costs

15.		0
16.		0
Other Operating Costs Subtotal:		0

Capital Outlay

18.		0
19.		0
Capital Outlay Subtotal:		0

Direct and indirect administrative costs:

TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:

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Appendix I: Negotiation and Amendments

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 of the TEA website and may be emailed to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov. Include all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed copy of page 1 of the application. More detailed amendment instructions can be found on the last page of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page.

For amendments, choose the section you wish to amend from the drop down menu on the left. In the text box on the right, describe the changes you are making and the reason for them.

Always work with the most recent negotiated or amended application. If you are requesting a revised budget, please include the budget attachments with your amendment.

Section Being Negotiated or Amended	Negotiated Change or Amendment
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	

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