



2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 13, 2022

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 40, 87th Texas Legislature**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **competitivegrants@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, October 13, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **February 9, 2023 to April 30, 2025**

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. Attachment 1: Pathway Selection and Participation

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 permitted for this grant. Check the box below if applying as a 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 upon request.

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 2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

PATHWAY 1:

- 5. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for Education & Training teachers that receive a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. These participating teachers must commit with the MOU to, at minimum, teach the Education and Training courses and, if applicable, establish and/or grow a chapter of a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 6. The MOUs for Education and Training teachers must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 7. If implementing dual credit Education and Training courses, the LEA must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for the partnering IHE by May 31, 2023. This MOU should include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 8. The LEA will retain documentation locally of each letter of commitment or MOU and submit to TEA upon request.
- 9. The LEA assures that each high school campus within the participating LEA will implement at least the Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both courses or either course. *Please see example on page 9 of the Program Guidelines.
- 10. To receive a stipend for teaching dual credit, the LEA assures the Education and Training teacher holds a master's degree in an education-related field and be the teacher of record for at least one dual credit course section in 2023-2024 and two dual credit course sections in 2024-2025 within the Education and Training course sequence.
- 11. All LEA high schools must establish and/or grow a chapter of a CTSO that supports the Education and Training career cluster through either the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) or Family, Career and Community Leads of America (FCCLA) and participate in at least one competitive event per year.
- 12. The LEA assures that all LEA high schools will participate in an initial TEA-led Teacher Institute in Summer 2023. Education and Training teacher stipend recipients are required to attend the entirety of the Institute. Principals, counselors, and LEA grant managers are only required to attend the first day. Participants who attended any previous Grow Your Own Summer Institute must still attend. IHE/EPP partners and student ambassador attendance is optional but recommended.
- 13. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will pilot the TEA Education and Training curriculum if they are not currently using a high-quality Education and Training curriculum.
- 14. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will receive TEA implementation supports and coaching by participating in online collaborative communities to be scheduled by TEA, not to exceed 6 hours per semester.
- 15. The LEA assures that Education and Training teacher stipend recipients will participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the Education and Training programming.

Statutory/Program Assurances Cont'd

- 16. LEA grant managers shall support Practicum in Education and Training implementation, including but not limited to student scheduling, identifying field sites and field site teachers, and coordinating student transportation to field sites.
- 17. LEAs shall develop a marketing and recruitment plan to grow enrollment in high school Education and Training courses. Upon request by TEA, all LEA high schools will submit their plan for marketing and student recruitment.
- 18. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA. If requested, LEAs must participate in focus groups and surveys to give input on the Education and Training programming.
- 19. All grant-funded teachers must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

PATHWAY 2:

- 20. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for each candidate that receives a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. All candidate stipend recipients must commit with a MOU, at minimum, to remain at the LEA for an agreed upon length of time in a full-time teaching role as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 21. The MOUs for candidates must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 22. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from each accredited EPP (see Eligible Applicants section of the Program Guidelines) that will partner with the LEA to award teacher certifications to all candidates (those earning a bachelor's degree and teacher certification and certification-only candidates) by May 31, 2023.
- 23. The MOUs for EPPs must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 24. The LEA will retain all MOU documentation locally and submit to TEA upon request.
- 25. LEAs must allow reasonable paid release time and schedule flexibility, as determined by the LEA, for candidates to complete their degree and certification course requirements while engaged in the grant program.
- 26. All certification-only candidates within a LEA will be certified by the same partner EPP as a cohort managed collaboratively by the LEA and EPP.
- 27. The LEA assures that candidate stipend recipients participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the grant programming.
- 28. If positions are available that can be appropriately filled in alignment with candidates' certification area(s), LEAs must commit to hiring/retaining candidates upon successful completion of their teacher certification to serve as a teacher of record in the LEA by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.
- 29. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA.
- 30. The names of all grant-funded teachers and/or candidates must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

ALL PATHWAYS:

- 31. If a teacher or candidate is unable to continue with the grant program, the LEA must file an application amendment and provide TEA with an update of the new amount and type of stipend recipient(s) within 30 days of notification.
- 32. LEAs must file application amendments within seven days of a request from TEA.

Program Description

Describe how the Grow Your Own program will be implemented with grant funds and how the grant will address the LEA's teacher pipeline needs.

In fall 2021, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) received a 2-year grant from TEA to provide 6 Teaching Assistants the opportunity to receive tuition assistance (up to \$18,000) to obtain a degree in Teaching and Learning. During the 2021-2022 school year, HISD effectively recruited 6 paraeducators to enter teaching and enrolled 4 of the 6. One moved districts and another was unable to meet credit requirements. The district is applying to the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own grant opportunity to build upon this effort and expand our support to 6 additional HISD Teaching Assistants who aspire to teach and earn a bachelor's degree over the next two years in alignment with HISD's new 5-year strategic plan.

This grant will address a key pillar in the district's strategic plan on growing and developing talent and will address a critical pipeline area for HISD - bilingual education. HISD will apply lessons learned from cohort 1 to effectively recruit and enroll paraeducators in cohort 2. For cohort 2, HISD will expand its recruitment to teaching assistants on path to or with an interest in a non-education bachelor's degree with a commitment to be entered into the district's Alternative Certification Program in addition to those with an interest in pursuing a degree in Teaching and Learning. HISD's Alternative Certification Program provides instructional coaching and support, helps teachers secure jobs in HISD, provides teachers a teaching salary as they work to obtain their teaching credential, and certifies teachers in urgent pipeline areas such as bilingual education. HISD will also partner with the University of Houston Downtown to develop an accelerated 3-year Bachelor's degree program providing paraeducators the ability to earn credits quickly if they demonstrate mastery.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for key personnel to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include each of the following individuals (when applicable) and a description of each role: 1. The LEA's grant manager; 2. LEA leaders involved in program implementation; 3. The campus principals for participating Education and Training high schools; 4. the college/career counselors for participating Education and Training high schools; 5. Education and Training teachers; 6. Education and Training field site teachers for Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses; 7. Any other personnel responsible for implementing the grant.

Title and Responsibilities of Position

Kaylan Connally, Executive Officer, Talent Strategy serves as the primary advisor to the Chief Talent Officer and leads the district's incubation of emerging, innovative talent strategies, including Grow Your Own programs and Opportunity Culture.

Jeremy Grant-Skinner, Chief Talent Officer, leads the district's efforts to recruit, develop, support, engage, and retain the employees who make up Team HISD. Jeremy leads the World Class Talent pillar of HISD's 2022-2027 strategic plan and oversees six Talent Office divisions: Employee Experience, Talent Acquisition, Talent Development, Talent Management, Talent Operations, and Talent Strategy.

Alejandro Gonzalez, Sr. Manager, Talent Aquisition, leads the district's efforts to recruit and select top talent for Team HISD. He leads implementation of TCLAS decision 4 on which this proposed work builds and will support coherence and continuous improvement.

Senior Manager, Grow Your Own (To Be Hired Fall 2022) will lead HISD's Grow Your Own partnerships and support the Executive Officer, Talent Strategy in developing a coordinated plan for prioritizing, coordinating, and funding the highest-potential, highest-yield Grow Your Own partnerships for the district.

Principals serving HISD schools will support program implementation, including recruitment and support for current HISD Teaching Assistants to earn their Bachelor's degree and obtain teacher certification.

Goals and Objectives

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed Grow Your Own program. Describe the talent management strategy, (including the LEA's approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers) related to those goals/objectives.

Goals/Objectives:

- To recruit talented diverse candidates into the teaching profession, particularly in hard to staff and critical areas such as bilingual education
- To build upon HISD's current efforts to support 6 Teaching Assistants to become teachers (currently supported through TEA's TCLAS decision 4) and expand our support to a new cohort of 6 additional Teaching Assistants
- To provide support for Teaching Assistants to earn their Bachelor's degree and become fully certified teachers in HISD

Talent Strategy:

As outlined in the strategy components for the World-Class Talent commitment within HISD's new 5-year strategic plan, the district will explore new ways to prepare our people to fill critical roles and expand the impact of effective teachers and leaders. The Superintendent and administration are largely focused on general teacher recruitment and retention, while incorporating some elements of teacher recruitment and retention that are more targeted to specific teacher types (including ESL teachers, bilingual education teachers, and special education teachers). The World-Class Talent strategy has 3 key areas: (1) Compensation and Culture, (2) Recruitment and Hiring, and (3) Growing Talent. A central part of our Growing Talent strategy is to incubate and support innovative Grow Your Own programs, including those that support paraeducators to become fully certified teachers. Through Grow Your Own programs, we will help provide current and future staff with the skills, knowledge, and certification to lead as teachers and in other roles.

Progress Monitoring and Evaluation Measures

Describe how the performance measures identified for this program are consistent with the purpose of the program and related to teacher pipeline needs. Include the tools and processes used to measure performance and the extent to which the major goals and objectives of the grant are met.

The HISD Talent Office team will use performance evaluation data through a paraprofessional appraisal system to help identify and recruit paraprofessionals to enter teaching. The district will collect identifying information for candidate stipend recipients each grant year, including:

- a. Teacher IDs
- b. Name of IHE the candidate is attending, if applicable
- c. Name of EPP the candidate is using
- d. Anticipated date of completing their bachelor's degree and/or teacher certification
- e. Type of bachelor's degrees and teaching certificates candidates are earning
- f. Number of years the candidate is committed to teaching in the LEA

HISD will track the number of candidates who meet university requirements, pass certification exams, complete the program, graduate on time or are on track to graduate (grades, POP cycle scores, etc.), start teaching within 2 years, and teach in critical shortage areas such as bilingual education. Additionally, HISD will collect participant feedback through surveys and focus groups on program implementation and collect teacher evaluation scores for candidates after their first year of teaching to evaluate the program's impact. The Talent Office team has robust capacity, tools, and processes to collect this data to monitor and measure performance of the grant.

Budget Narrative

Referencing the applicant's budget workbook and the Application Funding section of the Program Guidelines, outline the proposed budget and amounts for allowable uses of grant program funding. This should also match the Pathway Selection and Participation section of this application.

Proposed Budget:

6 paraprofessionals earning a bachelors and certification: $\$18,000 \times 6 = \$108,000$
-5.029% indirect

TOTAL: \$113,713

Sustainability Plan

Describe the sustainability plan for the Grow Your Own Program beyond the timeline of grant funding. The plan should address how a high-quality program will be maintained, including clear action steps beginning in the first year of grant funding and a demonstrated ability to leverage and coordinate resources to increase the LEA's capacity to strengthen the local educator pipeline and make progress on sustainability. This may include the use of other local, state, and/or federal resources. Consider also how the Grow Your Own program may be integrated into, be supported by, and provide support for existing LEA or EPP initiatives and/or priorities.

The Houston Independent School District Office of Talent is charged with ensuring world-class talent at all levels as part of its 5-year strategic plan. One of our key strategies to achieve this goal is to coordinate, prioritize, and build upon our current Grow Your Own programs and initiatives. The Chief Talent Officer and Talent Strategy Executive Officer at HISD are deeply committed to developing a coordinated plan for prioritizing, coordinating, and funding the highest-potential, highest-yield Grow Your Own partnerships beyond the timeline of this grant funding. The team is currently exploring other future funding opportunities, including through foundation support, education and general grant funds, and the Department of Labor.

This proposal will also build upon and be integrated into existing HISD initiatives and priorities. HISD will expand its recruitment to teaching assistants on path to or with an interest in a non-education Bachelor's degree with a commitment to be entered into the district's Alternative Certification Program in addition to those with an interest in pursuing a degree in Teaching and Learning. HISD will also partner with the University of Houston Downtown to develop an accelerated 3-year Bachelor's degree program providing paraeducators the ability to earn credits quickly if they demonstrate mastery. The HISD Talent Strategy team will design the next cohort to be for an accelerated Bachelor's degree program in partnership with the University of Houston Downtown and is in current discussion with Dr. Schwartz, Dean of the College of Public Service at the University of Houston-Downtown about this proposed program.

Stipend Recipient Recruitment

Describe the plan to recruit Education and Training teachers within Pathway 1 and/or candidates within Pathway 2 who are interested and eligible in participating in the program and receiving stipends. The plan must include strategies to equitably recruit diverse individuals and identify individuals with potential criteria including: **A. Pathway 1:** For Education and Training teachers, a demonstrated track record of success and/or achievement, involvement in student organizations and/or school activities, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable). **B. Pathway 2:** For candidates, a desire and commitment to teach long term in the LEA and/or region, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable).

Pathway 2:

The HISD recruitment team will seek recommendations from principals across the district of paraprofessionals and instructional aides who aspire to teach in critical areas such as bilingual education, are committed to teaching in the district for a minimum of two years, and have a track record of success and strong relationships with students. The team will also review paraeducators' performance appraisals to conduct targeted outreach to principals with high-performing paraeducators. To conduct outreach, the Talent Acquisition team within the Talent Office will use multiple broader forms of recruitment such as flyers, newsletters/emails, and social media to disseminate and amplify the opportunity.

Stipend Recipient Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Referencing the Program-Specific Assurances in the Program Guidelines, describe the MOUs in which: **A. Pathway 1:** Education and Training teacher stipend recipients agree to meet grant requirements and any other terms set by the LEA; **B. Pathway 1:** IHE that will partner with the LEA(s) to implement dual credit Education and Training courses and commit to supporting the Education and Training teachers and course implementation (if applicable); **C. Pathway 2:** Candidate stipend recipients commit to remain in the LEA for an agreed upon length of time as a condition of receiving the stipend and if a position is available, the LEA commits to hiring/retaining candidates with satisfactory program completion/job performance; **D. Pathway 2:** Accredited EPPs that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to candidates and commit to supporting candidates with completion of their teacher certification and supporting LEA(s) with implementation of the grant program.

Pathway 2 candidates will:

- Commit to teach for 2 years in a critical area (e.g., bilingual education)
- Receive a \$18,000 stipend to complete degree and teacher certification
- Receive release time and support from HISD to complete requirements
- Commit to enroll in HISD's Alternative Certification Program
- Complete their degree and teacher certification by grant period end date
- Participate in surveys and focus groups as requested by HISD and TEA

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