TEA — Texas Education Agency

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation | **P.L. 117-59 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Title II, School Improvement Programs, BSCA**

This LOI application may 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, May 30, 2023.**

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from | **July 1, 2023 to September 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 documentation as described on pages 1-2 in the Program Guidelines - limited to no more than **10 pages**

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization | Region 10 Education Service Center | CDN | 057950 | Campus | Region 10 ESC | ESC | 10 | UEI | UQZKSWHR

Address | 400 E. Spring Valley Rd | City | Richardson | ZIP | 75081 | Vendor ID | 1751249185

Primary Contact | Jana Melsheimer | Email | jana.melsheimer@region10.org | Phone | 972-348-1008

Secondary Contact | Megan Timme | Email | megan.timme@region10.org | Phone | 972-348-1130

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):

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

Authorized Official Name | Dr. Gordon Taylor | Title | Executive Director

Email | gordon.taylor@region10.org | Phone | 972-348-1004

Signature | *Gordon D. Taylor* | Date | May 30, 2023

Shared Services Arrangements

X 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.

☒ 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.

☒ 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.

☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2023-2025 Texas Center for Student Supports LOI Program Guidelines.

☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Texas Center for Student Supports LOI Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

☒ The applicant will formally establish the Texas Center for Student Support (TCSS).

☒ The applicant will dedicate a full-time director level position or above with personnel approved by TEA to lead the planning, execution, and implementation of all TCSS functions.

☒ The applicant will contract with a technical assistance provider or set of providers to develop a TEA aligned student support team framework that includes protocols for team operation, recommendations for team staffing, standardized forms, resources, and tools that LEAs will use to support their student support teams.

☒ The applicant will contract with a technical assistance provider or set of providers to develop a parent and family engagement playbook with resources and tools that LEAs can use to partner and build support with parents and families prior to a student support team assessment, and during the student support implementation process, to facilitate a student support partnership with families.

☒ The applicant will contract with a technical assistance provider or set of providers to establish and implement a campus leader, teacher, parent/family, and student advisory group and use subgroup focus groups to provide feedback and input on needs for services and support and on products developed for the Student Support Program.

☒ The applicant will contract with a technical assistance provider or set of providers to develop and implement job-embedded professional learning, technical assistance, and coaching to support LEAs with establishing and implementing student support team structures.

☒ The applicant will contract with a technical assistance provider or set of providers to develop and implement a data reporting system to gather and analyze data to monitor efficacy of the implementation of the Student Support Program, including student support team structure, quality of support leading to positive outcomes, and data related to increases in desired outcomes (e.g. increase in student support team referrals for nonacademic needs, increase in effective supports received by students, reduction in disciplinary incidents, reduction in bullying and harassment, increase in referrals for mental health services, reduction in removals from class, etc.).

Statutory/Program Assurances Cont'd

☒ The applicant will provide timely response to requests from TEA for information and data regarding program development, implementation, and performance and evaluation measures.

☒ The applicant will establish a collaborative partnership through contract procurement with the University of Texas at Austin Behavior Sciences and Policy Institute, and with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health (TIEMH) at the University of Texas at Austin, to develop the Student Support Program.

☒ The applicant will develop a plan to sustain the TCSS to support ESCs and LEAs beyond the life of the grant cycle.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the position is existing or proposed.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
Deputy Executive Director	Experience as a successful K-12 educator, elementary and secondary campus administrator, Special Programs Director in a mid-size suburban district. Experience with leading federal statewide initiatives - EANS, (See attached)
Director on Mental Health and Wellness (existing)	Experience as a successful K-12 educator, Behavior Specialist, Special Programs Director in a small and rural and mid-size district. Experience with leading statewide initiatives - special populations currently leads 5 (See attached)
State Director of the Texas Center for Student Supports (proposed)	Experience as a successful Texas K-12 educator, working with and/or for ESCs. Experience and the ability to effectively design and execute regional or state-level programs and initiatives; lead change at the district, (See attached)
TCSS Content Lead (proposed)	Subject matter expertise in subjects related to safe and supportive schools, including student mental health and wellness, physical school safety, and campus and district systems and practices to support MTSS. (See attached)
TCSS Adult Learning Lead (proposed)	Subject matter expertise in subjects related to adult learning and application of learning. Experience designing practice-based training with clear models and tools, planning for change and executing best practices in (See attached)

TEA Program Requirements

HISTORICAL SUCCESS: 1. Describe the success that the ESC has had in supporting LEAs with the following: **a.** electing and managing technical assistance providers to support LEAs and ESCs resulting in delivery of agreed upon deliverable and measurable outcomes; **b.** establishing and improving school culture resulting in strong relationships between staff and students, reductions in behavioral and disciplinary incidents, reductions in chronic absenteeism, reduction in incidents of bullying and harassment, and improved overall academic outcomes; **c.** implementing effective mental health training, support, and resources; and **d.** implementing effective student support team structures.

ESC 10 has considerable experience across departments and programs selecting and managing technical assistance providers. Three examples are: 1) McKinney-Vento, where ESC 10 contracts with a third party to provide statewide technical assistance, with 20 years of collaboration with Texas Homeless Education Office at UT Austin, 2) Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL), where ESC 10 manages a statewide technical assistance provider that trains and coaches the TIL Leads for all 20 ESCs. Survey results (average of over 4.7 on a 5-point Likert scale) and growth in TIL Lead action step mastery (average of over ten action steps mastered by TIL Leads per year) show that the technical assistance provider is meeting the needs of both TEA and ESCs. 3) Currently ESC 10 contracts with TEA for EANS 1, EANS II, and GAPS (i.e., statewide private schools). The activities outlined below provide support for the selection and management of technical assistance providers to support LEAs and ESCs. This includes distribution of procedures to request procurement of goods and services, verifying approval process for procurement requests for TEA approved services, creating a fiscal plan to ensure that the funds are

TEA Program Requirements Cont'd

used appropriately and that documentation is captured, creating systems to ensure that the vendors that are vetted and onboarded to meet all PNP requisites, creating opportunities for vendors to showcase their services to PNPs, and partner with TEA to ensure that the private schools across the state of Texas are serviced effectively and efficiently per the grant requirements.

ESC 10 provides and is a part of several training programs directly aligned to the improvement of school and student culture, not to mention the extensive mental health training and support that ESC 10 provides (outlined in subsection c) that also support improvements in school culture. A few highlights are: 1) Texas Instructional Leadership School-wide Culture Routines (TIL SCR) – this job-embedded professional development program has supported over 40 campuses and 6 districts, with an over 90% implementation rate when measured against the SCR action steps tool. 2) Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) – since 2015, ESC 10 has provided PBIS training to 14 LEAs. This training resulted in a significant increase in the positive perceptions of staff across all campuses and a significant decrease in referral rates. Referrals dropped by more than 50% for both the elementary and middle/junior high levels. High schools also experienced a 40% decrease in referral rates. 3) Teaching Resilience, Elevating Discipline – ESC 10 manages a grant and supports TEA with the build out of an online training program designed to support educators develop the mindsets and skill sets necessary to support students with self-regulation and resilience. ESC 10 is in the process of creating guidance on how districts can implement this program district wide and is working with groups of educators to pilot a cohort approach to the training. This program is scheduled to launch in August of 2023.

ESC 10 provides extensive mental health training and support to its LEAs. Highlights include: 1) in partnership with the Grant Halliburton Foundation, developed a Comprehensive Guide to School Mental Health Framework that aligns with the TEA Mental Health Framework outlining assessment of current programs, goal setting, mental health awareness/promotion services and supports, training opportunities, student screeners, climate surveys, and community resources to promote in small and rural schools as part of Title IV Small and Rural Mental Health Initiative, 2) in partnership with the Grant Halliburton Foundation has provided a full-time personal care counselor to support schools participating in the Small and Rural cohort to meet the needs of at-risk students and address the barriers expressed via needs assessments (See attached)

CONTENT: 2. Describe how the ESC will serve as the statewide Student Support Program content, training, and resource center for all twenty ESCs and participating LEAs. Include a brief description of the Student Support team framework, parents and family engagement playbook, and case management system.

ESC 10 recognizes the diverse subject matter expertise across the state and is excited to partner with TAs that will, together, comprehensively cover the prioritized content that TCSS will oversee for the state. ESC 10 itself has considerable subject matter expertise and experience in these topics, as evidenced by the significant mental health programs detailed above, and ESC 10 will add our demonstrated ability to plan, project manage, and performance manage complex work, as evidenced by our in statewide leadership with Texas Instructional Leadership, our integrated approach to School Improvement, and our project management of EANS grants for the state. With that, the following sequence of actions is how ESC 10 anticipates it will serve as the statewide SSP center for LEAs and ESCs in the development of core content: 1) Identify and establish partnerships with technical assistance providers. Identify the strengths, capacity, and thus the primary areas where the University of Texas at Austin Behavior Sciences and Policy Institute and the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health (TIEMH) at the University of Texas at Austin can support the TCSS and its work. Contract with TxBSPI and TIEMH aligned to those areas. Potentially build and post another RFP to find other TAs that can cover any remaining subject matter or technical assistance gaps. 2) Identify advisory group participants – district staff, ESCs, parents, and students by working with TEA, ESCs, relevant associations and interested stakeholder groups for recommendations/nominations. 3) Work with TIEMH and TxBSPI and other TAs as necessary, and engage in feedback loops with the advisory group and the staff of other ESCs to solidify best practices/expectations for Student Support Team framework including protocols for team operation; recommendations for team staffing; standardized forms, resources, and tools that LEAs will use to support their student support teams ; parent and family engagement (for the purposes of building a playbook; and case management systems. 4) Region10 ESC will collaborate or contract with Region 9 ESC to ensure the needs of underserved and rural schools are targeted to provided access to qualified mental health professionals, facilitation of mental health training, crisis and prevention services and community resource connection in order to improve individual, community and public mental health outcomes. This will include quality mental health support for students and school staff, (See attached)

TEA Program Requirements Cont'd

STRUCTURE: 3. Describe the protocols that the ESC will develop to establish and strengthen a clear link between existing school district support systems and the student support team structure including but not limited to behavior threat assessment, mental health needs, suicide prevention, emotional and behavioral health needs, and other needs that create barriers to positive student outcomes. Describe how the ESC will support the management of technical assistance providers agreed upon deliverables.

A central concern for the work of TEA and TCSS regarding the SSP and associated practices is that LEAs will view this work as additional, as another set of practices and expectations to layer on an already overwhelming series of actions that they deploy on a daily basis. Our goal would be to help LEAs and ESCs see how this work isn't detached or additional but instead nests within a system of support – that system that predominantly comprises one of the three legs of the instructional core, student readiness to learn. To do that, ESC 10 will work with TEA and the leaders of frameworks that can help districts see where these practices exist within aligned systems and that can help districts recognize when they have gaps in implementing these practices and thus should use their ESC and TCSS to support the closing of those gaps: the Effective District Framework, the Effective Schools Framework, and a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework. By anchoring in EDF Lever 1, which will demonstrate how these student supports plug into a network of aligned systems across the organization to ensure the vision is achieved – student academic and non-academic growth and success – and Lever 3, which will demonstrate how these practices make up part of a comprehensive multi-tiered system of support, TCSS will be able to demonstrate to districts that these practices are essential, impactful, and, when done well, assimilated into the way of work. The same will be true with the ESF and Lever 3, where we hope the diagnostic process (whether self-diagnosis or externally supported) will reveal both the importance and the current state of a campus's practices around safe and supportive schools. With the MTSS framework, ESC 10 will seeks to clarify for ESCs and LEAs how district and campus actions fit within a larger MTSS approach, including how actions, both required and discretionary, complement and supplement one another (Emergency Operating Plans, Student Behavioral Threat Assessments, School-wide Culture Routines, etc.), and how to ensure alignment between derivative practices, policies, and procedures. The more TCSS communicates and visualizes how these practices work within district and campus MTSS systems, and the more districts understand that this work anchors to these frameworks and that participation with and support from TCSS and their ESCs will improve implementation and thus student outcomes, the greater the buy-in and participation from LEAs. (See attached)

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: 4. Describe how the ESC will provide professional learning to the twenty ESCs and participating LEAs including content delivery, technical assistance, and resources to effectively implement the Student Support Program.

ESC 10 has long been a proponent of job-embedded professional development and has supported TEA in the design and delivery of significant statewide training, including Texas Instructional Leadership and Student Learning Objectives, among other programs. In both instances, ESC 10 staff led other ESCs and LEAs in recognizing that practice-based training and follow-up implementation support and coaching are essential if learning is to be transferred to daily habit (see Capacity). ESC 10 anticipates executing the following actions:1)Work with technical assistance providers to establish the core from which job-embedded professional development is built including clear actions – what, specifically, should LEAs do to effectively implement the Student Support Program and clear destination – what does it look like to do those things well. 2)Work with technical assistance providers to build training protocols, materials, and associated implementation tools for LEAs including clear roles and responsibilities on who does what and what it looks like to do those things well; breaking expectations down into granular actions with useful tools (clear and concrete action steps); practice during base training to build skills, instill confidence, and improve practices; on-going implementation support to trouble-shoot implementation challenges and ensure forward momentu; in-field coaching to improve skill and practice (both real-time feedback and stand-alone coaching sessions based on observation of implementation). 2)Build an overview session for ESC staff to ensure they are comfortable with the context of this work, their role in it, the suggested timeline of LEA support, and the support TCSS will provide them. This won't be the first interaction with ESC leads, as they'll be consulted throughout, but this will be an opportunity to comprehensively lay out the program, timelines, expectations, and surface additional needs they'll have. 3)Send ESC staff to attend a training of trainers so that ESCs can first experience training as participants. This will produce three outcomes of build ESCs' understanding of the job-embedded professional development support LEAs will need, provide ESCs an opportunity to pull up and practice delivering training, practice providing implementation support and coaching through case studies and role play scenarios, provide additional feedback to TCSS and TA providers to improve the training materials and support tools prior to full roll out with LEAs. 3) Arrange opportunities for ESC staff (See attached)

Statutory/Program Requirements Cont'd

DATA REPORTING: 5. Describe the system the Student Support Center will use to support participating LEAs with tracking referrals to the student support team and collecting data on supports provided to students and families to monitor effectiveness. Participating LEAs will be required to report this data to the Texas Education Agency.

In order to provide participating LEAs a user-friendly and secure data platform into which they can input key SSP data, ESC 10 would like to create a data collection and visualization platform much like we have with other statewide data - Supplemental Special Education Services (SSES) and School Family and Community Engagement (SFCE). Beyond the data platform, ESC 10 would build a Texas Center for Student Supports website that would house: 1) information, tools and resources for LEAs, 2) training and support resources for ESCs (to help LEAs), 3) data reporting functionality aligned with all necessary data privacy protections.

As it relates to data reporting, ESC 10 anticipates taking the following actions: 1) Craft and award an RFP to partner with a website and data platform design and build vendor. 2) Work with TxBSPI to establish data elements that align with practice expectations – data on what should be happening; allow for program evaluation – does it provide the insight necessary to understand what is happening and give insight into why it's happening; allow for program improvement – does the data support analysis from the LEA out (ESCs, TEA) to identify program and strategy adjustments to improve inputs and outcomes. 3) Collect feedback from the advisory group or a subset of the advisory group on data elements, the benefits versus burdens of collection of each element, and privacy concerns to ensure alignment and support for data collection. 4) Build data collection and visualization platform – for participating LEAs (hopefully a growing number over time), a private login reporting platform that allows for aggregation and visualization of data (campus configuration, district type, region, SSP variables, etc.).

CAPACITY: 6. Describe the ESC capacity and expertise to fulfill the program requirements.

From a program and project management perspective, ESC 10 has significant experience to inform and capacity to support the Texas Center for Student Supports. ESC 10 routinely collaborates across service areas within the ESC, including teaching and learning, mental health, and administrative services, and ESC 10 will be able to ensure that content-specific support from those service areas will be provided to permanent TCSS staff. ESC 10 oversees five statewide programs and has the experience necessary to work across LEAs of all contexts and ESCs of all sizes, as evidenced by our work in TIL and EANS I, II, and GAPS. In addition, ESC 10 has a full-time, dedicated performance management lead in Staci Barker, and a full-time, dedicated research and evaluation analyst in Kay Shurtleff. From a student support perspective, ESC 10 already runs programs across the full range of student support areas (see Historical Success) and has staff that can comprehensively support TCSS and its permanent staff to design and execute offering and support for LEAs and ESCs. We've long collaborated with outside organizations, such as the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute and the Momentous Institute, for the benefit of our LEAs, and have provided access to leading thinkers in the area of student support, such as Dr. Tina Payne Bryson. From an adult learning and school improvement perspective, ESC 10 has been providing job-embedded professional development to LEAs and ESCs for years (see Historical Success). The ESC has integrated its School Improvement and TIL teams to provide a multi-year, layered program of support to struggling campuses, and the department leads of those programs (TIL and SI) will play a large role in supporting the design and launch of TCSS.

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

CAPACITY: 7. How many TEA grants is the ESC currently administering? 71

CAPACITY: 8. How many TEA grant applications does the ESC have in progress (not including this application)? 8

Budget Narrative

Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including for staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. If applicable, include a high-level snapshot of funds currently allocated to similar programs. Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.

$1,600,000 – Contracts with technical assistance providers. This will fund:
The contract with TxBSPI
The contract with TIEMH
Any additional contract needs to partner with subject-matter experts in SSP practices and district implementation support not covered by TxBSPI and TIEMH

$830,000 - Two years' of personnel costs for new hires to staff the Texas Center for Student Supports ($415,000 per year). This will fund:
The Director for the Texas Center for Student Supports, who will manage TCSS, including project and performance management of TAs, ESC training and support, and TCSS efficacy (see Qualifications and Experience)
A full-time staff member that is an MTSS and student safety subject matter expert to support content creation, ESC learning, and LEA implementation (see Qualifications and Experience)
A full-time staff member that is an adult learning and professional development expert to support the ongoing design and dissemination of training protocols, tools, and resources and to support the training and coaching of ESCs.
Note - depending on ESC and LEA needs as it relates to TCSS support, Region 10 would be able to reduce or eliminate the funding for the adult learning staff member, if necessary. This position could be wholly or partially absorbed by other programs at the ESC, reducing future personnel costs by $120,000 per year.

$100,000 – Texas Center for Student Support website and date platform. This cost is to partner with a vendor to build a TCSS website that will host:
Information, tools and resources for LEAs
Training and support resources for ESCs (to help LEAs)
Data reporting functionality aligned with all necessary data privacy protections (see Data Reporting above)

$40,000 - Planning, program design, and performance management vendor. The vendor will lead TCSS staff and other relevant stakeholders, including TEA if participation is desired, through a process to plan the TCSS – identify the challenges to address, best practices for LEAs and how to best support LEAs in implementation of those best practices, the TCSS theory of action, strategy development, identifying performance assessment metrics, and establishing project management practices. The vendor will also train and coach the State Lead for the Texas Center for Student Supports on best practices in performance and project management, in alignment with TEA's approach to planning and performance management, to ensure continued implementation of strong planning and performance management practices in the future.

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		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

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**