



2023-2025 Title I, 1003 ESF-Focused Support Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 21, 2023

NOGA ID [Redacted]

Authorizing legislation **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), P.L. 114-95, Section 1003, School Improvement**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **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, April 21, 2023**.

Grant period from **July 3, 2023-September 30, 2025**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Award Date**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Pathway 1: Pathway 1 Supplemental Attachment
3. Pathway 2: Pathway 2 Supplemental Attachment
4. Memo of Discussion

NOTE: All applicants MUST submit an appropriate Supplemental Pathway Attachment for EACH CAMPUS on behalf of which the applicant is applying.

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 UEI

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.

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1

20

Pathway 2

0

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 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant Program Guidelines.
4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant 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 the requirements of [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#).
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. Title I served Federally Identified campuses awarded this grant will engage in the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) continuous improvement process and create a plan to be submitted to TEA that addresses the selected pathway aligned to the Essential Actions (EA) from the ESF.
8. The applicant ensures it will notify the Vetted Improvement Program provider of intent to apply and, if awarded, will work in good faith with the Vetted Improvement Program.
9. The applicant will identify a campus leader, on each awarded campus, who will be responsible for managing the grant project.

Statutory/Program Assurances, cont'd.

- 10. The applicant will provide access to TEA and its Vetted Improvement Partners for on-site visits to the district and campus(es) as appropriate.
- 11. The applicant provides assurance it will participate in all grant requirements including but not limited to an ESF Self-Assessment and ESF Diagnostic, developing a Targeted Improvement Plan, and submission of funding and pathway progress reports.
- 12. The applicant provides assurance it will provide awarded campuses access to grant funding and funding information in a timely manner, so that funding can be used to meet the needs and action steps of the campus during the grant period.

Summary of Program

1. Describe how the LEA will support campus(es) in carrying out school improvement activities, including how the LEA will help develop a Targeted Improvement Plan for the eligible campus(es) selected for this grant.

Fort Worth ISD (FWISD) is a large urban school district serving 74,326 students on 142 campuses in North Texas. In FWISD, 85.2% of students are Economically Disadvantaged, 77.2% are at-risk, and 96.6% are Title I (2021-22 TAPR).

FWISD is applying for ESF-Focused Support Grant funds to provide applicant campuses ongoing, focused support as they carry out ESF essential actions and improvement activities at every grade level. FWISD is committed to supporting ESF-focused school improvement activities to increase academic achievement.

FWISD places effective leaders in its highest-needs schools. The District has successfully piloted ESF-focused supports in its Polytechnic HS pyramid, in which principals received ESF training from their executive director, Dr. Susan Hernandez, a strong advocate of ESF who was trained by Bambrick and Teaching Trust.

FWISD will provide multiple levels of support personnel for the ESF-focused campuses in carrying out school improvement activities, including their executive directors, the grant coordinator, and their grant specialists.

FWISD will protect the time of the executive director and instructional leadership teams so that awarded schools can implement the ESF. FWISD devotes time, resources, and attention to campus planning. Collaboration among District and school stakeholders led to the procurement of a well-known web-based improvement plan for use at all FWISD campuses. FWISD has provided multiple campus improvement plan training opportunities since the web-based plan was introduced in the 2021-2022 school year. The District provides multiple campus improvement and targeted improvement plan training opportunities to ensure a smooth adoption of the plan, and FWISD will ensure that the principals of the schools selected for this grant will receive additional training and support as they develop their ESF-focused targeted improvement plans. FWISD will also ensure that the specialists who support awarded schools are trained and equipped to support the schools with ESF-focused activities.

2. Describe how the LEA will monitor schools receiving the ESF-Focused Support Grant, including how the LEA will: (a) Monitor Targeted Improvement Plans upon submission and during implementation, and (b) Implement additional actions as needed to meet barriers and challenges, after the first year of the grant cycle.

FWISD is applying for funds to support a targeted groups of schools, and this will streamline the monitoring of the ESF-focused Targeted Improvement Plans during development, submission, and implementation. Awarded campuses will receive support from ESC Region XI and will be reviewed by their executive director, the grants specialist, and deputy superintendent.

Based on training received from ESC Region XI, the executive directors will ensure that, during the development of the ESF-focused improvement plans, their principals and instructional leadership teams review school data carefully. Multiple data sources will be reviewed, including but not limited to pre-K and kindergarten readiness measures, BOY, MOY, and EOY MAP assessments, EOC results, STAAR results, CCMR measures, feedback from data walks, attendance records, discipline records, and survey results from students, parents, and staff.

Data will be disaggregated, and ESF-focused improvement plans will be based on a close and careful analysis of the data. The executive directors will work with their principals to ensure that the ESF-focused improvement plans are clear and actionable, and the grants specialists will ensure alignment among plans and budget allocations.

The executive directors and grant specialists will monitor progress during implementation. ESF-focused improvement plans and campus improvement plans will be reviewed again at MOY and EOY to gauge progress and compliance. Evidence of unsuccessful implementation at MOY and EOY will require additional action, which could include adjusting the plan to reflect unexpected barriers to implementation, additional training of campus staff, and closer or more frequent monitoring. Similar to a lesson plan that needs to be adjusted when students do not master the objective, ESF-focused improvement plans will be monitored closely, and unsuccessful implementation of a plan after the first year of the grant cycle will signal that the instructional leadership team needs to collaborate to review the data and perhaps adjust the lens, reflect on root causes, amend the plan, and move forward.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies, Performance and Evaluation

1. Describe how the LEA will modify, as appropriate, practices and policies to provide operational flexibility to the awarded campus, that enables full and effective implementation of the Effective Schools Framework Essential Actions and aligned Targeted Improvement Plan.

FWISD has well-established policies and procedures but will modify, as appropriate, certain practices and procedures to provide operational flexibility to awarded schools to enable full and effective ESF-focused improvement plan implementation.

FWISD is a large urban district with a long history of implementing grant-funded projects with fidelity. Experience has taught us that one size does not fit all in FWISD. Successful programs often begin with discretionary grant funding, and providing schools with flexibility to try new things has proven an effective approach.

District leaders are accustomed to fulfilling the requirements associated with accepting federal grant funds, and schools that receive funding through this grant will have the discretion to implement the essential actions necessary to meet the needs of their students.

Awarded schools will have access to their budgets in July. Awarded schools will receive supplemental training and ongoing professional development within their district group. Principals will be given the operational flexibility to bring back their teachers early so that they can begin to implement their improvement plans on the first day of school. Principals at awarded schools will have the authority to train new and current teachers in the Effective Schools Framework, and they will receive the flexibility to design operational systems to address school improvement according to the expectations of the grant. Awarded schools will have the flexibility to assess for student understanding more frequently than at the BOY, MOY, and EOY (which is the norm in FWISD), and they will be given time to address the foundational levers and essential actions with intention. Instructional leadership teams and PLCs will monitor student comprehension weekly, and teachers will receive additional opportunities to reteach concepts that were not originally mastered based on common formative assessment results. Awarded schools will collaborate within their campus group using data to drive discussions.

Budget Narrative

1. Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.

FWISD prioritizes strong leadership, giving school leaders, their executive directors, and charter schools authority to manage their schools according to what works best for their students. FWISD provides school leaders with adequate funding and control over their budgets. School leaders exercise great discretion over their Title I funds, requesting positions in the spring and filling them with highly qualified employees who will address the needs of their schools. School leaders solicit staffing feedback from their site-based decision making teams during the comprehensive needs assessment process, but the principal ultimately has discretion to fill grant-funded positions.

The SBDM team must approve Title I and School Improvement Grant budget transfers of \$5,000 or more, and this threshold was set to ensure that activities do not deviate from the school's CNA priorities and planned strategies. The proposed ESF-Focused Support Grant budget will be used to supplement and amplify the essential actions that are already underway at project campuses. The budget will be allocated equitably to meet the needs and goals of the program.

Adequate funds will be allocated for program coordination, compliance, evaluation, and contracts for professional development, including training on data-driven instruction above and beyond what is currently provided by the District to the executive directors and school leadership teams. The district has a working relationship with ESC Region XI, and the executive directors and federal programs team have already begun working with ESC staff to ensure their capacity to provide support to the leadership teams at all of the schools for which FWISD is applying.

Ongoing professional development will be provided to instructional leadership teams and teachers as well, through contracted services and extra duty pay for professional development. Funds will be used to purchase books for professional development to reinforce key concepts, and funds will be used for instructional supplies and materials and provide for supplemental extended learning opportunities for students. Campuses will be given the flexibility to determine how to best spend the funds based on their data and the needs of their students.

Budget Narrative, cont'd.

2. Describe how the LEA will ensure campus leaders have direct access to grant funding to ensure alignment to the Targeted Improvement Plan.

While the ESF-Focused Support Grant is a combined award for all of a District's selected campuses, and there will be a few shared costs among all of FWISD's awarded campuses, the majority of grant funds will be budgeted at the individual campus level to be used at the campus leader's discretion.

At the District level, the grant will have a single project coordinator to support campuses with procuring and scheduling training, liaising with the VIP, ESC Region XI and their staff to ensure campus needs are met, assisting with business processing, and providing necessary documentation to District leadership and the school board. Each campus will also be assigned a grant specialist to provide grant-related expertise with regard to compliance, reporting, use of funds, district policies and procedures, and business practices. The final District-level expenditure will be the combined contract with the ESC that will work with all of the awarded campuses.

These necessary expenditures will leave approximately 60% of grant funds at the campuses' discretion. Each campus will have appropriate lines budgeted to facilitate the purchase of technical assistance, instructional materials, summer professional development, teacher stipends/extra duty pay, travel expenses, and other materials/supplies for grant activities based on their campus's needs and prioritized focus areas. These requisitions will be entered by campus-level administrators to ensure prioritization of campus needs, campus preferences, and timely receipt of items directly aligned to the campus's Targeted Improvement Plan.

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"/>

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