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

Texas Education Agency®

NOGA ID

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	West Hardin County CISD	CDN	100908	Campus	2 listed below	ESC	5
UEI	DKFRYH8GL2L1						
Address	39227 Hwy 105	City	Saratoga	ZIP	77585	Vendor ID	1746029367
Primary Contact	D'Wanna Rasnick	Email	drasnick@westhardin.org	Phone	936.274.5061		
Secondary Contact	Susan Forthman	Email	acontracts@icloud.com	Phone	210.896.1690		

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

☒ General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances

☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification

☒ Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name	Dr. Jim Armstrong	Title	Superintendent
Email	jarmstrong@westhardin.org	Phone	936.274.5061
Signature		Date	04/20/2023

CDN 100908 Vendor ID 1746029367 Amendment #

Shared Services Arrangements

☐ Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are NOT permitted for this grant.

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1	2
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.

Our Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment serves as our District Coordinator of School Improvement (DSCI) and will continue to lead this project at the district level, working closely with the school principals and district leadership team to provide comprehensive district support to our two schools who are implementing school support and improvement activities.

Our mission is to serve the students of our community, ensuring academic success by meeting the needs of all students. Therefore, our teams have worked closely to create a web-based Targeted Intervention Plan. Together, through the development and implementation of our targeted improvement plan and in preparation for this application, we have identified specific actions for improvement (based on diagnostic assessments and aligned to the Effective Schools Framework), which our joint leadership team has committed to meet:
West Hardin Elementary School (grades Pre-K through 6)
-Essential Action 4.1: Daily Use of High-Quality Instructional Materials
-Essential Action 5.1: Professional Development for Effective Classroom Instruction
West Hardin High School (grades 7-12)
-Essential Action 5.1: Professional Development for Effective Classroom Instruction
-Essential Action 5.3: Data-Driven Instruction

In addition, our district leadership team will continue to
-provide access to resources to support teacher and leader professional development and student instruction, including assistance in securing outside resources for needs that cannot be met with current school budgets
-hold regular district leadership team meetings focused on providing support for school improvement activities
-collaborate with school principals and school improvement teams to continue with ESF-aligned web-based improvement plans to address needs specified through the ESF assessments.

Through ongoing coaching and support provided to school leaders, at least quarterly data reviews, and ongoing monitoring systems, the district team will continue to assess school needs and respond quickly to needs that are identified throughout the grant period.

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.

The DCSI, our Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction, will continue to lead the district school support team that partners with the two schools receiving the ESF-Focused Support Grant (West Hardin Elementary School and West Hardin High School) to implement the ESF-Focused Support Grant Program. As active participants in the creation, submission, implementation, and monitoring of the web-based improvement plans, the district team has real-time data regarding the fidelity of implementation of the plan and the level of success in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan, in addition to any challenges that may arise. The district support team will continue to monitor the web-based improvement plan through weekly observations, school-improvement team meetings, and quarterly data reviews. District-level support will address any challenges that are identified as they occur. The DCSI and the principals will formally communicate and coordinate as least each quarter with Education Service Center (Region 5), our VIP, to review their data and recommendations, in addition to daily/weekly informal updates.

In the event either campus is unsuccessful in any area of the plan after the first year of the grant cycle, the DCSI and the district school support team will identify the root causes of the lack of success and determine and implement research-based actions to correct course. Actions may focus on strengthening campus systems, building staff capacity, improving outcomes, and ensuring improvement efforts are implemented with fidelity. As the DCSI is a member of senior leadership who collaborates with the rest of the West Hardin CCAISD Cabinet routinely to establish priorities, she has direct access to all divisions of the district who support the schools to assist in resolving any external factors that may hinder school improvement efforts.

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.

Reviewing the most recent ESF Campus Diagnostic Assessments, the district and campus school improvement teams prioritized the essential actions that are proposed in this grant application and are included in our aligned Web-Based Improvement Plan. As part of this process, the teams identified areas of operational flexibility that would be required for full and effective implementation of the plans for each school. West Hardin CCISD is a District of Innovation and has agreed to provide flexibility to include the following:

-flexibility in staffing through hiring, training, and evaluation of staff,
-flexibility in curriculum by using curriculum and instructional programs tailored to the specific and unique needs of our student population,
-flexibility in general operations through a calendar and daily schedule that lend themselves to optimal learning conditions, and
-flexibility in resource allocation through local (school-level) control of discretionary funds.
-flexibility in scheduling time of instructional leaders to provide dedicated time to the project.

As needs are further analyzed, new data becomes available, and future web-based improvement plans are developed, additional needs for flexibility may be identified. The DCSI and school principals have a regularly-scheduled forum (district leadership team meetings) through which they can communicate those needs directly to the district administrator with the ability to provide additional flexibility.

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.

The proposed budget is designed to meet the needs of WHES and WHHS that were identified through the ESF Diagnostic Assessment as conducted in 2022 in preparation to submit this application. The proposed budget is also directly aligned to the purpose, goals, and requirements of the grant program. Funds have been allocated in the following areas:

The majority of our funds at both schools have been allocated in supplies and materials and extra duty pay for curriculum/ lesson development and implementation with VIP coaching. In contracted services we have budgeted $10,000 each at WHES and WHHS to pay Education Service Center, Region 5 as our VIP for Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) training, to provide curriculum coaching for our instructional leaders and teachers. In addition, $5,000 has been budgeted in contracted services for assistance with grant administration to ensure principals can focus on implementation.

For payroll, we have budgeted $40,000 at each campus to pay extra duty pay for teachers and leaders to protect instructional time and to provide dedicated time to ESF initiatives.

The remaining funds are budgeted for instructional and professional development supplies ($40,000 at each campus) and travel to required/recommended trainings ($5,000 at each campus).

If further analysis of our ESF assessment data or program data demonstrates a need to adjust funding based on changing needs, the local budget change/amendment will follow our local administrative procedures, and a budget amendment request will also be submitted to the Texas Education Agency provided the change requires an amendment based on Texas Education Agency rules for when to submit an amendment.

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.

In West Hardin CISD, principals administer instructional budgets. Principals work with stakeholders through our site-based decision-making teams to assess needs, design initiatives to meet those needs, and design budgets to support, evaluate, continuously improve and sustain those initiatives.

The majority of the funds for our proposed ESF project will be in the campus budgets and administered by the principals. The DCSI and business director will support principals by collaborating with them during planning, monitoring expenditures to ensure compliance with all policies and procedures, and assisting them to address any roadblocks they encounter to spend the funds in a timely manner. Principals and the DCSI will track spending as one method of measuring fidelity of implementation.

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