



2021-2023 Expansion of Dual Credit Faculty for CCRSM LOI
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 12, 2021

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 49, 86 TX Legislature; TEC §29.908(b) & 102.1091**

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 12, 2021**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this LOI.

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: CCRSM Crosswalk
3. Attachment 2: Letter of Instructional Assurances
4. Attachment 3: Letter of Hiring Assurances from Higher Education Partner(s)
5. Attachment 4: Participant Roster
6. Attachment 5: Letter of Educators' Commitment

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

Digitally signed by Dr. Xavier De La Torre
 DN: cn=Dr. Xavier De La Torre, ou=Ysleta Independent School District, ou=Superintendent of Schools,
 email=mmathewson@yisd.net, c=US
 Date: 2021.04.09 16:09:19 -0600

Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are 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 NOGA is issued.

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 assurances that a maximum of \$25,000 will be requested for reimbursement per educator for expenses related to tuition, fees, and travel during the life of the grant. Additional costs will be the responsibility of the LEA or participant upon a local agreement.
- 2. The applicant provides assurances that all participants serve within the eligible CCRSM in the 2021-2022 school year. Participating educators must each sign a Letter of Educator’s Commitment which will be collectively submitted as Attachment #5.
- 3. The applicant provides assurances that successful completion is defined as an average of 75% or higher in each course completed. All expenses related to participation in the accelerated credentialing program (e.g., tuition and fees, textbooks, travel expenses) are eligible for reimbursement by TEA upon successful completion of courses per term.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.
- 6. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2021-2023 CCRSM Expansion of Educators Eligible to Teach College Courses LOI Program Guidelines.
- 7. The CCRSM program leader(s) will submit a CCRSM designation (renewal) application for designation in 2022-2023 and for designation in 2023-2024.
- 8. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2021-2023 CCRSM Expansion of Educators Eligible to Teach College Courses Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- 9. The applicant provides assurances that an academic year signed and dated memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the dual credit provider will be publicly posted by August 15, 2021. The MOU must address the following elements: Eligible courses; Student eligibility; Location of the class; Composition of students in the class; Faculty selection, supervision, and evaluation; Course Curriculum, Instructional Materials and calendar; Academic policies and student support services; Data-sharing policies and procedures; Courses of study that lead to an associate degree or up to 60 hours of college credit toward a 4-year degree; Administration of statewide assessments; Transcription of credit and Funding.

TEA Program Requirements

1. Identification of Needs: Describe your plan for identifying dual credit faculty needs for this grant, as well as in the future. What systems will you put in place to ensure each CCRSM cohort is offered a sequence of coursework which will lead to a postsecondary credential?

Ysleta Independent School District (Ysleta ISD) has seen steady gains in dual credit (DC) enrollment across the district's growing list of college and career readiness school model (CCRSM) locations. In compliance with Ysleta ISD's Strategic Plan, student enrollment in DC courses will be benchmarked at the established CCRSMs and then strive for a 2% increase each year, as well as support the number of face-to-face course offerings at the district's two newest Early College High Schools (ECHS).

Opportunities/challenges: 1) growing student enrollment necessitates more faculty and 2) increasing the variety of courses that support the district's CCRSMs requires more faculty. Review of current offerings, regional educational opportunities, and regional workforce needs revealed 3) the need for DC faculty in seven content areas (i.e., biology, communications, criminal justice, government, philosophy, psychology, and speech) and to fill positions in other content areas that have been vacated (e.g., retirement, attrition). While students are still within the high school support system, they are best served by 4) credentialed Ysleta ISD teachers who are part of that support system.

Background: Ysleta ISD recognizes that DC courses help students gain experiences and a world view that will help them find suitable potential career paths. College not only becomes an option, but gaining a jump-start (e.g., courses of particular interest, gratification and success, earning college credit, no out-of-pocket expenses) in high school offers previously unimaginable opportunities. Ysleta ISD has seven high school (HS) campuses and one ECHS located on El Paso Community College (EPCC) property. Campuses offer a variety of DC courses at: the standalone ECHS and three additional ECHS campuses; four Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (T-STEM) campuses; and one Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) campus. Current DC courses include a broad range of subject matter: sciences, technology, engineering, statistics, communications, law enforcement, accounting, and business management.

To ensure teachers satisfy EPCC DC requirements for the course(s) they anticipate teaching, their graduate course of study will be reviewed for compliance with EPCC requirements before they complete their application process for UTEP. The intent is that, once their graduate coursework is complete, the teacher will have the master's degree and any necessary hours in the area of concentration that will allow them to teach specific DC course(s) at their Ysleta ISD CCRSM campus.

2. Program Design: Name the university partner(s) which will provide graduate level instruction to participating educators. Describe in detail how the LEA will coordinate with the university partner(s) to design an accelerated credentialing program. What are the university's roles and responsibilities in building a program to expand the number of educators credentialed to teacher college courses?

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) has established accelerated degree options, including the Master's of Education (M.Ed.) with hours in dual credit content areas. UTEP's College of Education (COE) has worked with Ysleta ISD in many ways, including providing educational and professional development services to district faculty. Discussions between UTEP and Ysleta ISD have established the relationship for refining accelerated programs of study to support those seeking to teach DC courses.

UTEP will provide Ysleta ISD teacher participants course options that will fit their individual needs. For those teachers who will need to earn their master's degree with the 18 hours in a specific area of concentration, they will enroll in the COE. For those teachers who have a master's degree and need to complete the 18 hours in a specific area of concentration outside COE, the COE offered to connect teachers to the appropriate college to earn those hours. Should a teacher need graduate hours in a discipline that is not provided at UTEP, courses may be taken at another accredited university and then transferred into UTEP's M.Ed. program.

Before each teacher participant completes UTEP's admissions process, Ysleta ISD will inform the teacher of exactly what they are expected to study to gain the necessary credentials from EPCC to teach the identified course(s).

UTEP's roles/responsibilities: ensure teachers have accelerated course options that are relevant to the DC needs as defined by EPCC, enroll the teacher participants into their appropriate graduate program, and ensure that teacher participants have the support provided to all university students, so that this cohort completes their studies by June 2023.

TEA Program Requirements (Cont'd)

3. Hiring: Name the dual credit provider(s) who will hire educators. How will the applicant collaborate with the dual credit provider? What steps will take place to ensure that the courses taken by the educator will meet the accrediting standards of the hiring dual credit provider? What are the roles and responsibilities of the hiring dual credit provider?

The El Paso Community College (EPCC) has a strong history of working with Ysleta ISD to provide dual credit and industry-certificated courses to high school students. EPCC currently oversees the implementation of 47 DC courses on behalf of Ysleta ISD, supporting credentialed teachers and maintaining student college credit records and transcripts. With this funding opportunity, EPCC has emphasized that the anticipated courses must meet student and CCRSM needs. EPCC has established DC course offerings and the criteria that teachers must meet to teach DC courses. UTEP has established graduate programs of study for numerous discipline areas. Ysleta ISD needs to have identified teachers meet the requirements of both institutions over the next two years for developing classroom assignments, as well as staffing vacated positions to ensure students are provided continuity for each of the established programs.

To ensure teachers satisfy EPCC DC requirements for the course(s) they anticipate teaching, their graduate courses will be reviewed before they complete their application process for UTEP. The intent is that, once their graduate coursework is complete, the teacher will have the master's degree and any necessary hours in the area of concentration that will allow them to teach specific DC course(s) in fall 2023.

EPCC, UTEP, and Ysleta ISD personnel will focus their energies, in late spring and early summer 2021, to ensure each has refined their processes to address their common goal of developing DC teachers. EPCC will remain in compliance with their accreditation body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

EPCC roles and responsibilities: identify DC curricula, course requirements, teacher requirements, credential and hire teachers for DC classes, and support to ensure this cohort completes their studies by June 2023.

4. Sustainability Plan: Describe the sustainability plan to be implemented which can support the ongoing efforts of the CCRSM campus(es) to address capacity challenges for offering college-level courses beyond the life of the grant. How will the applicant build upon the success of this program to expand college course offerings for high school students in the future.

With the efficient graduate educational options, Ysleta ISD and EPCC will have the greater flexibility and responsiveness to address evolving DC course and faculty needs. Each CCRSM Advisory Committee offers expert insight regarding regional workforce needs, educational programs of study, and how students may best be prepared over the next two to five years. Ysleta ISD will discuss course recommendations with EPCC for DC approval and with UTEP for the availability of accelerated graduate courses in identified content areas. Campus administrators track teachers who may be interested in future graduate studies and their areas of interest. Each spring, district personnel will work with campus administrators to identify specific teachers to address the faculty needs identified by the advisory committee. Through the refined identification, survey, rubric, and application processes, teachers will be educated, credentialed, and assigned to the DC course. DC teachers will continue to receive professional development, as appropriate, through both EPCC and Ysleta ISD.

There is an interdependent relationship between local school districts and regional institutions of higher education. This funding allows the opportunity for the three organizations to consider how practices may be more effectively aligned. From the boots-on-the-ground point-of-view, the district needs qualified teachers in the classroom. The goal is to streamline and strengthen practices by bolstering the relationship within the triad, effectively placing credentialed teachers to better serve students in relevant and engaging learning environments.

This funding provides the caveat of developing institutional relationships that will provide accelerated graduate programs. Ysleta ISD has occasionally provided financial support, through various funding streams, to teachers seeking their master's degree or certification fees for a specific certification (e.g., English as a second language). By establishing the internal processes, communication, and relationships with UTEP and EPCC, the DC teacher pipeline will be maintained.

TEA Program Requirements (Cont'd)

5. Recruitment and Retention: How were teachers identified and recruited? What new practices will be put into place to support their completion of the accelerated credentialing program? What commitment has the applicant made to educators to ensure that they will be able to teach college courses upon satisfaction of meeting credentialing requirements? What commitment has the applicant asked of educators to ensure that they will continue to serve the CCRSM beyond the grant period to teach college-level courses?

In advance of this application, data were reviewed and discussions between district and campus administrators took place to determine what DC courses were needed. The focus became the need for DC faculty in seven content areas (i.e., biology, communications, criminal justice, government, philosophy, psychology, and speech) and potential vacancies in other content areas across multiple CCRSM campuses. A list of potential teacher participants was developed.

Through this process, new practices were established: Each identified teacher was asked to complete a 1) survey and 2) the information on the Letter of Teacher Commitment to document their current educational status, their experience with the CCRSM, their intention toward the education they needed to be credentialed in one of the seven content areas (i.e., biology, communications, criminal justice, government, philosophy, psychology, speech) or to fill a vacancy in another content area, and their ability to complete their program of study by June 2023. To provide fair and equitable consideration of each interested teacher, 3) a rubric was developed to gauge the responses with regard to campus needs. Selected teachers are included on this application. In compliance with this grant, 4) each of the teachers on this application will serve in the CCRSM for the 2021-2022 school year. Once the grant is funded, 5) district personnel will develop an accountability document to document the teachers' commitment to remain assigned to the CCRSM for two years post-grant, through the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Each teacher understands the commitment to remain in the assigned DC faculty role two years post-grant and that their signature on the accountability document is required to move forward. The accountability document will be a separate form that will go through legal counsel for approval. Ultimately, the extra two-year commitment is the critical component for the desired faculty stability.

While supporting teachers as they earn their master's degree is not new to Ysleta ISD, the program manager will 6) work with EPCC and UTEP on tasks, processes, and documentation to ensure teachers are able to start their accelerated studies in fall 2021, 7) develop a supportive relationship with teacher participants (e.g., monthly check-ins, monitoring engagement, access to resources that will help them succeed), 8) verify course grades and facilitate the reimbursement process with the teachers. As with other grants, the program manager will work with the district's grant accountant regarding TEA's reimbursement process, 9) the program manager will work with EPCC to ensure each teacher is appropriately credentialed and is cleared to start teaching their DC course(s) in fall 2023. Teacher assignments will be made based on student enrollment thresholds in the designated courses. Ysleta ISD will provide the DC stipend as established. DC teachers will participate in professional development provided by the school district, their home campus, and as appropriate, by EPCC. Each CCRSM will plan and prepare for the respective new DC courses to start in the fall of 2023.

Given the breadth of the seven identified content areas in need of DC teachers or on a case-by-case basis for other content areas, the triad will be able to share checks and balances duties to ensure the most effective use of time and resources for the organizations and the teachers. The three entities have the opportunity to fine tune processes for identifying DC content area/course gaps [Ysleta ISD and EPCC], identify potential DC teachers [Ysleta ISD], enroll the teacher participants into their respective graduate programs [Ysleta ISD and UTEP], ensuring each teacher's graduate course of study is accelerated [UTEP], relevant to their needs [UTEP and Ysleta ISD], appropriate to DC credentialing and hiring [EPCC], course requirements [EPCC and Ysleta ISD], monitor grades [Ysleta ISD], manage reimbursements (e.g., test fees, tuition/fees, books, supplies) [Ysleta ISD], and that they have the support they need so that this cohort completes their studies by June 2023 [Ysleta ISD, UTEP, EPCC] and is teaching a DC course(s) by fall 2023.

Budget Narrative

Include a narrative describing how the proposed budget will support the needs and goals of the program, including for staffing, instructional expenses, supplies, materials, contracts, travel, etc. Describe any matches that are anticipated to support this program, either by the LEA, college partner, or educator. Describe the disbursement plan for the expenses incurred by educators participating in the program. Describe anticipated risks for this project and the adjustments which may be made over the course of the grant period.

Ysleta ISD has identified a total of eighteen (18) teachers, across nine (9) CCRSM campuses, who are committed to completing their master's degree and/or the additional hours required to teach DC course(s). The total request of this grant application is \$392,977, which is \$375,846 in direct costs and \$17,131 in indirect costs, with the following breakdown.

Of those teachers, five (5) have completed their master's degree and will focus on the hours they need to become credentialed; three teachers need 18 hours, one needs 12 hours, and the fifth needs six hours. The estimated combined cost for the five teachers is \$50,846. Funding in the amount of \$50,846 is requested to cover costs associated with completing the necessary hours in the identified area(s) of concentration.

The remaining thirteen (13) teachers will work on earning their master's degrees; it is estimated that they will require \$25,000 each. Funding in the amount of \$325,000 is requested to cover costs associated with those who will earn their master's degree.

Teacher participants have agreed to pay for their tuition, fees, books, and associated allowable costs in compliance with university policies on a semester basis. It is understood that funds will be reimbursed, based on successful completion of each course, that is, the teacher participant will earn an average of at least 75% or a grade point average of 2.0 for each course to be reimbursed.

Reimbursement for all allowable costs (i.e., tuition, fees, entrance exams, books, supplies) will be made using the district's established processes. As each semester is completed, the teacher participant will compile their grades and original receipts for allowable costs associated with that semester, and complete the Expenditure Form. The original documents are provided to the program manager for review and approval. Once the program manager approves the grades and expenses, the form and receipts are submitted to the Fund Accountant. Cross-functional discussions have taken place to ensure reimbursements are issued seamlessly and the payout should be provided in the next check run. To expedite the process, teacher participants will be asked to submit an electronic funds transfer (EFT) form at the outset of the program.

Ysleta ISD has considered the benefits and the risks. The critical benefit is maintaining the DC teacher pipeline needed to ensure students have access to the courses they want and need. This requires continuity planning and processes that attract teachers to further their education and earn their credentials. As the program is established, this first cohort moves forward and the next cohort is sought, processes will be monitored for continuous improvement opportunities.

There are risks to consider and mitigate as with all newly developed programs, especially with current public health unknowns. Teacher(s) may find themselves in circumstances (e.g., family responsibilities, graduate school challenges, workplace demands, leaving the district, and/or an out-of-town move) that impact their ability to successfully complete their studies in the allotted time or not at all. If a teacher must drop out and such changes occur prior to or during fall 2021, the district may be able to switch out that teacher with another candidate, prior to December 1, 2021, but the delayed start may mean the second teacher won't finish on time.

The district will use supplemental funds, based on need and availability of funds, to sustain those teacher(s) who do not finish their studies within the grant period. The district will cover those costs associated with teacher support and monthly check-ins. The program will be managed in the Ysleta ISD Department of Academics-High Schools, at no cost to the grant.

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