TEA
Texas Education Agency®

2021-2023 Title I, 1003 ESF-Focused Support Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 21, 2021

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, 2021.**

Grant period from	**July 8, 2021-September 30, 2023**
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 Pathway Attachment
3. Pathway 2: Pathway 2 Supplemental Pathway Attachment
   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	Brownsville ISD	CDN	031901	Campus	9 campuses	ESC	1	DUNS	030917579

Address	1900 E. Price Rd., Suite 307	City	Brownsville	ZIP	78521	Vendor ID	174-6000418

Primary Contact	Dr. Dora E. Sauceda	Email	drdesauceda@bisd.us	Phone	956-698-2091

Secondary Contact	Dr. Roni Louise Rentfro	Email	roni.rentfro@bisd.us	Phone	956-547-3590

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	Dr. Rene Gutierrez	Title	Superintendent of Schools

Email	rene.gutierrez@bisd.us	Phone	956-548-8011

Signature	*Rene Gutierrez 4-21-2021*	Date	04/20/2021

RFA #   SAS #

Shared Services Arrangements

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

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1	9
Pathway 2	9

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 2021-2023 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant Program Guidelines.

☒ 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2021-2023 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. For all pathways, the applicant will budget at least the minimum amount indicated in the Budget Object Code 6200 - Profession and Contracted Services.

Statutory/Program Assurances, cont'd.

☒ 10. The applicant will identify a campus leader, on each awarded campus, who will be responsible for managing the grant project.

☒ 11. The applicant will provide access to TEA and its Vetted Improvement Partners for on-site visits to the district and campus(es) as appropriate.

☒ 12. The applicant will attend and participate in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing of best practices through the TEA program office.

☒ 13. 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 web-based improvement plan, submission of funding and pathway progress reports.

Summary of Program

1. Describe how the LEA will support campus(es) in carrying out school support and improvement activities, including how the LEA will develop a web-based improvement plan for the eligible campuses selected for this grant.

Brownsville ISD will support the selected schools through the continuation and expansion of current district services and staff time. This includes the support of the Campus Intervention Teams (CIT) that is composed of the District Coordinator of School Improvement (DCSI) and the Assistant Superintendents assigned as each principal's supervisor. In addition, the BISD curriculum-related support staff, the BISD Human Resources Department staff, and other program support staff will be tasked as appropriate to meet the needs of each campus. The district has the staff and support programs in place to assist campuses in implementing school improvement activities. The district is applying for this grant to be able to fund external service providers that have been vetted by the Texas Education Agency to accelerate the improvement process and take advantage of the outside expertise in a more intensive manner than is otherwise currently feasible.

The district has been implementing the web-based Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) creation, revision, monitoring, and evaluation since Fall 2014 using the 806Technologies Plan4Learning software. Campus Improvement Plans are developed, reviewed, and revised by campus Site-based Decision-Making (SBDM) Committees. Campus Leadership Teams (CLTs) are composed of a subset of the campus SBDM membership along with any other appropriate staff members from the district or campus and this group more specifically works to develop and monitor the Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP).

Campus facilitators will continue to receive district training and supports for the implementation and documentation of the continuous improvement process from the DCSI and other program staff. The schools in improvement (identified for Targeted and Additional Targeted supports) all have CLTs and SBDMs that have worked with the DCSI and principal's supervisor to develop Targeted Improvement Plans based on the ESF self-assessment guidance since originally identified for state and/or federal accountability. The CIT and CLTs will monitor the implementation of the Targeted Improvement Plans after the plans are revised for 2021-2022 and then transition them into the web-based improvement plans. The web-based format should facilitate CIT and CLT monitoring of the implementation of the selected activities each cycle. The district is already discussing moving all Targeted Improvement Plans into this web-based model due to the greater ability to monitor progress more effectively, regardless of the grant.

2. Describe how the LEA will monitor schools receiving the ESF-Focused Support Grant, including how the LEA will: (a) Monitor a web-based improvement plans upon submission and during implementation, and (b) Implement additional action following unsuccessful implementation of such plan after the first year of the grant cycle.

The district will monitor schools receiving the 2021-2023 Title I, 1003 ESF-Focused Support Grant implementation through effective use of appropriate district staff. The District Coordinator of School Improvement (DCSI), along with the campus's Assistant Superintendent, will work closely with the Campus Leadership Team (CLT) to conduct an updated needs assessment in August to identify current needs, conduct root cause analysis, and develop a strong web-based Improvement Plan (IP) with action steps aligned to the goals and components of the selected priority focus areas and success towards milestones of implementing the approved ESF Vetted Improvement Programs. Once the grant is awarded, the district staff will work the selected VIPs to incorporate the program milestones and goals into the web-based Improvement Plan.

The web-based improvement plans greatly facilitate the monitoring of the implementation of the selected targeted action steps by making it easier for the CLT and CIT to document the progress in collaboration with the assigned regional and state supporting staff. The web-based improvement plans facilitate the cyclical monitoring process during the school year by including tools and resources that guide the continuous improvement process documentation and feedback from the CIT and others with external oversight and support responsibilities. The web-based IP should be accessible by campus, district, regional, and TEA staff and should assist in supporters' ability to conduct scheduled check-ins on the progress towards successful completion of actions or activities and achieving programmatic and achievement goals.

As the plan continues to be implemented, a key part of the process is to stop or revise any action steps that are not supporting improvement in the selected priority focus area(s) based on available data from multiple sources. Depending upon what actions are not successful after the first year of the grant cycle, the district will apply for any needed amendments to the grant plan and/or funding in order to increase the successful implementation of the improvement plan. This could include revisions to the VIP agreements, revisions to data collection and analysis, revisions to the action steps, or revisions to district supports.

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 aligned web-based Improvement Plan.

Brownsville ISD will modify, as appropriate, practices and policies to provide operational flexibility to awarded campuses to support the implementation of their respective web-based Improvement Plans. The district is committed to approving the use of the selected TEA Vetted Improvement Plan (VIP) providers as vendors that are part of the grant. The district will provide additional and more focused programmatic supports to ensure the full and effective implementation of the essential actions that are aligned to the web-based Improvement Plan. These supports may include more flexible budgeting of funds by the campus to better align various funds, prioritize district responses to identified needs for supports, and additional time committed by district staff supporting the implementation of the ESF Improvement Plans' essential actions.

All school improvement campuses have identified the need to improve the Essential Action 5.1: Objective-driven daily lesson plans with formative assessments. In addition, all campus leadership know there is a need to continue to address Essential Action 1.1: Develop campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities and/or 5.3 Data Driven Instruction. As part of the district supports, the Curriculum and Instruction Department staff will continue to prioritize meeting the campus needs for development of stronger implementation of the district's core scope and sequences/frameworks as well as support for implementation of the district's on-line lesson planning software application that integrates sharing of successful lessons and feedback from campus and district staff. In addition, the Assessment, Research and Evaluation Department staff will provide additional supports for actions steps related to developing stronger formative assessments and using the district's assessment software to provide rapid turnaround of assessment data.

Budget Narrative

1. 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.

The majority of the proposed budget is focused on the contracts with selected Regional ESC and External Vetted Improvement Program (VIP) providers. The district will provide additional staff time and supports as well as support the use of other district and campus funds for needed supplies, materials, and travel expenditures.

BISD has a long history of implementing grant-supported projects and aligning other district financial and personnel supports. One of the lessons learned from this history, is the importance of taking advantage of the grant funding and external supports to improve district prioritization of other funding and staff to create sustainable reform and improvement. The district was the recipient of six Texas Title I Priority School (T-TIPS) grants for five high schools and one middle school. These grants, along with participation in an i3 grant, brought these campuses from being in state and/or federal improvement to successful early college high schools and 2019 overall accountability ratings of As and Bs.

The campus CITs and CLTs worked quickly to review possible VIP providers and Regional ESC services to select the services that seemed to best meet the needs of the district's schools in improvement that are eligible for funding. Based on the data and documentation reviewed to update the beginning of year ESF Self-Assessments, progress to date on current Targeted Improvement Plans, and consultation with district and campus leadership, the grant includes both Regional Service Center and external VIPs. The five elementary campuses and one of the middle school campus have selected the Instruction Partner's services as those that appear to best meet their needs. The middle school selecting the same provider as the elementary campuses has two of the elementary campuses in its feeder pattern. The remaining three middle school campuses have selected the E3 Alliance services. In addition, the decision was agreed to by all involved to use the Region One ESC VIP services for all campuses and principal supervisors to provide uniform program implementation and supports district-wide for Observation and Feedback (Action Coaching). It is believed that this combination of supports will greatly accelerate these campuses and the district in improving student outcomes for all learners. Building the capacity of key district and campus individuals to help build the capacities of others is one of the main aspects to sustained school improvement success.

Outside of the contract budget area, minimal funding has been allocated for substitutes and stipends (6100), supplies and materials (6300), and travel (6400) because these expenditures will be supported by campus and district allocation of funds from other local, state and federal funds. The grant is not expected to be the only source of funds being provided to implement identified action steps.

Adjustments to the grant programs will be based on data collected by the campuses, district and VIP providers. If needed, the district will submit programmatic and/or budget-related amendments to TEA to support adjustments required to address future needs.

Budget Narrative, cont'd.

2. Describe how the LEA will align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with funds received under this grant.

Outside of the contract budget area (6200), minimal grant funding has been allocated for substitutes and stipends (6100), supplies and materials (6300), and travel (6400) because these expenditures will be supported by campus and district allocation of funds from other local, state, and federal funds. The grant is not expected to be the only source of funds being provided to implement identified action steps. One example of other funds supporting the implementation is the district funding of the lesson planning and assessment software with training for supporting teachers using the application. Another example is supplemental funds from Title and State Compensatory sources being targeted for additional supplies and materials to address action steps.

Resources will also include additional time of district and campus personnel to assist campuses in addressing the action steps as well as support the external service provider activities at the campuses. Implementation will require additional time and effort from program support staff, Assistant Superintendents assigned to the campuses, and the District Coordinator of School Improvement.

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
Group	Barrier