



**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

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

Pre-award costs permitted from

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 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

Shared Services Arrangements

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

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1

Pathway 2

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.

More than 97% of Waco Charter School students are economically and educationally disadvantaged from the impact of poverty. Children in poverty enter school with limited academic vocabulary and minimal expressive language skills as well as struggling socially to transition to the structures and expectations in the school setting. During RSSP Year 1, campus administrators struggled to collect observation data and provide project-specific feedback to build teachers' instructional strength.

Waco Charter School proposes to use the EFS-Focused Support Grant opportunity to provide school support and improvement activities for campus administrators and teacher leaders with professional development targeting instructional leadership, coaching and curriculum content understanding. This project will be conducted in tandem with the Resilient Schools Support Project Year 2 which will focus on increasing depth and rigor of instruction in kindergarten through grade 5 using more complex texts in ELAR, helping students gain the concepts, vocabulary and expressive language skill to explain their thinking in mathematics problem-solving and to extend these two areas of development across the other core content areas. As a part of both projects, teachers and administrators will be trained to collect, analyze and use data to provide effective instruction to meet student growth needs.

The Effective Schools Framework combines five levers to create an effective and successful learning environment. Lever 1 names Strong School Leadership and Planning as a critical area for school improvement where "Effective campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities develop, implement, and monitor focused improvement plans that address the causes of low performance." When paired with Lever 5, Effective Instruction with the focus of "...all students have rigorous learning experiences because the school ensures objective-driven daily lessons, classroom routines, and formative assessments that yield the data necessary for teachers to reflect, adjust, and deliver instruction that meets the needs of each student." These two areas of growth that are necessary to school improvement for Waco Charter School staff are included in the current CIP and project-funded activities because they have repeatedly yielded proven results in producing student growth through strong data-driven instruction.

By participating in Pathway 1 – ESC Supported VIP, Waco Charter School administrators and teacher leaders will use the suite of trainings from Texas Instructional Leadership in partnership with ESC Region 12 to help the participants to develop instructional leadership skills in the areas of observation and feedback, student culture, and data driven instruction. Combining both streams of growth will assure that both teachers and leaders are growing in a common effort to build a strong effective instructional program that can be sustained for new personnel who may join the team.

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.

Waco Charter School will monitor implementation of the ESF-Focused Support Grant (FSG) through periodic monitoring of progress toward completion of these targets:

- 1) Participate in the ESF Diagnostic process to determine campus and staff strengths and weaknesses to support and address through the ESF-Focused Support Grant. The ESF Diagnostic results are expected to yield specific measures to be included in the campus plan and monitored and adjusted to demonstrate student achievement growth through the project period and beyond.
- 2) Development of a web-based improvement plan that clearly demonstrates the incorporation of grant activities into the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) goals and objectives and provides transparent access to results of periodic monitoring and adjustments to stakeholders. The plan objectives should reflect strategies to address needs uncovered in the annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
- 3) Documentation of hours and elements of grant-related training for each staff member.
- 3) Creation and implementation of electronic calendars for the campus and administrators recording the improvement events, including but not limited to schedule of professional development, PLC meetings, teacher observations and feedback meetings, and periodic CIP progress checks.
- 4) Assess progress quarterly toward meeting student achievement targets. Consult with PSP / Coach biweekly to set, define and express goals as well as assess progress. Consult with TIL trainers and RSSP coaches for input to corrective steps to achieve project and campus goals.
- 5) Use root-cause analysis to identify contributing factors preventing full implementation of the CIP and project goals. Plans will be adjusted as needed to address the source and sustain improvement,

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.

Waco Charter School was founded to address the needs of children from poverty in the Sanger Heights neighborhood. Policies are in place to provide the flexibility for EOAC programs to provide financial resources that WCS students and families may need to overcome the barriers to exiting poverty. The Effective Schools Framework Essential Actions can be successfully implemented with fidelity within the current school schedule and adopted curriculum. Staff at administrative, teacher and paraprofessional levels are required to have the appropriate education to meet federal highly-qualified standards and hold Texas SBEC certifications for working in the PK-grade 5 environment. Previous improvement efforts to extend the daily schedule beyond the 420 minute daily minimum, encourage continuous learning for staff through professional development and/or undergraduate and graduate study, and creative methods of involving parents and families as learning partners have been continued. Emerging best practices and learning platforms are evaluated for potential benefit and effective implementation. One recommended adjustment is to engage students to participate in setting learning goals in age-appropriate ways and then guide them to monitor and record their progress as a strategy for individual success.

No policy or practice barriers exist at the time of application. As self-assessment reveals barriers, old or new, the Board of Directors can be approached to consider and approve policy changes in a timely manner to allow staff to pursue research-based solutions to maximize student success.

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.

Waco Charter School goals for the ESF-Focused Support Grant program are student centered. With 97% of WCS students being economically and educationally disadvantaged, they enter school with less academic vocabulary, underdeveloped expressive language skills and with fewer social skills for adapting to the school academic environment. Achieving Board-adopted goals for this population to reach mastery learning levels by third grade will require exceptional instructional skill and focus. This grant is one more step toward that goal by preparing staff to enhance instruction to overcome skill gaps for students to demonstrate "Meets" level achievement on annual STAAR reading and math assessments.

Payroll costs included in this grant will provide substitute teachers for teacher leaders to attend training and participate in observations and model lessons for peer teachers. Extra-duty pay is included to reimburse teachers for using their conference period for peer coaching, observation and modeling. An amount is also included for benefits for these payroll costs.

Professional and Contracted Services included will fund a two-year subscription to a web-based tool for the campus improvement plan and facilitate transparency with stakeholders. Another contract cost is included to allow three instructional leaders and three teacher leaders to participate in the Texas Instructional Leadership training with ESC Region 12. In addition to this professional development, the training program includes implementation support, observations and additional tailored support to guide successful application of those skills. Additionally, WCS will seek to contract with ESC Region 12 for the service of a PSP/Coach to assist in planning, executing and monitoring progress of the project. State funds are budgeted for staff development. This grant will enhance the staff development opportunities for teachers through an instructional coaching contract with ESC Region 12 to provide quarterly content coaching for teachers to implement research-based instructional strategies and to assist teachers to apply what they have learned through data disaggregation of student data and enable teachers to drill down and determine each child's strengths and weaknesses academically. An on-demand book-study workshop to understand the interrelationships among poverty, motivation and behavior is proposed to address social-emotional needs of the WCS student population.

Finally, the project proposes to send the leadership team to an in-state Instructional Coaching Conference to network and gain strategies from peers. Supply and materials costs are included to purchase office supplies for participants to create a project reference library as well as providing instructional resources for teachers. Travel and per-diem costs are included to allow the leadership team to be housed in the conference hotel during the Instructional Leadership Conference.

Waco Charter School will use available federal, state and local resources to fund ongoing professional development of instruction leaders and teachers. Few of the proposed project activities will require funding to be extended beyond the project period. Future funding for the web-based planning tool will be identified in the CIP and absorbed into the annual budget with state or federal funds. WCS uses ESSA Title IIA funds to underwrite the cost of membership in the Enhanced Curriculum Coop with ESC Region 12 which allows staff to participate in instructional professional development sessions for a reduced or zero additional registration cost. As most educators have a required continuing education requirement, WCS can require a specified number of hours of professional development for instructional leaders in priority improvement topics identified in the CIP as an evaluation metric for WCS staff.

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.

Waco Charter School (WCS) will continue to direct existing federal, state and local resources to support the campus' instructional program, fund salaries of the participating team members and provide for campus operational support during the project period and beyond. The campus team is 100% invested in helping WCS students overcome the deficits of poverty origins to become capable learners with the skills to match the performance of peers across the state. WCS actively seeks opportunities, like this grant project, to improve the instructional program to meet the unique needs of its student population. WCS has been accepted to participate in the CRIMSI Summer Pilot program for summer learning in 2021 to overcome some of the 2020-2021 learning loss as well as the Resilient Schools Support Program Year 2 project for 2021-2022 to strengthen the depth and rigor in virtual and on-campus instructional delivery with the support of the technical assistance provider. Professional development needs beyond the ESF project period will be met from training offered through the ESC Region 12 Enhanced Curriculum Co-operative and the Leadership Co-operative. ESC Region 12 offers support in almost any area of program development need. That partnership has benefited WCS often in the past and will continue . The supports offered from the ESF-Focused Support program will fund new initiatives that will contribute to a stronger instructional foundation and give instructional leaders (both administrators and peer-teachers) the training, coaching and tools for setting, monitoring and adjusting improvement-focused goals. The grant-funded activities are focused on building the capacity of instructional leaders to conduct targeted observations and give proactive feedback to support teachers to deliver effective instruction to meet the campus goal for each student to make sufficient academic progress yearly that will prepare them to meet or exceed the skills needed for math and reading success in the next grade level.

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