

PROGRAM GUIDELINES: 2021–2023 CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT (SUBCHAPTER D)

APPLICATION DUE DATE

11:59 p.m. Central Time, January 19, 2021

PROGRAM AUTHORITY

Public Law 114-95, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), Title IV, Part C – Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools; Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 12; and Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 100, Subchapter AA

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA). Program Guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and the specific program instructions. The Adobe Acrobat Standard Application System (SAS) consists of all forms to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

Reference to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#)

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). **It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.**

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² Grantee is defined as the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the federal government for the use of the funds provided. The term "grantee" does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors that may receive funds from a grantee. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education Appropriations Act:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$7,200,000
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	\$7,200,000
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	0%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$0

Grant Timeline

All of these dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Date	Event
December 11, 2020	RFA available; notice of the RFA published in the <i>Texas Register</i>
December 16, 2020	Last date to submit questions to be addressed in the applicant's Conference/Webinar See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference/Webinar
December 18, 2020	Applicants' Conference/Webinar
January 6, 2021	Last date to submit FAQs to TEA contact person See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions
January 12, 2021	Due date for the Notice of Intent to Apply
January 12, 2021	Due date for Reviewer Information Form
January 12, 2021	FAQs posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page
January 19, 2021	Due date for the application in the TEA Document Control Center, 11:59 p.m., Central Time See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Competitive Application Due Date and Time
January 26, 2021 – February 16, 2021	Competitive review period See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Competitive Review Process
April 1, 2021	Beginning date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period
May 2, 2023	Final date to submit an amendment
July 31, 2023	Ending date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the page. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant program is authorized by the Public Law 114-95, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), Title IV, Part C – Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools; Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 12; and Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 100, Subchapter AA.

Where to Submit the Application

See the Where to Submit the Competitive Application section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#).

Number of Copies

See the Copies and Signature for Competitive Grants section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#).

Purpose of Program

The purpose of this program is to provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools and support the growth of high-quality charter schools in Texas, especially those focused on improving academic outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students.

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility To Apply for Competitive Grants.

Eligible applicants include open-enrollment charter schools that meet the federal definition of a charter school, have never received funds under this grant program, and are one of the following:

(1) an open-enrollment charter school authorized by the commissioner of education under the Generation 25 charter application pursuant to the TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter D; or

(2) an open-enrollment charter school that has been designated by the commissioner of education, for the 2021-2022 school year, as a high-quality campus and does not have a current Charter School Program (CSP) High-Quality Replication Grant.

Charters awarded by the commissioner under the Generation 25 application that have been notified of contingencies to be cleared prior to receiving a charter contract are considered eligible to apply for the grant. However, these charters should be diligent in working with TEA to complete the contingency process as all contingencies pertaining to the charter application and approval must be cleared and a contract issued to the charter holder prior to receiving grant funding, if awarded.

Note: Open-enrollment charter schools interested in submitting expansion amendment requests and corresponding applications for high-quality campus designation between January 1 and March

1, 2021, are not eligible to apply for this grant. These charter schools will have to wait until the next CSP Grant opportunity, which will be released at a later date.

Important: Any charter school that does not open prior to Wednesday, September 7, 2022, after having been awarded grant funds, may be required to forfeit any remaining grant funds, and may be required to reimburse any expended amounts to TEA.

Eligibility List

An eligibility list **is not** posted on the [TEA Grant Opportunities page](#), with all documents pertaining to the RFA.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) **are not** allowed for this grant program.

More Than One Application

An open-enrollment charter school that has been designated by the commissioner of education, for the 2021-2022 school year, as a high-quality campus and does not have a current Charter School Program (CSP) High-Quality Replication Grant **may** apply for the grant on behalf of more than one charter school campus that is replicating a high-quality charter school model. A separate application must be submitted for each replicating charter school campus.

Application Funding

See the following sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#):

- Grant Funding
- Continuation Funding
- Fund Management
- Use of Funds

It is anticipated that approximately eight grants will be awarded, ranging in amounts up to \$900,000.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be selected in rank order.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

Direct Administrative Costs

The authorizing statute does not permit direct administrative costs for this grant program.

Indirect Administrative Costs

TEA does not permit indirect administrative costs for this grant program.

Pre-Award Costs

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs **are not** permitted for this grant.

Applicant Assistance

The following types of assistance are available to applicants for this grant program.

Contact for Clarifying Information

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), TEA Contacts.

The following TEA staff member should be contacted with questions about the RFA, the grant program, or for assistance with the applicants' webinar:

Arnoldo Alaniz
Division of Charter School Authorizing and Administration
CharterSchools@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 463-9575

Frequently Asked Questions

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Frequently Asked Questions.

The FAQs for this grant program will be posted to the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) site no later than the date listed on the Grant Timeline. Applicants may email their questions to the TEA staff member listed in the Contact for Clarifying Information section.

Applicants' Conference/Webinar

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) Applicants' Conference/Webinar.

Questions that applicants wish to have addressed during the applicants' webinar must be submitted no later than the date given in the grant timeline.

Date of Webinar	Time	Registration Link	Type
December 18, 2020	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. CT	https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QFLrXBaBQc2T4nEN6T0T9A	Live and Recorded

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

GovDelivery Email Bulletins

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), GovDelivery Email Bulletins.

Program Elements

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Description

The purpose of the Texas Quality Charter Schools Program Grant is to support the growth of high-quality charter schools in Texas, especially those focused on improving academic outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students. This will be achieved through administering the 2021–2023 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter D) to assist eligible applicants in opening and preparing for the operation of newly-authorized charter schools and replicated high-quality schools.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Grants Administration Division's [Administering a Grant](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision **applies** to this grant program.

SMART Goal

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), SMART Goals, Additional SMART Goal Guidance from TEA, and Measurable Goals and Progress.

Measurable Progress

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), SMART Goals, Additional SMART Goal Guidance from TEA, and Measurable Goals and Progress.

Application Requirements and Assurances

This section describes the two types of requirements that applicants must address in the application (such as with a narrative description, an activity timeline, or a checklist) to be eligible to be considered for funding:

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)
- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)

Program-Specific Assurances

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Provisions and Assurances.

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 and commissioner 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 grant 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 and commissioner 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 Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2021–2023 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter D) Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education

Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.

4. The applicant provides assurance that the applicant's financial accounting system adheres to the following requirements:
 - a. accommodates the minimum 15-digit account code mandated by the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG);
 - b. generates information needed for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting; and
 - c. ensures adequate accountability of state and federal funds.

If the applicant's financial accounting system is not approved by TEA, the applicant assures that it will budget and acquire an acceptable accounting system and training with these grant funds. Additionally, the applicant will be required to submit proof of an acceptable accounting system prior to receiving continued and/or additional funding.

5. The applicant provides assurance that it will maintain clear documentation and data for the school and students served by this grant program; will comply with any reporting and evaluation requirements that may be established by the TEA; and will submit the reports in the format and manner requested by TEA's Division of Financial Compliance. Grantees will be required to cooperate with the team that has been contracted to evaluate the use of the grant funds.
6. The applicant provides assurance that it has on file a certificate of occupancy or the equivalent, for the instructional facility. At any time, should the TEA Division of Charter School Authorizing and Administration request a copy, the applicant will provide such copy immediately.
7. According to Title IV, Part C of ESSA, to receive federal grant funds of any type, including U. S. Department of Education funds, the charter school must meet the federal definition of a charter school. By signing Attachment #1 and submitting the application, the authorized official of the public charter school certifies that each of the statements in the definition is true and that the school is in compliance with this definition. A charter school is not eligible to receive any federal funds at any time, formula or discretionary, from TEA if it does not comply with this definition.
8. Open-enrollment charter holders applying on behalf of a high-quality campus approved by the commissioner of education must also comply with the following:

The applicant provides assurance that the existing charter, as approved by the applicable state authorizer (the State Board of Education or the commissioner of education), and the Application for High-Quality Campus Designation, under which the new charter school campus was approved by the commissioner of education, are incorporated by reference into

this grant application and addresses statutory requirements in compliance with P.L. 114-95, Title IV, Part C, ESSA.

By certifying acceptance of and compliance with these provisions and assurances, the applicant further certifies that noncompliance with any of these provisions and assurances may result in forfeiture of participation in this grant program.

Statutory Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Statutory Requirements.

Per TEC §22.0834, any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a grantee or subgrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fingerprinting Requirement.

All applicants must address the following eight statutory requirements in the application:

1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the eligible applicant, any partner organizations, and charter management organizations, as applicable, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners.
2. Describe the quality controls agreed to between the eligible applicant and the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA), such as a contract or performance agreement, how a school's performance in the state's accountability system and impact on student achievement (which may include student academic growth) will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA) will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school.
3. Describe how the autonomy and flexibility granted to the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus is consistent with the definition of a charter school in Section 4310, including how the proposed charter school campus will have a high degree of autonomy over budget and operations and personnel decisions. Include a detailed description of the ways in which the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus will be permitted to govern autonomously, as evidenced by the day-to-day decision makers at the campus and their input with regard to the school's curriculum, calendar, budget, and daily operations.
4. Describe how the eligible applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of the proposed charter school campus.
5. Describe the eligible applicant's planned activities and expenditures of grant funds to open and prepare for the operation of the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school

campus, and how the eligible applicant will maintain financial sustainability after the end of the grant period.

6. Describe how the eligible applicant will support the use of effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate the proposed charter school campus.
7. Describe the eligible applicant's plan for meeting the transportation needs of the students at the proposed charter school campus.
8. Describe and justify any requests for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the eligible applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school, and a description of any state or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes to be waived or otherwise not apply to the school.

For newly-authorized open-enrollment charter schools, the charter approved by the commissioner of education is incorporated by reference into this grant application and addresses statutory requirements in compliance with P.L. 114-95, Title IV, Part C, ESSA.

For open-enrollment charter holders applying on behalf of a high-quality campus approved by the commissioner of education, the existing charter, as approved by the applicable state authorizer (the SBOE or the commissioner of education), and the Application for High-Quality Campus Designation, under which the new charter school campus was approved by the commissioner of education, are incorporated by reference into this grant application and address statutory requirements in compliance with P.L. 114-95, Title IV, Part C, ESSA.

TEA Program Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Program Requirements.

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements. Applicants must address within the application how they will achieve the following:

1. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2021–2022.
2. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2022–2023.
3. Provide the number of students to be served in 2021–2022 who would otherwise attend an F-rated campus (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serves the same grade levels as the proposed charter school. Please click on the All Campuses by Rating link available at https://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Accountability/State_Accountability/Performance_Reporting/2019_Accountability_Rating_System for more information.
4. Provide the names and nine-digit county/district/campus numbers of the F-rated campuses (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serve the same grade levels as the proposed charter school that you will be impacting as described above. Please click on the All Campuses by Rating link available at https://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Accountability/State_Accountability/Performance_Reporting/2019_Accountability_Rating_System for more information.

Activities and Use of Funds

See the [Administering a Grant](#) page for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds. Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel costs may be funded under this grant program. Out-of-state travel costs should be minimal. Travel costs are allowable as long as the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items are only incurred by employees on official business of the grantee and follow the grantee's regular business operations and written travel policy.

Out-of-State Travel will require a written justification form to be maintained locally and made available to TEA upon request. To access the Out-of-State Travel Justification form, refer to the [Administering a Grant page](#).

Travel Costs for Officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members

Travel costs for officials such as the executive director, superintendent, or board members may be funded under the grant program. Only travel costs to attend professional development or

training associated with the initial planning and design of the educational program, including curriculum planning and development, are allowable for these positions.

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Teacher, school leader, and specialized instructional support personnel (specialized instructional support personnel can be charter campus based or new charter management organization staff dedicated to providing instructional supports) salaries, limited during the planning phase and up to the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase, which starts the day the charter school campus begins to serve students, provided that these expenses are associated with initial implementation activities (i.e., as opposed to ongoing operations), such as (a) informing the community about the campus; (b) acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies; (c) acquiring or developing curriculum materials; and (d) teacher and staff recruiting (Note: If personnel split their time between ongoing operational activities and initial implementation activities, only that portion of the time associated with initial implementation of the charter school campus is allowable as an initial operational cost. The charter school campus must maintain accurate time and effort records to document the amount of time each employee works on tasks related to the initial implementation of the charter school campus. ESSA defines the term ‘specialized instructional support personnel’ as “school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists; and other qualified professional personnel, such as school nurses, speech language pathologists, and school librarians, involved in providing assessment, diagnosis, counseling, educational, therapeutic, and other necessary services, including related services as that term is defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1401] as part of a comprehensive program to meet student needs.”)
- Teacher, school leader, and specialized instructional support personnel salaries (specialized instructional support personnel can be charter campus based or new charter management organization staff dedicated to providing instructional supports), limited during the planning phase and up to the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase, which starts the day the charter school campus begins to serve students, provided that these expenses are associated with planning activities (i.e., as opposed to ongoing operations), such as refinement of the desired educational results and the methods for measuring progress toward achieving those results and professional development of teachers and other staff who will work in the charter school campus, that occur by the 30th day of operation (Note: If personnel split their time between ongoing operational activities and planning activities, only that portion of the time associated with conducting the planning activities is allowable as an initial operational cost. The charter school campus must maintain accurate time and effort records to document the amount of time each employee works on tasks related to the planning activities associated with the charter school campus. ESSA defines the term ‘specialized instructional support personnel’ as “school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists; and other qualified professional personnel, such as school nurses, speech language pathologists, and school librarians, involved in providing assessment, diagnosis, counseling, educational, therapeutic, and other necessary services, including related services as that term is defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1401] as part of a comprehensive program to meet student needs.”)

- One-time start-up equipment purchases necessary to implement a charter school, which may include, but are not necessarily limited to, desks, chairs, computers, equipment related to technology, physical education and art, and playground equipment
- Costs associated with the installation of computers, data systems, networks, and telephones
- Rental or occupancy costs for the school facility, up to the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase, in preparation for the opening of the charter school campus
- Costs associated with carrying out necessary renovations and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction) to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations [Examples of minor facilities repairs may include repairing a leak in the roof, replacing a broken window, and repairing a furnace or air conditioning unit. In essence, minor facilities repairs neither add to the permanent value of the property nor appreciably prolong its intended life, but rather, keep it in efficient operating condition (2 CFR 200.452).]
- One-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school campus
- Special education support
- Financial management software and training
- Professional development/training for teachers and staff, including travel and registration fees
- Implementing PEIMS
- Property insurance to cover equipment purchased with grant funds
- Other operating costs expended on allowable activities that cannot be supported from other state or local sources

General Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

In general, refer to the Budgeting Cost Guidance Handbook on the [Administering a Grant](#) page for unallowable costs.

- Field Trips
- Advisory Councils
- Memberships in civic or community organizations
- Hosting or sponsoring conferences

In addition, unallowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Debt service (lease-purchase)

- Food
- Salaries or contracted personnel beyond the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase of the charter school campus, which starts the day the campus begins to serve students
- Rental or occupancy costs for the school facility beyond the first 30 days of the initial implementation phase, which starts the day the campus begins to serve students
- Lease/rental of equipment
- Purchase or lease of land or real estate
- Construction
- Consumable instructional or other supplies and materials
- Accounting/bookkeeping services except for the purchase of accounting software to comply with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)
- Ongoing costs associated with transportation for students to and from the charter school campus during the regular school day
- Annual audit services
- Ongoing food service
- Other property and liability insurance
- Interest on loans
- Deposits of any kind, such as security deposits or service deposits
- Religious instruction, materials, or insignia
- Extra-curricular activities such as University Interscholastic League (UIL), competitions, athletic programs that are not part of the state-required physical education program, and clubs (e.g., chess club)

Project Evaluation and Modification

By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the required evaluation reports in the format and time requested by TEA. TEA will collect and analyze relevant data from PEIMS if it is available.

Specific critical success factors and milestones will be developed in a manner determined appropriate by TEA.

Performance Measures

The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance measures:

Applicants are required to describe how project evaluation data will be used to monitor the grant program on an ongoing basis and to determine whether the program is on track to achieve the summative SMART Goal and meet the Quantifiable Needs based on established Benchmarks included in the grant application. By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any reporting and evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the reports in the format and time requested by TEA. In addition, grantees will be required to cooperate with the team contracted to evaluate the use of the grant funds.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

When a grantee chooses, or is required under a grant, to hire a contracted evaluator, TEA believes that the evaluator must have the capability to remain independent and objective in

carrying out the evaluation. “Independent and objective” implies that there is no influence or control, real or perceived, exerted on the evaluator by any person who is involved in the provision of program services. Therefore, the only way in which a contracted evaluator can be truly independent and objective is not to be involved in any manner with the provision of program services or activities. Otherwise, the evaluator is, at least in part, evaluating its own services.

In addition, TEA is aware that some grant writers develop and design the grant program, write the entire grant application, and then wish to evaluate the grant program. TEA also believes that this scenario poses a conflict of interest for the evaluator, in that the evaluator is evaluating the grant program that he or she designed, developed, and wrote. Again, it is not possible for the evaluator to function independently and objectively if the evaluator performed in this capacity. It is certainly acceptable for the grant writer to receive some information from a potential evaluator to include in the evaluation section of the grant application with regard to an appropriate evaluation plan or design, but communication between the grant writer and evaluator should be limited to that specific topic.

Applicants should make every effort to ensure that contracted evaluators be independent and objective.

Federal Grant Requirements

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement **does** apply to this federally funded grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement **does not** apply to this federally funded grant program.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement **does not** apply to this federally funded grant program.

Application Elements

This section describes the requirements and attachments that must be addressed in and included with the application.

Notice of Intent to Apply

For competitive grants, prospective applicants are requested to submit the Notice of Intent to Apply (NOI) by the date specified in the Grant Timeline. The NOI provides helpful information that allows TEA staff to plan for the management of the applications and review processes. Failure to notify TEA of the intent to apply will **not** disqualify the applicant from applying for grant funds.

The NOI is published along with the RFA on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Reviewer Information Form

For every application submitted for a competitive grant, the applicant is required to submit the names of three individuals to serve as reviewers in the competitive review process for the grant program. For LEAs submitting multiple campus grant applications, the LEA must submit a minimum of three reviewers per campus application or a total of ten reviewers, whichever is less.

Individuals who are hired to prepare grant applications may not serve as reviewers, and their names should not be submitted. Applicants must notify the people whose names they submit that they may be asked by TEA to serve as reviewers.

Once reviewers are selected, they will receive detailed information about the review process. The competitive review for the grant program will take place during the time period given in the Grant Timeline.

The Reviewer Information Form is published along with the RFA on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. All applicants are required to complete the form and to submit it online on or before the date given in the Grant Timeline.

Required Attachments

See the following section of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#):

- Required Program-Related Attachments

Required Program-Related Attachments

- Attachment 1: Federal Definition of a Public Charter School

Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of applications for competitive grants.

Standard Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Standard Review Criteria.

Specific Review Criteria

See the Specific Review Criteria.

Grant Specific Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>The application includes goals and objectives that reflect the state and federal objectives of expanding the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the state.</p> <p>Note: Applicants must provide this information in the Identify/Address Needs, SMART Goal, and Measurable Progress sections of the application.</p> <p>The SMART Goal should align with the Identify/Address Needs and Measurable Progress sections of the application. The Quantifiable Needs, SMART Goal, and the Benchmarks associated with Measurable Progress must be able to be met or achieved during the grant period.</p> <p>The SMART Goal should be stated in the following format: By (SPECIFIC DATE), (PERCENT) of (ALL STUDENTS or A SPECIFIC STUDENT GROUP or STUDENT GROUPS) will achieve (LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE) on the (SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT).</p> <p>Example: In spring 2021, 80% of all students who are assessed will have achieved acceptable performance on the reading/ELA examinations that are part of the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR).</p>	10
<p>Total Maximum Number of Grant Specific Criteria Points</p>	<p>10</p>

Priorities for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) Priorities for Funding.

TEA Priority	Maximum Points
<p>The number of students projected to be served in 2021-2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 and above: 10 points 150-199: 7 points 101-149: 4 points 75-100: 1 point <p><i>Note: Priority points will be awarded based on information provided in TEA Program Requirement #1.</i></p>	10
<p>By the second year of the grant (2022-2023), a minimum of 50 students will be in grades assessed for state accountability purposes (grades 3-11).</p> <p><i>Note: Priority points will be awarded based on information provided in TEA Program Requirement #2.</i></p>	5
<p>Percent of students that will benefit from this program who would otherwise attend an F-rated campus (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serves the same grade levels as the proposed charter school. Please click on the All Campuses by Rating for more information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50%: 5 points At least 40%: 4 points At least 30%: 3 points At least 20%: 2 points At least 10%: 1 point 	5

<i>Note: Priority points will be awarded based on information provided in TEA Program Requirements #1 and #3.</i>	
Total Maximum Number of Statutory or TEA Priority Points	20

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