

PROGRAM GUIDELINES: 2020–2022 SCHOOL ACTION FUND - IMPLEMENTATION

APPLICATION DUE DATE

5:00 p.m. Central Time, July 14, 2020

PROGRAM AUTHORITY

Public Law (P.L.) 107-110, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Section 1003(g)

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| APPLICATION DUE DATE..... | 0 |
| PROGRAM AUTHORITY | 0 |
| Introduction to the Program Guidelines | 1 |
| Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines..... | 1 |
| U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations | 2 |
| Grant Timeline | 2 |
| Grant at a Glance..... | 3 |
| Authorizing Legislation | 3 |
| Where to Submit the Application..... | 3 |
| Note: TEA requires applications to be emailed. Multiple applications per applicant must be submitted in separate emails. | 3 |
| Purpose of Program | 3 |
| Eligible Applicants | 3 |
| Eligibility Requirements for “Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus” | 4 |
| Eligibility Requirements for “Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE Campus” | 4 |
| Eligibility Requirements for “Create a new school as a district-managed campus” | 4 |
| Eligibility List | 4 |
| Shared Services Arrangement | 4 |
| More Than One Application | 4 |
| Application Funding..... | 4 |
| Selection of Applicants for Funding..... | 5 |
| Cost Share or Matching Requirement | 5 |
| Limitation of Administrative Funds | 5 |
| The grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to their current approved restricted indirect cost rate for this grant program. Pre-Award Costs..... | 5 |
| Applicant Assistance..... | 5 |
| Contact for Clarifying Information | 5 |
| Frequently Asked Questions..... | 6 |
| Applicants’ Conference/Webinar..... | 6 |
| Errata Notices..... | 6 |
| GovDelivery Email Bulletins..... | 6 |
| Program Elements | 6 |
| Program Description..... | 6 |
| Supplement, Not Supplant..... | 7 |
| SMART Goal | 7 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Measurable Progress | 7 |
| Application Requirements and Assurances | 7 |
| Program-Specific Assurances | 7 |
| Statutory Requirements | 8 |
| TEA Program Requirements | 8 |
| Activities and Use of Funds | 9 |
| Out-of-State Travel | 9 |
| Travel Costs for Officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members . | 9 |
| General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds | 10 |
| General Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds | 12 |
| Project Evaluation and Modification | 13 |
| Performance Measures | 13 |
| Limits on Contracted Evaluators | 13 |
| Federal Grant Requirements | 13 |
| Equitable Access and Participation | 13 |
| Private Nonprofit School Participation | 13 |
| Maintenance of Effort | 14 |
| Application Elements..... | 14 |
| Notice of Intent to Apply | 14 |
| Reviewer Information Form | 14 |
| Required Attachments | 14 |
| Required Program-Related Attachments..... | 14 |
| Scoring and Review | 15 |
| Standard Review Criteria..... | 15 |
| Specific Review Criteria..... | 15 |
| Oral Interviews for Funding..... | 15 |
| Priorities for Funding | 16 |
| Summary of Application Scoring and Selection | 16 |

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 | \$5,000,000 |
| Percentage to be financed with federal funds | 100% |
| Amount of federal funds | \$5,000,000 |
| 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 |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| June 2, 2020 | RFA available; notice of the RFA published in the <i>Texas Register</i> |
| June 16, 2020 | Last date to submit questions to be addressed in the applicant's Conference/Webinar See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference/Webinar |
| June 16, 2020 | Last date to submit FAQs to TEA contact person See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions |
| June 23, 2020 | Applicants' Conference/Webinar, registration at https://tinyurl.com/SAFwebinar |
| June 23, 2020 | Due date for the Notice of Intent to Apply |
| June 23, 2020 | Due date for Reviewer Information Form |
| June 23, 2020 | FAQs posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page |
| July 14, 2020 | 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 |
| July 15, 2020– July 24, 2020 | Competitive review period See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Competitive Review Process |
| August 10, 2020 – August 17, 2020 | Grantee interview period |
| September 9, 2020 | Beginning date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period |
| May 3, 2022 | Final date to submit an amendment |
| July 31, 2022 | Ending date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period |

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) 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 (P.L.) 107-110, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Section 1003(g)

Where to Submit the Application

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

Submission Requirements

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

Note: TEA requires applications to be emailed. Multiple applications per applicant must be submitted in separate emails.

Purpose of Program

This grant program aims to increase the number of students in great schools by providing customized implementation support to districts committed to bold action to transform low-performing schools and create better options for students. There are three school action models that applicants can select from:

1. Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus
2. Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE campus
3. Create a new school as a district-managed campus

School Actions are a comprehensive and bold approach by ISDs to increase the number of students in top-rated schools and reduce the number of students in low-rated schools. By providing grant funds and technical assistance to support school actions for individual campuses, TEA also supports school districts in adopting a broader continuous improvement strategy that annually evaluates school quality, parent demand, and neighborhood needs to take strategic actions that both improve schools and provide parents with the schools and programs they desire.

The grant includes support for matched technical assistance from the TEA. To learn more about school actions, please visit <https://www.centerforschoolactions.org/>

Eligible Applicants

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

Eligible applicants are ISDs with 2018–2019 Comprehensive schools or Targeted schools with a

D or F rating (2019 ratings). A campus may not receive funding concurrently from Texas Title I Priority School (TTIPS) Cycle 5 grant funds, a School Redesign grant, a School Transformation Fund grant, or a 2019-2021 School Action Fund Implementation Grant.

Eligibility Requirements for “Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus”

To be eligible for grant funding, districts must have authorized a partnership agreement that meets eligibility requirements for SB1882 turnaround partnership.

Eligibility Requirements for “Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE Campus”

To be eligible for grant funding, districts must have completed the ACE model planning process with support from a third-party technical assistance organization with demonstrated expertise with ACE model planning and implementation. The district must demonstrate commitment to implement with fidelity all five core components of the ACE model and be prepared to open the school as an ACE campus in Fall 2020.

Eligibility Requirements for “Create a new school as a district-managed campus”

To be eligible for grant funding, districts must demonstrate that a school leader for the new campus has completed a new school design planning fellowship/process to develop a detailed educational program and implementation plan for the new campus. The planning process/fellowship must be facilitated by a third-party technical assistance organization with demonstrated expertise with new school design planning. The district must also demonstrate that it has conducted a rigorous evaluation and approval process of the educational program to ensure the program adequately addresses levers and indicators from the Texas Effective Schools Framework.

Eligibility List

An eligibility list is 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

Eligible applicants **may** apply for the grant on behalf of more than one campus. A separate application **must** be submitted for each 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 up to 5 grants will be awarded up to \$1,000,000 per grant.

Selection of Applicants for Funding

Applicants will be selected in the following order:

- 1) **First**, the highest ranked applicant for each of the three school action models will be funded.
- 2) **Then**, contingent on remaining available funds, applicants that selected create a new school as a district-managed school action model and met threshold requirements for sequestered review and oral interviews will be funded in rank order.
- 3) **Then**, contingent on remaining available funds, applicants that selected the remaining action models and met threshold requirements for sequestered review and oral interviews will be funded until funds are exhausted.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cost Share/Match 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 permits applicants to budget reasonable and necessary administrative costs for this grant program.

Indirect Administrative Costs

The grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to their current approved restricted indirect cost rate 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:

Christopher DeWitt, Manager of District Supports
Division of System Support and Innovation
dssi@tea.texas.gov
Phone: (512) 936-2142

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. The webinar will be recorded.

| Date of Webinar | Time | Registration Link | Type |
|-----------------|--------|---|------|
| June 23, 2020 | 9:00AM | https://tinyurl.com/SAFwebinar | Live |

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

This grant program seeks to assist and support districts in the implementation of a school action in Title I, Part A Comprehensive schools and Targeted schools with a D or F rating, providing an opportunity for districts to create new and improved learning environments that substantially increase student achievement.

School Action Models are a bold approach by districts to increase the number of students in highly-rated schools through supported planning and implementation of a school action in Comprehensive and Targeted schools. (see below for detailed descriptions of the *School Action Models*).

The TEA will provide up to 5 implementation awards at amounts up to \$1,000,000 to support ISDs with the implementation of their school action plan. The grants will fund applicants during the implementation phase of a school action for a two-year grant period ending on July 31, 2022.

Applicants will present a strong plan to execute a school action supported by a TEA designated and matched school action technical assistance provider. School action technical assistance providers are rigorously vetted and selected by the TEA and demonstrate a strong track record of developing and implementing school actions. The applicant must describe how it will use grant funds in its eligible campus(es) to implement the school action, identifying one of the following school actions:

- 1) **Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus:** An ISD authorizes a turnaround partnership as a subchapter C charter school that qualifies for Texas Partnership benefits under TEC §11.174 and opens as a partnership school for the 2020-21 school year and beyond.
- 2) **Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE campus:** An ISD implements the Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) model with fidelity for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond as a traditional, district-managed school.
- 3) **Create a new school as a district-managed campus.** An ISD opens a new school for the 2020-2021 school year that will be led by a high-performing, entrepreneurial educator that has previously participated in an intensive school design planning process facilitated by a third-party technical assistance provider organization. All new schools must apply for and receive a new county district campus number (CDCN) for the 2020–2021 school year. To be eligible for a new school grant, the ISD must guarantee prioritized enrollment at the new campus for students attending or zoned to a 2018–2019 Comprehensive and/or Targeted school (2019 ratings).

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.

- The ISD will work in good faith with the TEA vetted and matched school action technical assistance provider and agency-provided technical assistance.
- Applicant will budget 25% of the total award as “Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider” on schedule 6200. This amount will be subtracted from the total grant award and used by TEA and ESC-13 to establish a contract with the matched provider.
- The ISD must identify a project manager. The ISD may use other funds for this position.

- ISDs pursuing a partnership-managed model must perform a financial spending analysis in accordance with TEA requirements.
- ISDs must complete fidelity of implementation revisions with the matched school action technical assistance provider on or before October 15, 2020.
- The ISD will provide access for on-site visits to the ISD and campus by TEA and its contractors.
- The ISD 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.
- The ISD board must commit to Lone Star Governance (LSG) training and coaching.
- The applicant assures partners operating campuses under the partner-managed option must commit to TEA-identified board training.
- Pre-K “New Schools” must designate a feeder Comprehensive or Targeted campus by September 30, 2020.
- Enrollment at a new school must prioritize students attending or zoned to a 2018–2019 Comprehensive and/or Targeted School (2019 ratings).

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.

1. Describe how the ISD will carry out its school support and improvement activities, including how the ISD will develop a school improvement plan for the eligible campuses identified as a 2018–2019 Comprehensive or D- and F-rated Targeted School (2019 ratings).
2. Describe how the ISD will monitor schools receiving Title I - Part A funds, including how the ISD will:
 - a. Monitor school improvement plans upon submission and implementation, and
 - b. Implement additional action following unsuccessful implementation of such plan after a number of years determined by the district.
3. Describe how the ISD will use a rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external organizations with whom the ISD will work with to support the Comprehensive or Targeted school.
4. Describe how the ISD will align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with funds received under this subsection.
5. Describe how the ISD will modify, as appropriate, practices and policies to provide operational flexibility that enables full and effective implementation of the school action.
6. Describe how the selected school action model will incorporate one or more evidence-based strategies during the implementation phase.

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. ISDs must select one of the eligible grant models,
2. ISDs must describe:
 - a. The evaluation process and criteria utilized for selecting the school action model for the specific campus to be supported with this grant.
 - b. How the school action aligns with the ISD's overall strategy for support and intervention in low-performing schools and/or the ISD's strategy for expanding high-quality school choices for students and families.
 - c. How were senior district leaders involved in the decision to select the school action for the Comprehensive or Targeted school, and to apply for this School Action Fund Implementation Grant.
 - d. How the district has worked or will work with members of the school community (staff, families, community leaders) to communicate plans and solicit community input into the school action implementation process.
 - e. What specific technical assistance support from outside provider organizations does the ISD expect to need in order to effectively implement the selected school action.
 - f. The identified ISD staff member to manage the implementation grant and the qualifications of the identified staff member.

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 the following travel costs are allowable for these positions:

- Site visits during the grant period as outlined in the application
- Travel to and from TEA required events

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Grant applicants should establish grant budgets that align with the following required use of funds. Budget guidance is specific to the selected school action. Grant applicants should set aside 25% of grant funds for their matched technical assistance provide on Schedule 6200. Other required budget line items include “up to” amounts for the budget item. Districts must budget for these costs in their grant application but have flexibility to determine the amount of funds up to the amounts listed below.

| Restart a Struggling School as Partner-Managed Campus | | |
|---|---------------------|---|
| Required Expenses | Target Grant Amount | Notes |
| Technical Assistance Matched Provider | \$250,000 | TEA will directly contract for TA provider support on behalf of the district grantee. Contract amount will be subtracted from the NOGA amount. |
| District Administrator / Innovation Officer Position | Up to \$150,000 | Up to 15% of grant funds can be directed toward personnel expense for a district administrator to manage the grant program; for instance, to cover a portion of district Innovation Officer position. |
| Partner Organization Funding | \$500,000+ | At least \$500,000 should be set aside for the partner organization to support implementation of the partner model. |
| School Quality Reviews | Up to \$30,000 | Costs for third-party organization to conduct rigorous ESF-aligned assessment of school practices and priority setting with leadership team. |
| Communications planning and support | Up to \$20,000 | Districts may allocate some portion of grant funds to support the planning and execution of a strategic communication plan. |
| School community engagement events | Up to \$10,000 | Expenses associated with school community events to solicit input and communicate plans related to the school action. |
| Travel | Up to \$10,000 | Travel expenses for TEA required events and district-directed trips to support partnership implementation. |
| Other materials/supplies for grant activities | Up to \$20,000 | |

| Restart a Struggling School as a District-Managed ACE Campus | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Required Expenses | Target Grant Amount | Notes |
| Technical Assistance Matched Provider | \$250,000 | TEA will directly contract for TA provider support on behalf of the district grantee. Contract amount will be subtracted from the NOGA amount. |
| District Administrator / Innovation Officer Position | Up to \$100,000 | Up to 10% of grant funds can be directed toward personnel expense for a district administrator to manage the grant program; for instance, to cover a portion of district Innovation Officer position. |
| Staff Stipends | Up to \$300,000 | |
| Extended Day expenses | Up to \$250,000 | May include extra duty pay for teachers, transportation, after-school enrichment programming. |
| Professional development | Up to \$200,000 | May include contracted services and/or extra duty pay for teachers to participate in summer PD training. |
| Travel | Up to \$20,000 | Travel expenses for TEA required events, ACE convenings hosted by TA provider organization, and district-directed trips to visit ACE campuses or other activities to support ACE implementation. |
| Supplies / Materials for school culture/branding | Up to \$50,000 | |
| Instructional materials | Up to \$50,000 | Instructional materials purchased with grant funds for new school start-up must meet TEA criteria for high-quality instructional materials aligned to TEKS and rigor of state assessments |
| Communications planning and support | Up to \$10,000 | Districts may allocate some portion of grant funds to support the planning and execution of a strategic communication plan. |
| School community engagement events | Up to \$10,000 | Expenses associated with school community events to solicit input and communicate plans related to the school action. |
| Other materials/supplies for grant activities | Up to \$10,000 | |

| Create a New School as a District-Managed Campus | | |
|---|----------------------|--|
| Required Expenses | Target Amount | Notes |
| Technical Assistance Matched Provider | \$250,000 | TEA will directly contract for TA matched provider support on behalf of the district grantee. Contract amount will be subtracted from the NOGA amount. |
| ESF Diagnostic review; School Quality Review | \$46,000 | TEA will directly contract for TA matched provider to conduct four rigorous ESF-aligned assessment of school practices and priority setting with leadership team. Contract amount will be subtracted from the NOGA amount. |
| District Administrator / Innovation Officer Position | Up to \$50,000 | Up to 5% of grant funds can be directed toward personnel expense for a district administrator to manage the grant program; for instance, to cover a portion of district Innovation Officer position. |
| School instructional leader position(s) | Up to \$250,000 | Ongoing funding for principal or other school leader position (e.g. instructional coach) during the first two years of school start-up. |
| Instructional materials | Up to \$200,000 | Instructional materials purchased with grant funds for new school start-up must meet TEA criteria for high-quality instructional materials aligned to TEKS and rigor of state assessments. |
| Classroom technology | Up to \$200,000 | |
| Professional development | Up to \$150,000 | Expenses can include personnel costs for participation in professional development, contracted services for training, and other costs directly associated with staff professional development. |
| Supplies / Materials for school culture/branding | Up to \$50,000 | |
| Travel expenses | Up to \$10,000 | Travel expenses for TEA required events and district-directed trips to visit model schools or other activities to support school action implementation. |
| School community engagement events | Up to \$10,000 | Expenses associated with school community events to solicit input and communicate plans related to the school action. |
| Other supplies and materials | Up to \$10,000 | |

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.

- Advisory Councils
- Field trips
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences
- Debt service (lease-purchase)

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:

Completion of the Fidelity of Implementation Tool to include ongoing progress monitoring of the goals and goal progress measures. Upon grant award, TEA Division of System Support and Innovation will provide awardees with this tool by September 15, 2020. ISDs must complete fidelity of implementation revisions with matched school action technical assistance provider on or before October 15, 2020. Progress will be monitored by the agency on a monthly basis.

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** 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 ISDs submitting multiple campus grant applications, the ISD 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

The applicant must submit with the application the TEA-supplied attachment that corresponds to their selected school action listed below. (Only one attachment per application).

1. Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus
2. Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE campus
3. Create a new school as a district-managed campus

Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of applications for competitive grants. Applicants that receive a minimum of 70% of the points available through the peer review of standard and specific review criteria will be invited to attend an oral interview which will be conducted virtually, from August 10, 2020 through August 17, 2020. Applicants must then receive a minimum of 70% of oral interview points to be considered for priority points. Priority points will be added to scores from the peer review and oral interviews. Applicants will be eligible to receive a grant award based on their total point ranking AND must meet the 70% threshold from both the peer review and oral interviews to be eligible to receive a grant award.

Standard Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Standard Review Criteria. **(60 points)**

Specific Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Specific Review Criteria. **(20 points)**

Quality of Responses to Required Program-Related Attachments

1. Restart a struggling school as a partner-managed campus
2. Restart a struggling school as a district-managed ACE campus
3. Create a new school as a district-managed campus

Points will be assigned on the basis that attachment responses are of sufficient quality and depth.

Oral Interviews for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Oral Interviews for Funding. **(40 points)**.

ISDs should include the following individuals in the oral interview process:

- Superintendent, or cabinet-level leadership team member that is a direct report to the Superintendent
- Proposed grant project manager
- Senior district leader directly responsible for overseeing the selected campus
- Campus-level leader for school action implementation

During the oral interviews applicants will have the opportunity to elaborate and be evaluated on the following topics. Both applicant and evaluator may reference any RFA documents, including the program guidelines, the FAQs, and the Attachments (including responses to specific criteria for the selected school action).

1. School Action Selection (20 points)
 - a. Evaluation process and criteria for selecting the school action
 - b. Alignment of school action with overall district strategy for school improvement
 - c. Support from district leadership and school board

2. Readiness to Implement (20 points)
 - a. Understanding of school action requirements
 - b. Awareness of school action implementation challenges and mitigation strategies
 - c. Plans for engaging technical assistance organizations
 - d. Presence of existing practices and policies to support school action implementation

Priorities for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Priorities for Funding (up to 40 points).

Applicants must submit the optional TEA-provided attachment to receive Priority Points.

1. **Evidence of Innovation Office (10 points):** ISD must have hired a school transformation or innovation officer to support the school action implementation process. The applicant may attach either a copy or a hyperlink (URL) to the ISD’s organization chart highlighting the eligible position(s).
2. **Adoption of Model Authorizing Policy (10 points):** The applicant must certify the ISD’s adoption of the Model Authorizing Policy EL(LOCAL) or ELA (LOCAL) board policy and include a hyperlink to the ISD’s authorizing policy. The policy must match the TEA model policy. The model policy can be found [here](#).
3. **Evidence of a Call for Quality Schools (10 points):** the applicant must attach a hyperlink (URL) to an in-district charter application which has been approved under TEC §12.0522, TEC §12.0521, or TEC §12.0521
4. **High Need Campus (10 points).** The campus identified is designated “Comprehensive” (any letter grade from 2018-19 accountability rating), or “Targeted” (with F letter grade from 2018-19 accountability rating)

Summary of Application Scoring and Selection

