TEA
Texas Education Agency ®

2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, January 29, 2024

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation: General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article IX, Section 18.114(c)(v)

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.

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, January 29, 2024**.

Grant period from: **March 20, 2024-September 30, 2024**

Pre-award costs permitted from: **Not Permitted**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)

See the Program Guidelines for for additional attachment information.

Select Focus Area (Applicants May Select One or Both Focus Areas)

☐ Focus Area 1: Career and Technical Education Course

☒ Focus Area 2: Work-Based Learning Experiences

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds): N/A

Applicant Information

Organization	Aquilla ISD	CDN 109-912	ESC 12	UEI JKLAPLJ9CAV6

Address: 404 N. Richards | City: Aquilla | ZIP: 76622 | Vendor ID: 74-1603839

Primary Contact: Dr. David Edison | Email: david.edison@aquillaisd.net | Phone: 254-694-3770

Secondary Contact: Andrew Christian | Email: andrew.christian@aquillaisd.net | Phone: 254-694-3770

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

☒ General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances

☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification

☒ Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name: Dr. David Edison | Title: Superintendent

Email: david.edison@aquillaisd.net | Phone: 254-694-3770

Signature: DDE | Date: 1/18/2024

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Shared Services Arrangements

☐ Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are permitted for this grant. **Check the box below if applying as fiscal agent.**

☐ The LEA or ESC submitting this application is the fiscal agent of a planned SSA. All participating agencies will enter into a written SSA agreement describing the fiscal agent and SSA member responsibilities. All participants understand that the "Shared Services Arrangement Attachment" must be completed and signed by all SSA members, and submitted to TEA before the NOGA is issued.

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

☒ 1. The applicant provides 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 2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education Grant Program Guidelines.

☒ 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education 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 curriculum will be appropriately aligned to regional labor market supported CTE programs of study.

☒ 6. The applicant provides assurance to provide data to TEA on student completion of courses through a special collection process run by TEA.

☒ 7. 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.

Summary of Program (Focus Area 1)

Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization. Describe how the program will address the mission and needs.

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

Summary of Program (Focus Area 2)

Provide an overview of the program to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization. Describe how the program will address the mission and needs.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Aquilla ISD's staff has conducted a thorough review of the grant guidelines, purpose, and performance objectives. With these considerations in mind, the district is actively pursuing Summer CTE funds to facilitate the implementation of a Summer Work-Based Learning (WBL) program tailored specifically to the Carpentry Program of Study (POS).
This program presents a valuable opportunity for students to acquire essential employability skills in a high-demand occupation, learn more about Career and Technical Education (CTE), and better prepare themselves for both college and their future careers. The program is set to span four (4) weeks and will engage up to eight (8) students in grades 11 and 12.
The staff strongly believes that this grant has the potential to significantly benefit the district's current students, aligning seamlessly with Aquilla ISD's mission of educating individuals according to their unique capabilities, nurturing their development to the fullest potential, and empowering them to achieve their life's aspirations.

SPECIFIC NEEDS: Aquilla ISD is making every effort to support its students, but it's crucial to emphasize the pressing need for funding in the district. The district's students are grappling with challenges that can hinder their chances of success in finding well-paying jobs. Here are some key areas of concern: Over half of the district's students face economic disadvantages (Economically Disadvantaged); Every single student qualifies for Title 1 support (100%), a much higher percentage compared to the state average of 64.6%; The Career or Military Ready graduate rate currently stands at just 15.4%, which is less than half of the state's average of 33.5%; The median household income is only $36,875, which is nearly half the state's average of $67,321 (2023 Data USA); and There is a lack of industry/ business within the area, as Aquilla ISD is located in a rural area (5 priority points).

ADDRESSING NEEDS: Through this program, we are determined to address students' challenges head-on. The goal is to arm them with essential employability skills, enhancing their competitiveness in the job market. Simultaneously, the acquisition of Career and Technical Education (CTE) course credits will enrich their educational journey, ensuring they are well-prepared for college and future careers. As this program unfolds, we look forward to witnessing a positive shift in the Career or Military Ready graduate rate. This shift will not only empower students to break free from the cycle of economic disadvantage but also serve as a crucial bridge to overcome the rural limitations resulting from the scarcity of local businesses.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel (Focus Area 1)

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the position is existing or proposed.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
Not applying for Focus Area 1.	Not applying for Focus Area 1.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel (Focus Area 2)

Outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external consultants projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include whether the position is existing or proposed.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
SUPERINTENDENT (EXISTING) – Will supervise program personnel involved.	QUALIFICATIONS: Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Education or related field. EXPERIENCE: At least 2 years of experience in a Superintendent Position.
WBL PROGRAM COORDINATOR (PROPOSED) – Will oversee grant implementation, manage data collection, and assist with program evaluation.	QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's Degree in Education or related field. EXPERIENCE: 3 years of experience in CTE and knowledge of grant components, data collection, and budgeting.
WBL PROGRAM TEACHER (EXISTING) – Will facilitate and monitor students in the project-based learning on-site.	QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's Degree in Education or a related field. EXPERIENCE: 2 years of experience in teaching.
WBL PROGRAM COUNSELOR (EXISTING) – Market to and recruit students for the program, assist with enrollment, and provide career pathway counseling.	QUALIFICATIONS: Minimum of a bachelor's Degree in School Counseling or a related field. EXPERIENCE: Must have 2 years of experience in assisting students in selecting career pathways.
WBL BUSINESS/INDUSTRY PARTNER (PROPOSED) – Will be responsible for overseeing students as they receive work-based learning opportunities.	QUALIFICATIONS: Ability/knowledge to offer the targeted CTE trainings and oversight in work-based activities. EXPERIENCE: 4 years of experience in the targeted industry.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Focus Area 1)

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed program. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives?

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Focus Area 2)

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed program. What activities/strategies will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives?

GOAL/OBJECTIVE: Aquilla ISD's Focus Area 2 program is a crucial initiative aimed at supporting the district's students. It is designed with the following objectives in mind: provide invaluable learning experiences, instill crucial employability skills acquired in authentic workplace settings, and ensure a seamless transition from education to the workforce. The district's students are facing significant challenges, and with these objectives met, the district hopes to meet its goal of increasing median annual earnings in the area and increasing participation in post-secondary education.

To fulfill this GOAL, the district is fully committed to putting in place a set of ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES. These include but are not limited to:

(1) Establish robust partnerships with local businesses, including Alamo Masonry, to create internship opportunities for students in various fields.
(2) Launch a targeted recruitment campaign, not only using flyers, posters, and online notices but also by organizing informational sessions and workshops to engage and enroll a minimum of 8 students.
(3) Develop a comprehensive curriculum that integrates work-based and project-based learning experiences, allowing students to tackle meaningful projects.
(4) Provide ongoing mentorship and guidance for students throughout their participation in the program.
(5) Organize career exploration events and college readiness workshops to broaden students' horizons and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed for their future endeavors.
These critical activities/strategies are essential to address the pressing needs of the district's students and ensure the success of the four-week work-based learning program. Through these efforts, we aspire to equip the district's students with the tools they desperately require to break free from the challenges they face and pave a path toward a brighter future.

Performance and Evaluation Measures (Focus Area 1)

Describe the performance measures identified for this program which are related to student outcomes and are consistent with the purpose of the program. Include the tools used to measure performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of project objectives and strategies.

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

Performance and Evaluation Measures (Focus Area 2)

Describe the performance measures identified for this program which are related to student outcomes and are consistent with the purpose of the program. Include the tools used to measure performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of project objectives and strategies.

Aquilla ISD places a high priority on the success of the grant program, recognizing its potential impact on the district's students. Therefore, the district has undertaken a thorough review of the grant guidelines and performance measures, pinpointing the following as key indicators to track for improving student outcomes and achieving the program's intended goals:

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: 1. Number of students participating in the WBL internship. 2. Student information as a part of the fall PEIMS submission (i.e. Demographics). 3. List of business and industry partners offering work-based learning experiences to participating students. 4. Total and average hours worked by students in the program. 5. Total and average hourly earnings of students in the program. 6. Evidence of training plans for each participating student. 7. Evidence of partnership agreements for each participating business and industry partner. 8. Evidence of culminating assessments or recognition of skills for each student in the program. 9. Report all data related to PEIMS (in the Fall PEIMS submission).

TOOLS USED TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE: To attain these statistics, the district will utilize various data tools such as student enrollment lists, PEIMS, business/industry partner MOUs, attendance/timesheets, payroll reports, assessments, student/stakeholder surveys, and business/industry partner feedback.

With access to this data, the district can carry out bi-weekly reviews of the performance measures. In the event that issues arise where the goals are not being met, the district will engage with all stakeholders to seek solutions or arrange a meeting with TEA to address these concerns.

Budget Narrative (Focus Area 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.

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

Budget Narrative (Focus Area 2)

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.

BUDGET: Aquilla ISD has conducted a meticulous review of grant goals and has developed the following budget to ensure it can provide the most impactful program:
• 6100 ($9,125) – Funds have been allocated for one (1) bus driver, professional staff extra-duty pay, and employee benefits.
• 6200 ($1,881) - Funds have been allocated for data collection and analyses of work-based learning activities.
• 6300 ($16,855) - Funds have been allocated to purchase instructional supplies and resources that are needed to deliver real-world work experience.
• 6400 ($18,020) – Funds have been allocated for compensation for 8 students who are not employed by a private business to receive work-based training.
• Indirect Cost Rate ($4,119) - The district will use the indirect cost rate to recover the costs of managing the grant.
HIGH-LEVEL SNAPSHOT: Despite financial challenges, we are committed to optimizing available resources. Although we cannot provide paid summer internships, current funding allocations prioritize essential elements, which can be used to offset costs associated with running this WBL Program. For example, the district currently allocates funds to facilities, transportation, cafeteria personnel, computers/software, and classrooms. Funding sources for these allocations include local funds for maintenance, state transportation funds, Texas Department of Agriculture allocations for summer food programs, and the Instructional Materials Allotment (IMS) for hardware/software.

ADJUSTMENTS: If program adjustments become necessary, a collaborative meeting among stakeholders will be convened to thoroughly discuss and determine the changes essential for the program's success. In cases where program modifications are deemed necessary, the district will issue letters of intent to all stakeholders, ensuring transparent communication. To ensure compliance with regulations, any required modifications will strictly adhere to TEA rules for amendments, ensuring a seamless and compliant adjustment process.

Program Requirements

1a. Needs Assessment (Focus Area 1): Applicants must complete a Needs Assessment Summary indicating specific area of need the LEA has that hinders the completion of courses within programs of study. (For example: describing scheduling conflicts, specific program of study teacher availability, etc.)

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

1b. Needs Assessment (Focus Area 2): Applicants must complete a Needs Assessment Summary indicating specific area of needs the LEA has to offer work-based learning opportunities. (For example: describing transportation limitations, describing scheduling conflicts, specific program of study teacher availability, etc.)

Aquilla ISD conducted a thorough needs assessment, meticulously identifying gaps and deficiencies at the community, district, and state levels. In alignment with the earlier overview, the district found the following critical areas of concern:
• Over half of the district's students grapple with economic disadvantages (Economically Disadvantaged).
• Every single student in the district qualifies for Title 1 support (100%), significantly surpassing the state average of 64.6%.
• The Career or Military Ready graduate rate currently stands at just 15.4%, which falls far short of the state's average of 33.5%.
• The median household income within the district stands at $36,875, nearly half of the state's average of $67,321 (2023 Data USA).
• We face the challenge of limited supporting businesses, particularly concerning as Aquilla ISD is situated in a rural area, giving 5 priority points to the district's application.

To address these pressing concerns and provide much-needed support, the district's Summer Work-Based Learning (WBL) program will offer tangible solutions to its students' challenges. It will equip them with essential employability skills, enhancing their competitiveness in the job market. Additionally, by learning about Career and Technical Education (CTE), students will enrich their educational journey, ensuring they are well-prepared for both college and future careers. Consequently, we anticipate a positive shift in the Career or Military Ready graduate rate, empowering the district's students to break free from the cycle of economic disadvantage and actively contribute to the growth of the community. Furthermore, this program will play a pivotal role in bridging the gap created by the scarcity of local businesses, nurturing a skilled workforce capable of finding employment, and stimulating economic development in the rural area.

Program Requirements, cont'd.

2. **Focus Area 1**: Applicants must specify which program(s) of study and the CTE course(s) in the program(s) of study that will be offered (see https://tea.texas.gov/academics/college-career-and-military-prep/career-and-technical-education/cte-programs-of-study for a list of the approved statewide programs of study). Include the number of students who be engaged and supported in this focus area.

Not applying for Focus Area 1.

3. **Focus Area 2:** Applicants must specify business and industry partners who will be involved in the program. Additionally, specify the work-based learning model(s) which will be utilized and the number of students who will be engaged and supported.

BUSINESS PARTNERS INVOLVED AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS: Aquilla ISD has strategically partnered with Alamo Masonry (Letter of Support - 1 priority point) to provide essential work-based training opportunities. In addition to off-campus work-based learning, the district will leverage its department heads, including the Agriculture Department (Letter of Support - 1 priority point), to facilitate on-campus work-based learning experiences, enabling students to acquire valuable Carpentry skills.

WORK-BASED LEARNING MODEL(S): Within the district's comprehensive Work-Based Learning (WBL) model, Aquilla ISD has meticulously designed a structured approach that encompasses both internship opportunities and project-based learning. Under this model, students will
• Actively participate in meaningful projects in collaboration with Alamo Masonry and the district's Agriculture Department.
• Be provided transportation to and from the worksites, as needed, to avoid a transportation barrier.
• Earn an hourly wage and immerse themselves in significant real-world experiences. Experiences may include but are not limited to: identifying materials used in agricultural construction, selecting fencing materials, planning and executing fence installations, and demonstrating essential carpentry skills like surface refinement, paint selection, caulking, and proficient use of various painting tools.

Through these partnerships with Alamo Masonry and the Agriculture Department, Aquilla ISD's goal is to expand students' access to CTE courses and offer paid summer WBL opportunities. This initiative can yield immense positive outcomes for students and the community by enlarging the pool of skilled and workplace-ready individuals.

CDN 109-912 | Vendor ID 74-1603839 | Amendment #

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.

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Amended Section   **Reason for Amendment**