



**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

This LOI application must be submitted via email to [loiapplications@tea.texas.gov](mailto: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, February 12, 2024**.

Grant period from

Pre-award costs permitted from

**Required Attachments**

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

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):

**Applicant Information**

Organization  CDN  ESC  UEI

Address  City  ZIP  Vendor ID

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

**Certification and Incorporation**

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the LOI application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the LOI application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- LOI application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name  Title

Email  Phone

Signature  Date



**Shared Services Arrangements**

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are 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.

Mercedes ISD currently serves 4,455 students who are 97.9% Hispanic, 91.6% economically disadvantaged, 75.7% at-risk and 29% emergent bilingual (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report). The mission of the Mercedes ISD Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is to prepare students for a wide range of careers and further educational opportunities by offering CTE courses in middle school and high school level. In addition to providing these courses and opportunities, Mercedes ISD CTE program seeks to connect our students to high skill, high-wage and in-demand careers in our community by providing industry based certifications (IBCs) and licenses opportunities.

One way we ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to engage in these programs is by offering CTE courses over the summer that are aligned with the programs of study that lead to those industry based certifications and licenses. The Summer CTE Grant funds will be used to assist Mercedes ISD with providing two additional high-quality CTE courses, law enforcement I and anatomy and physiology, to our students during the summer months. Through targeted recruiting by our CTE director and school counselors, we will strive to identify 15 students to participate in the anatomy and physiology course and 20 students to participate in the law enforcement I course. These courses will prepare students, as well as create space in schedules, for future courses in programs including P-TECH as well as other Law and Public Service Career Cluster certification programs. In doing so, we seek to increase the number of students who graduate with a Level I or Level II certificate from 0% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 1% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing the our region (one) average of 1.4% in the next four years; and increase the number of students who graduate with an approved IBC from 35.8% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 43% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing our region (one) average of 57.7% in the next five years.

**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.

Mercedes ISD currently serves 4,455 students who are 97.9% Hispanic, 91.6% economically disadvantaged, 75.7% at-risk and 29% emergent bilingual (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report). The mission of the Mercedes ISD Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is to prepare students for a wide range of careers and further educational opportunities by offering CTE courses in middle school and high school level. In addition to providing these courses and opportunities, Mercedes ISD CTE program seeks to connect our students to high skill, high-wage and in-demand careers in our community by providing work-based learning activities and opportunities.

One way that we can ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to engage in these work-based learning activities and opportunities is by offering these opportunities during the summer time. The Summer CTE Grant funds will be used to assist Mercedes ISD with providing paid internship opportunities to Mercedes ISD students as part of our Project LUCES: Lighting Up Career Exploration and Success. We will strive to recruit 25 incoming junior and senior students that are part of the Education and Training Program, Digital Media Program and Business and Industry Program to work alongside Mercedes ISD staff to gain hands-on experience as well as the technical and soft skills during the four week program. These internship opportunities will allow our students to develop the skills necessary to succeed in their chosen career pathway while also removing some of the financial and other barriers that might prevent them from accessing these opportunities. In doing so, we seek to increase the number of students who graduate with an approved IBC from 35.8% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 43% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing our region (one) average of 57.7% in the next five years.



**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
Project Director: Responsible for overseeing the implementation of courses during the summer program.	Qualifications/Experience: Administrator with experience leading campus and district-wide initiatives.
Grant Manager: Responsible for overseeing and managing the grant.	Qualifications/Experience: Administrator with experience managing grant funded programs and overseeing data collection and monitoring.
Counselors: Responsible for identifying possible students for recruitment.	Qualifications: Must be a certified Mercedes ISD counselor and hold a valid Texas counselor certification.
Campus Teachers: Responsible for instructing summer CTE course offerings	Qualifications: Must be a certified Mercedes ISD teacher and hold a valid Texas teacher certification.

**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
Project Director: Responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Project LUCES program.	Qualifications/Experience: Administrator with experience leading campus and district-wide initiatives.
Grant Manager: Responsible for overseeing and managing the grant.	Qualifications/Experience: Administrator with experience managing grant funded programs and overseeing data collection and monitoring.
Counselors: Responsible for identifying possible students for recruitment.	Qualifications: Must be a certified Mercedes ISD counselor and hold a valid Texas counselor certification.



**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?

Goals/Objectives: (1) 100% of the twenty students enrolled will successfully complete Law Enforcement I during the summer program and enroll in a level three course in the fall of 2024. (2) 100% of the fifteen students enrolled will successfully complete Anatomy and Physiology during the summer program and enroll in a level four course in the fall of 2024.

Wildly Important Goal(s): Increase the number of students who graduate with a Level I or Level II certificate from 0% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 1% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing the our region (one) average of 1.4% in the next four years; and increase the number of students who graduate with an approved IBC from 35.8% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 43% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing the our region (one) average of 57.7% in the next five years.

Activities/Strategies: Counselors will work with the project director to identify students who are eligible for the summer courses. Counselors will set-up meetings with those students to provide information about the courses and review the benefits of enrolling in the courses. Counselors will be available to meet with parents to answer any questions and provide information about the value and importance of this program. The district will ensure transportation. Additionally, students will be provided with materials, including technology, needed to assist in the successful completion of the courses. Project director will work with the principal to ensure that the teachers are highly qualified and have the materials necessary to ensure successful instructional delivery. Grant manager and program director will work with all stakeholders to monitor student progress and performance to address and overcome any obstacles that the students may encounter.

**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?

Goals/Objectives: Provide twenty five Mercedes ISD students paid internships, as part of Project LUCES, which will allow our students to work alongside Mercedes ISD staff to gain hands-on experience as well as the technical and soft skills during a four week summer program. 100% of the twenty five paid interns will complete the required 80 hours by August 2024 and the enrollment in work-based learning/practicum will increase by 10% during the 2024-2025 school year.

Wildly Important Goal: Students will be able to understand the skills and knowledge needed to successfully transition from their previous coursework to the workforce. Increase the number of students who graduate with an approved IBC from 35.8% in 2021-2022 (2022-23 Texas Academic Performance Report) to 43% in the next two years in order to reach our overall goal of surpassing our region (one) average of 57.7% in the next five years.

Activities/Strategies: Counselors will work with the project director to identify students who are eligible for the summer internship. Counselors will set-up meetings with those students to provide information about Project LUCES (internships), review the benefits of participating and share the application link. Counselors will be available to meet with parents to answer any questions and provide information about the value and importance of this program. The district will ensure transportation to the worksites. Students will be provided with weekly feedback on their job performance as part of their required weekly reflections assignment. Students will be given the opportunity to interview employees and supervisors at the worksites. Students will also be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the program and their experience. Grant manager and program director will work with all stakeholders to monitor student progress and performance to address and overcome any obstacles that the students may encounter. The three internship programs will last four weeks but start at various times throughout the summer to align with the needs of the district; this will also ensure that the project director is able to effectively onboard and monitor each cohort to ensure the success of the student interns.



**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.

Mercedes ISD will use several tools to monitor the performance of the program toward our goals/objectives. The principal will monitor the instructional planning and delivery to ensure that students are receiving the highest quality instruction. The grant manager and program director will review and monitor student attendance and student grades daily and weekly to ensure students are progressing through the course appropriately and identify areas of concern so they can be remedied quickly. They, in collaboration with the counselors, will also review and monitor student completion and course enrollments for the 2024-2025 school year of the students to ensure that students are progressing through their pathway toward certification and certificates. The grant manager will ensure that data is collected and reported in a timely manner as required by TEA. Lastly the grant manager and program director will review student and teacher feedback survey results to identify areas of strength and weakness in the program in order to make adjustments for future courses.

**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.

Mercedes ISD will use several tools to monitor the performance of the program toward our goals/objectives. The grant manager and program director will review and monitor student attendance, student hours worked and student earnings daily and weekly to ensure students are on track to meet the program goals/objectives. The project director will monitor the progress of the students on their skills indicated on their training plan to ensure they are on track. The grant manager will ensure that data is collected and reported in a timely manner as required by TEA. The project director and grant manager will work with counselors to monitor course enrollments in 2024-2025. Lastly, the grant manager and program director will review student and department staff feedback survey results to identify areas of strength and weakness in the program in order to make adjustments for future internships.



**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.

**Staffing:** 52% of the budget was allocated to payroll in order to fund four teachers, two instructional aides. The teachers and aides will keep the student to teacher ratio stays at or below 8:1; this will ensure that we are able to meet the academic needs of all students during these accelerated summer courses. Money was also allocated for one counselor and one administrator to cover the costs of overseeing the programs beyond their contracted days.

**Supplies and Materials:** The supplies and materials that will be ordered to conduct the CTE summer courses are reasonable and necessary to meet the objectives and goals of the program. All supplies and materials will be directly tied to the lessons taught and aligned to coverage of all TEKS.

**Travel:** The Mercedes ISD transportation department will provide transportation services for all students during the summer program.

**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.

**Staffing:** 62% of the budget was allocated to payroll in order to compensate the twenty five summer interns. Money was also allocated for one administrator to cover the costs of overseeing the programs beyond their contracted days.

**Supplies and Materials:** The supplies and materials that will be ordered to conduct the CTE summer internship program are reasonable and necessary to meet the program's objectives and goals.

**Travel:** The Mercedes ISD transportation department will provide transportation services for all students during the summer program.



**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.)

The specific area of need that hinders Mercedes ISD from the completion of courses within programs of study are scheduling conflicts and teacher availability. Our district has historically experienced difficulty staffing CTE courses, which results in fewer courses being offered to our students. In addition, due to the demand for dual-enrollment courses as well as the increases in the number of students requiring academic remediation, students are unable to find the space in their schedule for the higher level courses. Aside from those specific areas of need, with ESSER funds no longer being available, the district is unable to offer as many summer courses due to lack of funds.

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.)

The specific area of need that hinders Mercedes ISD from being able to offer work-based learning opportunities are scheduling conflicts, transportation limitations as well as financial hardships for our students. Due to the demand for dual-enrollment courses as well as the increases in the number of students requiring academic remediation, students are unable to find the space in their schedule for work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, our transportation department is limited in their ability to transport students to work-based learning opportunities. The majority of our students are economically disadvantaged and are unable to undertake an unpaid internship opportunity in their field of career interest as it could inflict financial hardship on their family.



**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.

The summer program will offer a one-credit Law Enforcement I course within the Law Enforcement program of study and it will also offer a one-credit Anatomy and Physiology course within the Emergency Services program of study. A total of 35 students will be engaged and supported in this focus area.

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.

Mercedes ISD will be the business and industry partner involved in the Project LUCES program. The Project LUCES program will focus on providing sustained interactions with industry professionals in real workplace settings to foster meaningful engagement with the tasks required in the given career field. Each student intern will receive a personalized training plan so they are able to gain as much hands-on experience and knowledge as possible. These plans will be evaluated at the beginning and end of their internship to evaluate student progress and performance.



**Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose** (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the [Administering a Grant](#) page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

*You may duplicate this page*

**Amended Section**

**Reason for Amendment**



**Application Part 2:**

**2023-2024 Summer Career and Technical Education Grant**

**Authorized by: General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article IX, Section 18.114(c)(v)**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: Application Part 2 (these budget pages) is not compatible with Google Docs.**

**Complete the supporting budget worksheets first**, i.e., 6100, 6200, 6300.... The Program Budget Summary worksheet is linked to and will auto-populate with the amounts you entered on the respective supporting budget worksheets. All budgeted amounts must be entered in whole dollar amounts. **Do not enter any cents.**

On each supporting budget worksheet, complete the Total Program Costs and Total Direct Admin Costs lines. Together these lines must equal the Grand Total otherwise the field will change color to red indicating an error. These amounts will automatically populate on the Program Budget Summary worksheet.

If pre-award costs are allowable, budget all pre-award costs in the Pre-Award Cost column on the appropriate supporting budget worksheet(s).

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**Payroll 6100**

Complete this worksheet to request payroll costs. Do not request funds for consultants or contractors on this worksheet; those funds should be requested on the Professional and Contracted Services 6200 worksheet.

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**Professional and Contracted Services 6200**

Complete this worksheet to request professional services, consulting services, and contracted services.

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**Supplies and Materials 6300**

Complete this worksheet to request supplies and materials.

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**Other Operating Costs 6400**

Complete this worksheet to request other operating costs. Be sure to comply with documentation requirements, where applicable.

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**Capital Outlay 6600**

Complete this worksheet to request capital outlay costs.

Capital outlay means funds budgeted or expended to purchase capital assets, such as equipment, or expenditures for the acquisition cost of capital assets. Capital assets are tangible or intangible assets having a useful life of more than one year, which are valued at \$5,000 or greater per unit, or the applicant's capitalization level, whichever is less. Capital outlay may include expenditures to make improvements to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life.

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**Program Budget Summary**

This worksheet auto-populates from the supporting budget worksheets for Program Costs, Direct Admin Costs, and Pre-award Costs, if applicable. There are only a few fields that may require input from the grantee, if applicable, such as indicating *Consolidate Administrative Funds*, *Indirect Costs*, *Shared Services Arrangement*, or the *Administrative Cost Calculation*.

*Indirect Costs* - Neither direct nor indirect administrative costs may be charged to this grant program.

[Maximum Indirect Cost Workbook link.](#)

*Shared Services Arrangement* - If applicable, enter amount of payments to member districts on line 9.

*Administrative Cost Calculation* - Indirect administrative costs may be charged to this grant program.

For further guidance, refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#).