2023-2024 National Board Candidacy Cohort
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 31, 2022

Texas Education Agency®

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation: Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended by P.L. 114-95, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title II, Part A, Section 2101 (c)(4)(A)

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **loiapplications@tea.texas.gov.**

The LOI application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, October 31, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from: **December 8, 2022 - August 31, 2024**

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

Required Attachments

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

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization	Region 4 Education Service Center	CDN	101950	Campus		ESC	4	UEI	020805321
Address	7145 West Tidwell Road	City	Houston	ZIP	77092	Vendor ID	1741589572		
Primary Contact	Dolores Trevino	Email	dolores.trevino@esc4.net	Phone	713-744-6821				
Secondary Contact	Adrienne Towns	Email	adrienne.towns@esc4.net	Phone	713-744-8121				

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	Rodney Watson, Ph. D.	Title	Executive Director
Email	rodney.watson@esc4.net	Phone	713-744-6534
Signature	Rodney Watson Digitally signed by Rodney Watson Date: 2022.11.01 08:15:14 -05'00'	Date	11/01/2022

Shared Services Arrangements

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

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 National Board Candidacy Cohort Program Guidelines.

☒ 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2024 National Board Candidacy Cohort Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

☒ 5. The applicant provides assurance that they accept and will comply with Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances requirements.

☒ 6. Candidate Eligibility, Recruitment, & Selection

a) The grantee will implement a rigorous recruitment and selection process for the National Board candidates. As part of this process, the grantee will vet the candidate's deep understanding and commitment to the rigors and time demands of pursuing National Board Certification.

b) The grantee will ensure that all National Board Candidates have at least 3 years of teaching experience upon completion of National Board certification.

c) If this is the grantee's first time running a National Board candidacy cohort, the grantee will use the grant funding to support no more than 15 National Board Candidates.

d) The grantee will monitor theoutcomes and completion rate of candidate, mentor, and facilitator perception surveys provided by TEA and administered not more than three times per year

Statutory/Program Assurances cont'd.

☒ 7. National Board Cohort & Support Sessions

a) The grantee will implement a National Board Candidate Cohort of current classroom teachers pursuing National Board Certification in 2023-24.

b) The grantee will publicize the National Board Cohort on its website and through other communication means. Communication must include, but is not limited to, details about National Board Certification and the Candidacy Cohort.

c) The grantee assures that it will identify its external partner, if applicable, during the negotiation process.

d) If partnering with an external entity, the grantee will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with that entity before engaging in work for which grant funds are used. The grantee will ensure that the MoU includes partnership costs and commitment to meeting program assurances. In addition, the MoU will include all major activities for which grant funding will be used and the dates for which those activities will occur, which will be within the start and end dates of the grant period.

e) The grantee will provide National Board Candidates at least 8 meeting sessions over the course of the year with a Board-Certified facilitator that provides guidance and feedback on the development and submission of National Board Components.

f) The grantee will track attendance of National Board Candidates at each of the 8 meeting sessions over the course of the year and retain the attendance tracking in case of an audit.

g) The grantee will create a scope and sequence of the 8 meeting sessions and submit it to TEA upon request.

h) The grantee will support National Board candidates in submitting two components for certification to National Board in the 2023-2024 school year. The scope and sequence for the meeting sessions must be aligned to the component submissions.

i) The grantee will support the administration of participant surveys, which may include candidates, mentors, and facilitators, administered by TEA up to three times per year.

☒ 8. Mentors, Facilitators, & Compensation

a) The grantee will adhere to the Policy Guidelines for Ethical Candidate Support and other guidelines for supporting candidates provided by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

b) The grantee will provide each National Board Candidate a mentor who will meet with the candidate to provide mentorship and guidance on National Board Certification per the guidelines available through National Board.

c) The grantee assures that each of the mentors and facilitators hired with grant funds have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

d) The grantee will ensure all mentors and facilitators have received training for their positions prior to working with candidates.

e) The grantee will create a job description with the role and responsibilities of facilitators and mentors.

f) The grantee assures that each candidate will receive at least 10 hours of mentor support during the year focused on the National Board components.

g) The grantee will establish expectations for meeting time between mentors and candidates (e.g., cadence, types of check-ins, etc.). The grantee will set up a system to track mentor-candidate interactions, including the number, duration, and frequency of meetings. The grantee will retain this documentation in case of an audit.

h) Grantees that hire teachers within their organization to serve as facilitators or mentors will provide them with additional compensation.

Summary of Program

Describe the proposed National Board Candidacy Cohort to be implemented with grant funds. Include the overall mission and specific needs of the organization as they relate to teacher retention and effectiveness. Describe how the National Board Candidacy Cohort will address the organization's mission and needs.

In the most diverse city in Texas, Region 4 serves more than 1.2 million students and 165,000 educators. Our core purpose of providing excellence in service for children, leads us to improve student achievement, while also building relationships near and far. The lack of high attrition, lack of experience, and inconsistency with effectiveness, have resulted in student learning disparities not seen in years. Region 4 will come alongside those we service to address these needs through the Region 4 National Board Candidacy Cohort (R4NBCC). R4NBCC charges and shifts the mindset of teachers while transforming their practice in the areas of teaching and learning by providing them the support, services, and resources needed to create and implement high-quality, engaging, and relevant learning experiences. These learning experiences will demonstrate effectiveness through student progress and overall achievement due to the accomplished teaching of the R4NBCC graduate. Beginning with pre-candidacy (to ensure commitment and provide foundational knowledge) and progressing through structured learning plans, the R4NBCC will focus on their why, while increasing their efficacy and disposition, which will lead to efficiency, and greater professional enjoyment. This yields a positive impact on student relationships, learning, and achievement. This will excite them and provide continued motivation as they see incremental progress, not having to wait until the end, however, receiving the recognition and accomplishment of certification (and a designation) upon completion is the goal we help them achieve. Many district's lack what is required to provide the in-depth and rigorous support candidates need for National Board success. With the R4NBCC our community will be able to partner with us to provide their highly effective teachers with the opportunity to receive first-rate service, support, and resources. This will help us begin to achieve the ultimate goal of using dynamic learning to reinvigorate highly qualified teachers by growing their instructional effectiveness to meet student needs for years to come.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Referring to the program-specific assurances, outline the required qualifications and experience for primary project personnel and any external partners projected to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the National Board Candidacy Cohort. These positions may include but are not limited to district grant manager, external partner (if applicable), Facilitator, mentor, and candidate. Include whether the position is existing or proposed. Consider any other key personnel not listed in the table below.

Title and Responsibilities of Position	Required Qualifications and Experience
Region 4 Director, Accountability and Leadership Solutions (existing) Grant Oversight and Budget Allocation	18+ yrs principal or higher administrator exp., extensive exp. writing, implementing, overseeing, and providing data for grants (including fiscal guidelines), extensive exp. with program budgeting, contracts, etc.
Region 4 Facilitator, Educator Excellence I (existing) Program Developer, Professional Learning Facilitator (PLF), Grant Manager	10+ yrs high-impact teaching evidenced w/ evaluations and student growth measures, 5+ yrs professional development and curriculum and instruction exp. and 5+ yrs admin. exp. at campus and district level, also a trained NBC PLF.
Texas National Board Coalition of Teaching (external partner) Provider of Mentors	The organization will provide fully trained and vetted, NBCT mentors to provide the required program assurances for each cohort candidate, including but not limited to required number of hours of 1:1 mentorship.
Texas National Board Coalition of Teaching (external partner) Provider of NBCT Professional Learning Facilitator	The organization will provide fully trained NBCT PLF, to work along side a trained Region 4 PLF ensuring all program assurances are met for the cohort candidates, including but not limited to required number of meetings.
Region 4 National Board Cohort Candidates (R4NBCC) National Board Teacher Candidates (up to 15)	Meet all updated National Board requirements that went into effect 09/19/22, align to demographics and student needs of Region 4 districts, and are identified as highly effective teachers.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Referring to the program-specific assurances and performance and evaluation measures within the program guidelines, describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed National Board Candidacy Cohort. Describe activities/strategies that will be implemented to meet those goals/objectives.

R4NBCC desires to be a dynamic program known for its energy and zeal to take highly effective teachers to the next level, reigniting their passion for impacting student growth and achievement across the region. We will be representative of our region demographics as R4NBCC seeks to increase the number of NBCT's from 58 to 75, and continually add 10-15 NBCT's every 1-2 years as the program grows and becomes self sustaining. Identifying and recruiting teachers will begin by using regional data. Highly effective teachers who meet NB requirements, are not eligible for their district's local designation system or in districts without one will be determined. Other identifiers will also be used to ensure a large application pool. Marketing, advertising, and communication about the program will need to reach all parts of the region with a detailed plan (including timeline), leveraging all partnerships. The dynamic and robust nature of the program will begin with pre-candidacy. This part will prepare the R4NBCC for the rigor and pace needed for component success. In addition, it will provide a deep dive into other essentials. To take their ability to the next level collaborating with TXNBCT will provide NBCT mentors, and a NBCT PLF, to work along side the Region 4 PLF. Positive changes for the R4NBCC will come from learning and engagement at meetings, working with PLC's, and using materials that will make teaching more enjoyable sooner due to relevant learning topics that pertain to components and what they do everyday (ex: sequencing lessons for differentiation and less stress). R4NBCC component success leading to certification increasing the number in region and decreasing attrition will be done through the robust curriculum that will be executed through the collaboration, which will include group, independent, mentor:mentee, PLF check-in's, calendar's, and all assurance required components.

Performance and Evaluation Measures

Describe the plan for collecting, evaluating, and responding to data on performance measures identified for this grant. Include the descriptions of tools used to measure and evaluate performance, as well as the processes that will be used to ensure the effectiveness of the National Board Candidacy Cohort objectives and strategies.

Region 4 staff will analyze various data before, during, and after the cohort for continual evaluation to promote optimal effectiveness. To ensure Region 4 demographics and student needs are met an analysis of regional data prior to recruitment will inform parameters and specifics for recruitment (i.e., number of NBCT's, where effective teachers are needed most, where are the highly-qualified teachers, etc.). Upon reviewing applications, comparing potential candidates to the data will inform the next steps (move forward, more recruitment, etc.). A tracking tool will be used to catalog applications received, status updates, and enrollment to be compared to half-way through and at the end of the program. All meetings, in any format, will require a sign-in and sign-out sheet that will be verified by Region 4 PLF. All contracted facilitators and mentors will use sign-in and sign-out sheets, along with time-logs for meeting with mentors to document overviews of the meeting. These sheets will be reviewed one-two times a month with communication sent to those needed for absences or other concerns detected. Candidate progress will be monitored and addressed by TXNBCT and Region 4 PLF using various methods for the following items. Pre-candidacy seriousness and follow-up if needed for cohort readiness, cohort pacing concerns and interventions, disposition and efficacy changes, review of Making Connections Form with candidate mentor, progress of component work as demonstrated at meetings and other check-ins (as needed), demonstration of student progress during candidacy evidenced by component artifacts and examples, or other exemplars (i.e., BOY and EOY assessments, SLO's, projects, etc.), submission of Region 4 surveys for meeting feedbacks and professional learning, performance of created practice writing and multiple choice component simulations, feedback from content/discipline specialists from group tutoring, and informal interactions. At the end of each cohort meeting each group of candidates will complete a Cohort Connections Form that will review previous content, tie in current content, and reflect on where they are. This form along with other information will be reviewed at bi-weekly PLF meeting (TXNBCT and Region 4) to drive any immediate changes that need to be made and notes for future changes to the scope and sequence, curriculum, and/or resources. This will also be a time to discuss any other program items, such as anecdotal data. Anecdotal data will be noted as it will inform future decisions for R4NBCC in the best interest for candidates. Subtle noticing's such as using the payment plans available through NB, difficulties keeping pace at certain times in the semester, more struggles with one discipline and developmental level over another are informative. Lastly, comparing candidate progress information for component passers to non-passers will also provide data for programmatic changes for 100% success.

Budget Narrative

Refer to the lines from the Application Part 2 Budget Workbook to describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the National Board Candidacy Cohort grant program. Be sure to include why each item included in your budget (Application Part 2 Budget Workbook) is reasonable and necessary to achieving the goals of your National Board Candidacy Cohort. 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.

The Region 4 Facilitator of Educator Excellence's salary will be paid by other funding sources to ensure adequate funds are available for the other areas. Majority of the budget will go towards the TXNBCT external partnership, with the remainder going to other necessary resources for success.

• Required NBCT PL Facilitator for minimum of 8 meetings (requesting more meetings) in-person: $ 4,000
  o Although 8 meetings are the minimum amount, this is not enough for candidate success. For the required deep learning, understanding, and application of standards, components, and writing, gain the ability to engage in feedback protocols, collect, analyze, and select samples, understand rubrics and rate their own work using them, become a reflective practitioner, see student growth during the process, and other objectives, more meetings and time is required.
• Required NBCT Mentors (1:1) for minimum of 10 hours per candidate: $6,000
• R4NBCC Course Collaboration for the following: $5,500
  o Pre-Candidacy course: Proven to be a key variable to success. Those that complete pre-candidacy move onto cohorts and complete certification process at higher rates of success than those who do not.
  o Component 3 and 4: scope and sequence, Canvas contents, curriculum and instruction, and other needed items
  o Component 1: Canvas Contents, studying content for exam, best practices/tips, and developing a study calendar
• NBCT Readers for Component Writing Reviews (1 final draft for each component with feedback): $2,000
• 2 year ATLAS subscription for candidates and facilitators for incorporation into program curriculum: $4,000
  o This subscription provides an actual look at what accomplished teaching looks like for R4NBCC individual discipline and developmental level. An unmatchable resource allowing them to see the 5 Core Propositions, Architecture of an Accomplished Teacher, and their standards in action, so that they can then formulate a plan for implementation.
• Advertising and communication for R4NBCC opportunity across region to ensure all qualified are reached: $2,000
• Region 4 Facilitator mileage for in region travel: $3,500
• Resident Teacher Class Usage and Content Tutoring: $5,000
  o The Region 4 Facilitator will be pursuing NBCT and using a local teachers classes, receiving after-hours content tutoring, PLC support, and access to everything needed for success, to become certified. This is to enable the program to be self-sustaining and viable after the grant, and continue achieving the vision and mission set forth, while reaching the goals.
• Region 4 room use for meetings (ISO states $500/day): $2,500
• Region 4 Content Specialist Support for Tutoring (small group sessions): $3,000
• Consumable and reusable items for facilitators use with R4NBCC (ex: workbooks, chart paper, manipulatives, etc.): $8,500

Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this program.

- (●) The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this program.
- ( ) Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

(●) Yes ( ) No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the program?

( ) Yes (●) No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

5A: Assurances

- [x] The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- [x] The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

5B: Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	
4. Total current-year program allocation	
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the program's defined limit	
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	

CDN 101950 Vendor ID 1741589572 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.

You may duplicate this page

Amended Section	Reason for Amendment