



2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 13, 2022

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation

General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 40, 87th Texas Legislature

This LOI application must be submitted via email to competitivegrants@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 13, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from

February 9, 2023 to April 30, 2025

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)
2. Attachment 1: Pathway Selection and Participation

Amendment Number

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

Applicant Information

Organization CDN Campus ESC DUNS

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 a 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 upon request.

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 2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines.
4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

PATHWAY 1:

5. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for Education & Training teachers that receive a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. These participating teachers must commit with the MOU to, at minimum, teach the Education and Training courses and, if applicable, establish and/or grow a chapter of a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) as a condition of receiving the stipend.
6. The MOUs for Education and Training teachers must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
7. If implementing dual credit Education and Training courses, the LEA must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for the partnering IHE by May 31, 2023. This MOU should include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
8. The LEA will retain documentation locally of each letter of commitment or MOU and submit to TEA upon request.
9. The LEA assures that each high school campus within the participating LEA will implement at least the Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both courses or either course. *Please see example on page 9 of the Program Guidelines.
10. To receive a stipend for teaching dual credit, the LEA assures the Education and Training teacher holds a master's degree in an education-related field and be the teacher of record for at least one dual credit course section in 2023-2024 and two dual credit course sections in 2024-2025 within the Education and Training course sequence.
11. All LEA high schools must establish and/or grow a chapter of a CTSO that supports the Education and Training career cluster through either the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) or Family, Career and Community Leads of America (FCCLA) and participate in at least one competitive event per year.
12. The LEA assures that all LEA high schools will participate in an initial TEA-led Teacher Institute in Summer 2023. Education and Training teacher stipend recipients are required to attend the entirety of the Institute. Principals, counselors, and LEA grant managers are only required to attend the first day. Participants who attended any previous Grow Your Own Summer Institute must still attend. IHE/EPP partners and student ambassador attendance is optional but recommended.
13. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will pilot the TEA Education and Training curriculum if they are not currently using a high-quality Education and Training curriculum.
14. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will receive TEA implementation supports and coaching by participating in online collaborative communities to be scheduled by TEA, not to exceed 6 hours per semester.
15. The LEA assures that Education and Training teacher stipend recipients will participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the Education and Training programming.

Statutory/Program Assurances Cont'd

- 16. LEA grant managers shall support Practicum in Education and Training implementation, including but not limited to student scheduling, identifying field sites and field site teachers, and coordinating student transportation to field sites.
- 17. LEAs shall develop a marketing and recruitment plan to grow enrollment in high school Education and Training courses. Upon request by TEA, all LEA high schools will submit their plan for marketing and student recruitment.
- 18. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA. If requested, LEAs must participate in focus groups and surveys to give input on the Education and Training programming.
- 19. All grant-funded teachers must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

PATHWAY 2:

- 20. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for each candidate that receives a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. All candidate stipend recipients must commit with a MOU, at minimum, to remain at the LEA for an agreed upon length of time in a full-time teaching role as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 21. The MOUs for candidates must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 22. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from each accredited EPP (see Eligible Applicants section of the Program Guidelines) that will partner with the LEA to award teacher certifications to all candidates (those earning a bachelor's degree and teacher certification and certification-only candidates) by May 31, 2023.
- 23. The MOUs for EPPs must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 24. The LEA will retain all MOU documentation locally and submit to TEA upon request.
- 25. LEAs must allow reasonable paid release time and schedule flexibility, as determined by the LEA, for candidates to complete their degree and certification course requirements while engaged in the grant program.
- 26. All certification-only candidates within a LEA will be certified by the same partner EPP as a cohort managed collaboratively by the LEA and EPP.
- 27. The LEA assures that candidate stipend recipients participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the grant programming.
- 28. If positions are available that can be appropriately filled in alignment with candidates' certification area(s), LEAs must commit to hiring/retaining candidates upon successful completion of their teacher certification to serve as a teacher of record in the LEA by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.
- 29. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA.
- 30. The names of all grant-funded teachers and/or candidates must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

ALL PATHWAYS:

- 31. If a teacher or candidate is unable to continue with the grant program, the LEA must file an application amendment and provide TEA with an update of the new amount and type of stipend recipient(s) within 30 days of notification.
- 32. LEAs must file application amendments within seven days of a request from TEA.

Program Description

Describe how the Grow Your Own program will be implemented with grant funds and how the grant will address the LEA's teacher pipeline needs.

Grow Your Own grant funding from the Texas Education Agency will help our school district, and community, continue to develop a regional talent pipeline of future educators. Our vision is to begin identifying students with interest in the education profession from all three ISDs which are part of the Rural Schools Innovation Zone (Premont ISD, Brooks County ISD, and Freer ISD) as early as 8th grade. We seek to enroll interested students in the Grow Your Own Academy where they will take both education-related high school and college courses throughout the program. When students finish the program, they will have college credits which will articulate to a regional university. We aim to support our Grow Your Own students in their pursuit of a bachelor's degree and teacher certification. Our primary goal is to put our students on a pathway to the education profession.

Premont is in a very rural part of South Texas. Many of our teachers currently commute 45-60 minutes from Kingsville, Alice, or Corpus Christi. Developing a teacher and talent pipeline from within our community is a long-term talent management strategy for the district. Additionally, attracting teachers to our district can be challenging because compensation packages may be more attractive in larger districts.

The Premont Promise was adopted via school board resolution on 12/14/2020 and is an initiative by which students who complete the Education & Training program in high school, earn their bachelors degree, and earn their Texas teaching certification, will be given priority status in the interview process for open teaching positions at Premont ISD. The TEA Grow Your Own Grant helped garner support for this resolution and will help us sustain momentum.

Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel

Outline the required qualifications and experience for key personnel to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include each of the following individuals (when applicable) and a description of each role: 1. The LEA's grant manager; 2. LEA leaders involved in program implementation; 3. The campus principals for participating Education and Training high schools; 4. the college/career counselors for participating Education and Training high schools; 5. Education and Training teachers; 6. Education and Training field site teachers for Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses; 7. Any other personnel responsible for implementing the grant.

Title and Responsibilities of Position

Claudette Garcia, Principal of Premont Collegiate High School, will serve as Grant Manager. Ms. Garcia has been the high school principal since 2019 and has experience managing grant-funded programs. Ms. Garcia has strong relationships with the Education and Training instructors, central office staff, and the counselor.

Dr. Kristina Gonzalez, Interim Superintendent of Premont ISD, will initially oversee the GYO program from the central office. In February 2023, Dr. Michael Barrera will assume the role of Superintendent for the district. Dr. Gonzalez has been with Premont ISD since 2019. Dr. Barrera has served as superintendent at other ESC 2 districts. Both leaders are supportive of GYO efforts.

Claudette Garcia is the principal of Premont Collegiate High School. In this role she is responsible for instructional leadership and guidance of teachers in the building. Ms. Garcia routinely meets with the high school teachers to coordinate on key projects and initiatives.

Amanda Hernandez is a certified school counselor and will support college and career counseling/advising for the students in the Grow Your Own Academy.

Velma Marin and Belinda Benavides are the current Education & Training teachers. Instructional Practices is taught by Ms. Marin and Practicum in Education is taught by Ms. Benavides. Both courses are mapped for dual credit through a partnership with Coastal Bend College.

Michael Gonzalez is the Executive Director of the Rural Schools Innovation Zone. Ms. Joann Moreno is the Finance Director for Premont ISD. Mr. Gonzalez will support the programmatic implementation while Ms. Moreno will assist with the implementation on the finance and procurement issues.

Goals and Objectives

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed Grow Your Own program. Describe the talent management strategy, (including the LEA's approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers) related to those goals/objectives.

Premont ISD has a goal to develop a local talent pipeline of future educators for our schools. In 2021, we launched the Grow Your Own Educator Academy at Premont Collegiate High School. Students from Falfurrias High School and Freer High School are eligible to attend the Grow Your Own Educator Academy as their districts are members of the Rural Schools Innovation Zone. While in the Grow Your Own Educator Academy, students do participate in field experiences (Instructional Practices & Practicum in Education and Training) where high school students travel to the elementary school to assist with instruction and learn from the elementary teachers. In 2023 our first cohort of Grow Your Own students will graduate high school. By 2027, members of the initial cohort will be on track to earn their bachelor's degree and Texas teaching certification. By Fall 2027, we hope to hire at least one new teacher who can through the Grow Your Own Academy. 27 students are currently in the Grow Your Own Academy. By 2025, we hope to enroll at least an additional 20% of students in the pathway.

Recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers in our rural area is challenging. Our primary means of attracting new teachers to the district is through employee referrals. We post openings on the Education Service Center Region 2 website and the Premont ISD website. We are competing against higher compensation packages from larger school districts (Alice, Kingsville, Corpus Christi). Premont ISD did complete the Teacher Incentive Allotment review process and recognized 4 master teachers at Premont Collegiate High School last year. The TIA stipends are a strategy to retain our most effective and impactful teachers. As we continue to identify our master teachers, a long-term strategy is to engage them in aspects of the Grow Your Own Educator Academy. We want our education and training students to learn from our best teachers.

Progress Monitoring and Evaluation Measures

Describe how the performance measures identified for this program are consistent with the purpose of the program and related to teacher pipeline needs. Include the tools and processes used to measure performance and the extent to which the major goals and objectives of the grant are met.

Premont ISD is committed to collecting, monitoring, and analyzing data related to the Grow Your Own initiative. In addition to the specific evaluation measures in the grant's program guidelines, we will also monitor data points such as:

- student enrollment in additional Education and Training courses and Human Services courses
- attainment of industry-based certifications of students in the program (Educational Aide I and others)
- number of, and type of, work-based learning experiences students in the program receive
- number of elementary and middle school teachers who support field experiences for the high school students
- number of students from Freer ISD and Brooks County ISD participating in the Grow Your Own Academy

As the Grow Your Own Educator Academy grows and matures, we will also monitor data in our Human Resources Department regarding:

- how new hires learned about the job opportunity (referral, online, ESC 2)
- if new hires went through an Education and Training program in high school
- which college or university new hires received their teaching degrees from

While we have a new chapter of TAFE, we wish to increase the level of student engagement. We will track the competitive events that our students compete in along with their successes in competition.

In order to monitor the various data points, multiple staff members will play roles. Education and Training teachers will be asked to record the number of and types of work-based learning opportunities made available to students. The Human Resources Department will be asked to develop a system to capture data points on new hires to better understand how we are attracting new teachers to the district. Premont counselors will be charged with reaching out to Freer ISD and Brooks County ISD to collect any needed student data regarding students from those districts. Data will be reviewed annually, at a minimum, to benchmark yearly progress.

Budget Narrative

Referencing the applicant's budget workbook and the Application Funding section of the Program Guidelines, outline the proposed budget and amounts for allowable uses of grant program funding. This should also match the Pathway Selection and Participation section of this application.

Total Budget Request = \$36,000 for Pathway 1

Payroll (6100): \$24,000

- \$22,000 for two (2) teacher stipends (Velma Marin, Belinda Benavides) who teach sections of Instructional Practices and Practicum in Education and Training for dual credit
- \$2,000 for stipends for Education and Training field site teacher for duties above and beyond the traditional school day while arranging field experiences for education and training students

Professional and Contracted Services (6200): \$5,000

- \$1,500 to support TAFE student membership fees, chapter materials, and competition fees
- \$3,500 to support dual credit fees for Education and Training courses offered through Coastal Bend College

Supplies and Materials (6300): \$2,000

- \$2,000 for misc. instructional supplies and materials needed to support the Education and Training program.

Other Operating Costs (6400): \$5,000

- \$3,000 for travel expenses for Premont ISD teachers, counselor, and administration to attend TEA's Grow Your Own Institute
- \$2,000 for student transportation to/from field sites for Instructional Practices and Practicum in Education and Training

Capital Outlay (6600): \$0

- \$0 - No capital outlay is required for this project.

Direct/Indirect Costs: \$0

- \$0 - The district will not take direct/indirect costs for this project. The funds will be allocated to stipends for our teachers and programmatic supports for the program.

Our budget aligns with the expectations and program guidelines and is sufficient in meeting our needs.

Sustainability Plan

Describe the sustainability plan for the Grow Your Own Program beyond the timeline of grant funding. The plan should address how a high-quality program will be maintained, including clear action steps beginning in the first year of grant funding and a demonstrated ability to leverage and coordinate resources to increase the LEA's capacity to strengthen the local educator pipeline and make progress on sustainability. This may include the use of other local, state, and/or federal resources. Consider also how the Grow Your Own program may be integrated into, be supported by, and provide support for existing LEA or EPP initiatives and/or priorities.

Premont ISD's membership in the Rural Schools Innovation Zone (RSIZ) is one sustainability strategy. By accepting students from Freer ISD and Brooks County ISD into the Grow Your Own Educator Academy, it allows for the sharing of students and resources across the Zone. The RSIZ funding model was established last year and is structured so that CTE weighted funding follows the student from his/her home school to the school where instruction occurs. A second sustainability strategy is to recruit additional students into the Grow Your Own Educator Academy. CTE weighted funding is a cornerstone of long-term sustainability. As more students enroll, the more funding we will receive to support the program. Additionally, when students begin taking courses such as Instructional Practices and Practicum in Education and Training, funding will increase substantially because those are upper level CTE courses and are 2-3 contact hours. A third strategy is to identify additional faculty and staff who may be able to teach additional sections of Education and Training courses in the future. As enrollment in the program grows, we may need additional staff teaching sections. If/when this occurs, we aim to identify teachers who can teach dual credit. As mentioned previously, the Premont ISD board of trustees adopted the Premont Promise as an addition strategy to identify and retain teacher talent in our community. Students who complete the Education & Training program in high school, earn their bachelors degree, and earn their Texas teaching certification, will be given priority status in the interview process for open teaching positions at Premont ISD. Freer ISD and Brooks County ISD are aware of this initiative and may be exploring similar approaches for their districts. Our final sustainability initiative is to begin allowing our high school Education and Training students to gain early, hands-on field experiences at our elementary school and our Baby University (instructional daycare center).

Stipend Recipient Recruitment

Describe the plan to recruit Education and Training teachers within Pathway 1 and/or candidates within Pathway 2 who are interested and eligible in participating in the program and receiving stipends. The plan must include strategies to equitably recruit diverse individuals and identify individuals with potential criteria including: **A. Pathway 1:** For Education and Training teachers, a demonstrated track record of success and/or achievement, involvement in student organizations and/or school activities, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable). **B. Pathway 2:** For candidates, a desire and commitment to teach long term in the LEA and/or region, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable).

Two teachers are currently teaching Education and Training courses for dual credit at Premont Collegiate High School; Ms. Velma Marin and Ms. Belinda Benavides. These teachers intend on maintaining their employment status for the foreseeable future. Both teachers have received high evaluation marks from school administrators over the past few years. Ms. Marin was one of four teachers from Premont Collegiate High School designated as a master teacher under the Teacher Incentive Allotment program.

Both teachers have positive relationships with our student body and portray positivity in presenting the education profession to aspiring minds.

When identifying additional Education and Training teachers, we will review student performance data and instructor performance evaluation files to identify teachers who consistently have high-performing students and high evaluation marks. We want our Education and Training students to learn from our best.

To ensure adequate work-based learning opportunities for our students, we will seek out high-performing teachers at the elementary school to support field experience opportunities.

Stipend Recipient Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Referencing the Program-Specific Assurances in the Program Guidelines, describe the MOUs in which: **A. Pathway 1:** Education and Training teacher stipend recipients agree to meet grant requirements and any other terms set by the LEA; **B. Pathway 1:** IHE that will partner with the LEA(s) to implement dual credit Education and Training courses and commit to supporting the Education and Training teachers and course implementation (if applicable); **C. Pathway 2:** Candidate stipend recipients commit to remain in the LEA for an agreed upon length of time as a condition of receiving the stipend and if a position is available, the LEA commits to hiring/retaining candidates with satisfactory program completion/job performance; **D. Pathway 2:** Accredited EPPs that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to candidates and commit to supporting candidates with completion of their teacher certification and supporting LEA(s) with implementation of the grant program.

Premont ISD does have an existing MOU with our Education and Training teachers, Ms. Marin and Ms. Benavides. This document was developed two years ago and will be revised to include any additional program guidelines or requirements. In general, the MOU indicates that teachers receiving stipends to teach dual credit Education and Training courses agree to:

- maintain their employment with the district for at least two additional years
- utilize high-quality instructional materials in their instructional delivery
- collaborate with elementary and middle school teachers to allow field experiences for the high school Education and Training students
- maintain credentialed status with our higher education partner, Coastal Bend College
- complete any reporting and data collection requests from school administrators, district administrators, and/or TEA
- serve as a chapter advisor for TAFE
- encourage TAFE members to participate in local, regional, and state competitions (as applicable)
- attend TEA's Grow Your Own Institute during the summer
- attend TEA-provided webinars focused on Grow Your Own initiatives
- actively recruit students into the Grow Your Own Educator Academy to increase student enrollment in the program

By May of 2023, a revised MOU will be established with Ms. Marin and Ms. Benavides. Terms for paying out stipends will be established in the MOU with the stipends being spread out over a two year period.

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
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