



2023-2025 Title I, 1003 ESF-Focused Support Grant
Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, April 21, 2023

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), P.L. 114-95, Section 1003, School Improvement**

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, April 21, 2023**.

Grant period from **July 3, 2023-September 30, 2025**

Pre-award costs permitted from **Award Date**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
 2. Pathway 1: Pathway 1 Supplemental Attachment
 3. Pathway 2: Pathway 2 Supplemental Attachment
 4. Memo of Discussion
- NOTE: All applicants MUST submit an appropriate Supplemental Pathway Attachment for EACH CAMPUS on behalf of which the applicant is applying.**

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 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 NOT permitted for this grant.

Number of Campuses Included in this Application

Pathway 1	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Pathway 2	<input type="text" value="0"/>

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 Title I, ESF-Focused Support Grant Program Guidelines.

4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Title I, ESF-Focused Support 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 they accept and will comply with the requirements of [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#).

6. 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.

7. Title I served Federally Identified campuses awarded this grant will engage in the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) continuous improvement process and create a plan to be submitted to TEA that addresses the selected pathway aligned to the Essential Actions (EA) from the ESF.

8. The applicant ensures it will notify the Vetted Improvement Program provider of intent to apply and, if awarded, will work in good faith with the Vetted Improvement Program.

9. The applicant will identify a campus leader, on each awarded campus, who will be responsible for managing the grant project.

Statutory/Program Assurances, cont'd.

- 10. The applicant will provide access to TEA and its Vetted Improvement Partners for on-site visits to the district and campus(es) as appropriate.

- 11. The applicant provides assurance it will participate in all grant requirements including but not limited to an ESF Self-Assessment and ESF Diagnostic, developing a Targeted Improvement Plan, and submission of funding and pathway progress reports.

- 12. The applicant provides assurance it will provide awarded campuses access to grant funding and funding information in a timely manner, so that funding can be used to meet the needs and action steps of the campus during the grant period.

Summary of Program

1. Describe how the LEA will support campus(es) in carrying out school improvement activities, including how the LEA will help develop a Targeted Improvement Plan for the eligible campus(es) selected for this grant.

Mercedes Independent School District (MISD) recognizes that success for schools comes with creating a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility among district and campus staff. The two middle schools (Chacon and Harrell) in the district are identified as a Comprehensive Support or a Targeted Support campus therefore, will be prioritized in strengthening campus systems, building staff capacity, improving school outcomes, and continuing implementation and support of campus improvement efforts. The district has worked with both middle schools in conducting self assessments that include the implementation of the five essential actions of the Effective Schools Framework: Strong School Leadership and Planning, Effective, Well-Supported Teachers, Positive School Culture, Quality Instruction and Effective Instruction.

The overall themes identified as challenges were shifting mindsets to set high expectations for students, and implementing lessons with fidelity. Both campuses have also had recent changes in leadership that have not been through the Effective Schools Framework training. The two middle school campuses both need improvement in the area of effective instruction focusing specifically on lesson observation and feedback which will set the foundation for mentoring and support the identification of trends. Following that implementation, campuses can improve upon data driven instruction to prepare, lead and implement effective data meetings which is fundamental to school improvement and positive student outcomes.

The district staff (DCSI, special population directors, content coordinators) will work closely with both campuses to support and mentor campus leaders in observing classroom instruction and successfully identifying high-leverage precise action steps that impact teacher growth. To create a culture of data-driven instruction, district staff will support campuses by establishing a systemic approach to lesson planning that focuses on rigor and differentiation practices that meet the needs of all student populations. Furthermore, we will build strong school leadership by providing ongoing coaching on conducting observations and providing meaningful timely feedback.

2. Describe how the LEA will monitor schools receiving the ESF-Focused Support Grant, including how the LEA will: (a) Monitor Targeted Improvement Plans upon submission and during implementation, and (b) Implement additional actions as needed to meet barriers and challenges, after the first year of the grant cycle.

District staff will consist of DCSI, special population directors, and content coordinators that will assist with observations and feedback, planning of professional development based on campus needs, providing resources as needed, etc. District staff will work hand in hand with each campus to ensure that the improvement plan activities are being implemented. This team will monitor each campus targeted improvement plan by establishing a timeline with checkpoints on a quarterly basis for campuses to adhere to based on their specific action steps. District staff will set up collaborative meetings with each campus where campuses will need to provide evidence of implementation by sharing artifacts, resources, and actions completed with district staff. If implementation is not being addressed, district staff will hold campuses accountable by providing campuses with next steps that will need to be taken before the end of the next quarterly check to ensure progress toward campus goals.

After the first year of the grant cycle, Mercedes ISD will evaluate the web-based improvement plans using a developed rubric to identify areas of need. District staff will meet with campus leaders to conduct a self assessment and develop a redesigned plan that will address the areas of need identified and establish measurable outcomes for the upcoming year. Ultimately, MISD will provide outstanding levels of empowerment to each campus in deciding the daily operations of their campus and their implementation of best research-based practices that align with the goals of their improvement plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies, Performance and Evaluation

1. Describe how the LEA will modify, as appropriate, practices and policies to provide operational flexibility to the awarded campus, that enables full and effective implementation of the Effective Schools Framework Essential Actions and aligned Targeted Improvement Plan.

Mercedes ISD will provide operational flexibility in school operations such as scheduling, collaborative planning by content and/or grade level, district staff support in effective differentiation strategies that improve student outcomes, ensuring time allotment for collaborative learning walks with campus leaders, and timely access to student performance reports. Moreover, the awarded campuses will be allowed to select professional development sessions that are aligned to their needs assessment and web-based improvement plans. Additionally, Mercedes ISD will leverage other funding sources that increase sustainability of effective instruction and build effective routine lesson planning practices that include rigor and differentiation for all student populations; thus, creating well supported teachers, positive school cultures, and high quality curriculum and assessments. Our goal is to encompass collaborative interactions between district staff, campus leaders, teachers, and students to achieve high levels of effective instruction for all learners.

Budget Narrative

1. Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.

Mercedes ISD has selected Pathway 1 to work with Region One ESC on Texas Instructional Leadership and support that will provide both middle school campuses and the district leaders with training on building capacity of educators that fosters continuous improvement.

6100s - 35% (\$35,000) of the funding will be allocated to the 6100s for extra duty pay and fringe benefits for staff as they attend professional development sessions outside of their normal working day.

6200s - 60% (\$60,000) of the funding will be allocated to the TIL training that will be provided by Region One ESC

6300s-2% (\$2,000) of the funding will be allocated to purchasing the necessary supplies and materials needed during professional development sessions and to implement lessons with fidelity. All instructional materials purchased will be directly aligned to the ESF prioritized focused area for both middle school campuses (5.2) Building Teacher Capacity Through Observation and Feedback Cycles and (5.3) Data-Driven Instruction.

6400s-3% (\$3,000) of the funding will be allocated to travel for campus staff to attend conferences or supplemental training sessions.

During quarterly reviews between the District Staff and Campus Leaders the review if current expenditures are aligned with the improvement process and determine if adjustments need to be made. Federal Programs Director will work with the campus principal to review local, state and federal funding

Budget Narrative, cont'd.

2. Describe how the LEA will ensure campus leaders have direct access to grant funding to ensure alignment to the Targeted Improvement Plan.

District staff will ensure that campuses have access to grant funding by providing budget sheets to campuses on a quarterly basis. Budget expenditures will be monitored by our Federal Programs Director who will set up percentages that need to be expended within a specific timeline. Other supplemental funding sources will also be identified and prioritized to service both middle school campuses as they work through Pathway 1.

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	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>

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