

2026-2027 TOPS High School Reauthorization Application Prompt Responses

Question #2:

Texas Online Preparatory High School serves approximately 3,000 students in grades 9–12 through a fully virtual instructional model. The student population includes economically disadvantaged students (51.9%), students identified as at-risk (48.4%), students receiving special education services (14.9%), and emergent bilingual students (7.9%). The campus serves a racially and ethnically diverse student body with a broad range of academic readiness levels and support needs.

Student outcomes show strengths in several areas and also a clear need for improvement. In Reading/Language Arts, 58% of students achieved Meets Grade Level or above, exceeding the Closing the Gaps target of 44%. Reading growth increased from 62% in 2025 to 64% in 2026, and Mathematics growth increased from 57% to 59%. In Domain 3, reading performance exceeded the 2026 target for every evaluated subpopulation, whereas math performance did not reach a single target for any evaluated subpopulation, and indicates the need for significant focused improvement. Course completion improved from 82.1% to 84.2% over three years. The federal graduation rate reached 91.9%, exceeding the federal target of 90%, and 90% of graduates met CCMR criteria. TELPAS progress reached 32%, surpassing the federal target of 28%. TOPS HS maintains 94% overall attendance, with 98% of students completing orientation expectations within their first 3 days, and 86% of students meeting weekly engagement expectations, demonstrating weekly campus gains and year-over-year improvement.

These outcomes are supported by an instructional model grounded in PLCs, unit and lesson internalization, lesson rehearsals, student work analysis, and ongoing observation and feedback. Weekly calibration sessions strengthen consistency in instructional expectations, delivery, and feedback. The program is designed to provide individualized, multi-tiered supports based on attendance, course progress, engagement, onboarding data, and academic performance. Through PLC structures and the Engagement Guiding Coalition, staff coordinate interventions, monitor student progress using standards mastery data and student work samples, and partner with families to support persistence and completion. Instructional coaching, collaborative planning, and cross-functional support systems further strengthen implementation.

Question #3:

Texas Online Preparatory High School monitors student progress through a MTSS that integrates academic performance, attendance, engagement, and intervention data to guide decision-making. Consistent with TEC Chapter 30B, our academic and operations plans include progress monitoring, intervention, staffing, professional development, and student/family engagement. Students are placed in intervention tiers using STAAR/EOC achievement and growth, beginning-of-year assessment results, prior intervention history, and enrollment history. The MTSS Team reviews student progress monthly using Common Formative Assessment (CFA) data by TEKS, RTI pre- and post-assessments, IXL diagnostics, intervention attendance, and engagement measures. Daily instruction also includes mastery checks, accommodations, emergent bilingual supports, and instructional adjustments. There is also consistent collaboration among teachers, interventionists, and support staff. These strong practices are embedded in the campus strategic plan and implemented under district leadership oversight to support continuous improvement and improved student outcomes.

Intervention supports include Tier 2 and 3 academic interventions, individualized IXL pathways, attendance interventions, accountability structures, credit recovery monitoring, graduation readiness supports, and EOC preparation. Interventionists also participate in PLC lesson internalization and student work analysis to ensure live small group support is aligned to student needs.

Areas for improvement include course failure rates, credit deficiencies, disengagement, EOC readiness, and graduation readiness. In response, the school implemented a common intervention scope and sequence, increased EOC remediation staffing, expanded engagement oversight, added teacher-supported credit recovery options, implemented Bluebonnet for EOC readiness, and aligned IXL pathways to beginning-of-year assessment results. A Graduation Rate Guiding Coalition was established to strengthen monitoring and intervention for students at risk of not graduating.

Successful practices will be sustained through ongoing CFA, RTI, IXL, attendance, engagement, participation, and student outcome review cycles. Intervention effectiveness will continue to be evaluated regularly, and progress monitoring systems will be refined as needed to maintain alignment with Chapter 30B requirements and support a continuous improvement process grounded in student data and outcomes.

Question#4:

Students seeking enrollment in Texas Online Preparatory High School in grades 9–12 must meet the eligibility requirements established under TEC §30B.103, as well as the campus board-approved enrollment criteria. These requirements are communicated in writing to families before enrollment, are posted on the campus website, and are applied consistently to all applicants without discrimination. Families receive clear information regarding application timelines, required documentation, eligibility review, enrollment decisions, and steps needed to prepare for a successful start to school.

We review additional eligibility criteria through objective transcript and academic record analysis. Students must be on track to graduate with their cohort year, as verified through transcript review, and may be no more than two years older than their cohort age. Students entering grade 9 must have earned a Meets or Masters performance level on Grade 8 Reading and Mathematics STAAR assessments, or equivalent qualifying criteria, and must have earned final grades of 65 or higher in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics. Students entering grades 10–12 must have passed all required End-of-Course (EOC) assessments with at least an Approaches performance level. Students participating in STAAR Alternate 2 must have earned Satisfactory or Accomplished performance levels on applicable prior assessments. Students enrolling during the spring semester must demonstrate passing grades in all core academic courses on their most recent report card, including Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. Students may not have a record of a mandatory but incomplete DAEP/JJAEP placement.

Texas Online Preparatory High School is a TEA-designated Purple Star campus and provides military enrollment exceptions as permitted by TEA rules.

The enrollment process is transparent and equitable. Families submit an application and required records, and campus staff review each application using the same published standards for all applicants. Enrollment decisions are based solely on documented eligibility criteria and are applied uniformly and objectively to ensure equal access.

Question #5:

TOPS is implementing targeted enhancements to its virtual program model for SY 2026–2027 based on student outcome data, accountability results, root cause analysis, and stakeholder feedback. These changes are aligned to the campus strategic plan and district goals for improved STAAR EOC performance, increased CCMR, higher graduation rates, and stronger overall accountability outcomes. Ongoing PD will support teacher and leader ability to implement instructional and programmatic changes.

One key change is the additional implementation of HQIM through Bluebonnet Learning in Algebra I, with planned expansion to additional HS courses as materials become available. Prior performance data identified a need for stronger curriculum alignment, greater rigor, and more consistent instructional coherence particularly in mathematics. Bluebonnet Learning will support TEKS-aligned, grade-level instruction and strengthen STAAR readiness while improving the consistency of instruction across the virtual environment.

TOPS is also increasing live instructional time to 60 minutes, 5 days per week, to support HQIM implementation and improve student engagement. Data and stakeholder feedback indicated a need for more direct instruction, guided practice, academic discourse, and timely feedback. Additional synchronous learning opportunities will allow teachers to monitor understanding more frequently, provide targeted intervention when needed, and increase student access to immediate instructional support.

To strengthen instructional quality, TOPS will continue to build teacher capacity through PLCs, unit and lesson internalization, lesson rehearsals, student work analysis, and observation and feedback through calibration sessions in the virtual environment. These practices are intended to improve Tier 1 instruction, support consistent delivery across classrooms, and increase fidelity of implementation. Campus leaders will also use observation tools and feedback protocols to strengthen instructional coaching and support teachers in responding to student needs.

TOPS is also expanding student success systems, including credit recovery, EOC retest preparation, cohort and graduation monitoring, and leaver tracking. These modifications will improve course completion, grad rate, supports for students who need intervention to remain on track, CCMR for cohorts 2027-2029 without reliance on College Bridge completion, and CCMR for cohort 2030 with maximum top tier performance.

Question #6 a:

Organization Name: K12, a Stride, Inc. company

Accreditation Status: Accredited

Accrediting Agency: Cognia (formerly AdvancED)

K12, a Stride, Inc. company, is accredited by Cognia, a global nonprofit organization that provides accreditation and continuous improvement services for educational institutions. K12 first received accreditation through AdvancED in 2010. AdvancED merged with Measured Progress in 2018 and became Cognia. K12 maintains its accredited status by meeting Cognia's quality standards, engaging in continuous improvement processes, and participating in both internal self-studies and external quality assurance reviews. In 2025, Cognia awarded Stride, Inc. the first-ever corporate umbrella accreditation, further recognizing the organization's commitment to quality educational systems and practices.

Prior to the enactment of Senate Bill 569, Texas Online Preparatory High School was authorized to operate and provide online courses and full-time virtual instruction through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) in accordance with Chapter 30A of the Texas Education Code.

Question #6 b:

TOPS provides a public virtual education program: certified teacher instruction; state-aligned core, elective, and career and technology courses; live and asynchronous learning; curriculum; assessments; and individualized planning. Teachers monitor progress and provide tutoring, MTSS/RTI, and additional support.

Teams of support staff provide onboarding, attendance, engagement, family support, counseling coordination, and wraparound interventions. Eligible students receive IEP-required specialized instruction and related services. The program provides instructional materials, software, loaned computers and printers, connectivity assistance, technical support, and secure systems for learning, reporting, testing, and data security.

Budgeted Program Expenses

82% Instructional costs

36% Teacher expenses

Teacher compensation and benefits, general education, special education, career and technology, dyslexia, bilingual, counseling, professional development

29% Curriculum, materials, and systems

Student curriculum and delivery, instructional materials and tools including special education resources, physical and digital textbooks and supplies, LMS, SIS, Course Content Management System, as well as admissions, enrollment, and onboarding of students

5% Laptops and connectivity

Loaner computers and printers for students and teachers as well as internet stipends to assist with connectivity

2% Additional student services

Related to speech, physical, and occupational therapy; psychological evaluations; and accommodations for students with visual and hearing impairments.

7% Technology support

School reports, tools, analytics, and monitoring, attendance, compliance reporting, data hosting and security

3% Testing support

Testing site rentals and logistics, IT infrastructure requirements, testing computers, and applicable software, as well as proctor time and travel expenses

11% Instructional administrative support costs

General and special education support, teacher effectiveness/training, Reporting and student data management, legal expenses, human resources management, business/financial management, and school website support

7% School District oversight fee

Administrative expenses and other costs incurred that are associated with the district's responsibility of supervising, reporting, and overseeing the Program's quality, compliance, and operational performance in accordance with Applicable Law.

Question #6 c:

TOPS HS, operated in partnership with Huntsville ISD, has a demonstrated history of success in delivering virtual education services. The 26-27 school year will mark the 14th year of this partnership. During that time, TOPS HS has consistently provided a full-time virtual instructional program for students who benefit from an online learning environment while maintaining a strong focus on academic achievement, graduation readiness, and accountability performance.

From the district's perspective, the provider's historical performance reflects consistent effectiveness in a virtual setting. Across multiple accountability cycles, TOPS HS has maintained ratings ranging from C to B. Most recently, the campus earned an 82 (B), improving from 79 in 24-25. The campus also earned an 83 (B) in 23-24, 79 in 22-23, and 78 in 21-22. These results show sustained performance and steady improvement over time.

These outcomes provide concrete evidence that the provider delivers effective virtual instruction and supports student success through consistent systems. TOPS HS has established structures for individualized learning, data-driven decision-making, targeted academic support, and ongoing progress monitoring in the virtual environment. Staff use these systems to identify student needs early, respond with timely interventions, and maintain a focus on academic progress, course completion, graduation readiness, and CCMR.

The campus's historical results also demonstrate the provider's ability to serve students with consistency and fidelity over time. In a virtual model, strong outcomes depend on clear expectations, effective instructional delivery, regular monitoring, and responsive intervention. TOPS has demonstrated all of these through its long-standing partnership with Huntsville ISD. The continuity of performance across multiple years and accountability cycles reflects a proven track record of effectiveness with students in a virtual setting.

Building on this history, TOPS has established a goal of earning an A rating in 26-27 through continued improvement in academic achievement, student growth, engagement, and timely intervention. The district views this history of performance as strong evidence that the provider is well positioned to continue serving students successfully in a high-quality virtual learning model. Our partnership is grounded in continuous improvement, and we remain committed to supporting student success.

Question #6 d:

The district maintains a structured and transparent oversight system to monitor and evaluate TOPS. Oversight is aligned to district strategic goals and accountability expectations, with the school's strategic plan directly connected to district priorities for academic achievement, College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR), student engagement, and graduation outcomes.

Monitoring occurs through multiple recurring processes. Weekly meetings between the TOPS Executive Director and district Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning review implementation progress, student performance data, operational concerns, and action plans. Monthly principal meetings focus on campus performance metrics and continuous improvement priorities. Instructional quality is monitored through monthly classroom observations and PLC calibrations using district evaluation tools and established instructional expectations.

The district also participates in monthly Guiding Coalition reviews, including Instructional, Engagement, Graduation Rate, and Special Populations committees. These reviews analyze implementation evidence, student outcome data, and progress toward goals. Formal Campus Support Sessions are conducted throughout the year using the district's Campus Support and Progress Monitoring Rubric and Scorecard to evaluate performance, identify barriers, and determine necessary supports or corrective actions. Quarterly CCMR reviews with district accountability leadership monitor postsecondary readiness outcomes and ensure alignment to accountability targets.

Expected student outcomes are clearly defined and measurable. Performance targets include 90% Approaches Grade Level, 70% Meets Grade Level, and 20% Masters Grade Level on state assessments, a 60% TSI-ready rate without College Prep coursework, and a 98% four-year graduation rate.

To ensure transparency and accountability, district leadership and the Board receive monthly reports summarizing accountability indicators and student progress. When data indicate that performance goals may not be met, the district implements an escalation process that increases monitoring frequency, instructional observations, leadership reviews, and targeted support. This continuous improvement cycle ensures TOPS remains accountable for program quality, student engagement, academic performance, and progress toward district and state expectations.

Question #7:

Texas Online Preparatory High School has established procedures to ensure all staff assigned to the virtual campus meet the qualifications required under TEC §30B.053(b) and hold appropriate certification for the content and grade levels they teach before serving as Teacher of Record.

Prior to teaching online, TOPS verifies that newly hired teachers meet requirements for online instruction based on former TVSN standards. Teachers who cannot document prior qualifications must successfully complete an approved Online Instructor Training course before being assigned as Teacher of Record. Completion records are reviewed and maintained through the onboarding process to ensure compliance before instructional responsibilities begin.

In addition, all teachers new to TOPS participate in onboarding designed for virtual learning environments. Training includes virtual instructional practices, instructional systems and platforms,

research-based instructional strategies, online student engagement, compliance requirements, and campus expectations. Teachers also receive content-specific training, including RBIS and PLC+, aligned to assigned content and ongoing coaching from instructional coaches to support effective virtual instruction.

TOPS uses defined criteria to determine whether a teacher has sufficient previous experience. A teacher may qualify through one of the following documented pathways:

Successful completion of a professional development course or program approved by the former TXVSN;

A graduate degree in online or distance learning; or

Two or more years of documented experience teaching online courses to students in Grades 3-12.

For candidates qualifying through prior online teaching experience, TOPS requires documentation verifying at least two years of online teaching experience serving students in Grades 3-12. HR and campus leadership review employment records, and other documentation during hiring to verify eligibility. Documentation is reviewed before course assignments are finalized to ensure teachers meet all requirements prior to serving students in the virtual environment.

Through this process, TOPS ensures that every teacher assigned to the virtual campus either demonstrates sufficient prior experience in online instruction or completes the required training before assuming instructional responsibilities, while also participating in campus-specific onboarding and professional learning designed to support success in a virtual setting.

Question #9:

TOPS maintains a safe learning environment through a comprehensive cybersecurity, data privacy, and student safety framework that integrates secure technology systems, proactive monitoring, student education, and responsive support services. Cybersecurity practices are guided by the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and include continuous network monitoring, threat detection, vulnerability management, role-based access controls, Single Sign-On, Multi-Factor Authentication, and established incident response procedures for identifying, containing, and remediating security threats.

Student information is protected in compliance with FERPA and the Texas Student Privacy Act. Academic, health, disciplinary, and personally identifiable information is safeguarded through secure systems and restricted access protocols. Third-party vendors must complete security reviews and risk assessments before hosting, processing, or storing student data.

Students receive instruction during orientation and quarterly thereafter, on digital citizenship, cybersecurity awareness, online safety, strategies for safe browsing, and responsible technology use. The Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, Microsoft Teams Usage Policy, and Student Handbook establish expectations for protecting personal information, using digital tools responsibly, and reporting safety concerns. Students are taught how to identify misinformation, safeguard account credentials, and engage appropriately in online environments. Cyberbullying prevention is supported through clear behavioral expectations, counseling services, reporting systems, and intervention protocols. Students learn to recognize, report, and respond to cyberbullying across digital platforms. Multiple reporting options, including anonymous reporting, enable concerns to be investigated and addressed promptly. Students are encouraged to preserve evidence, block inappropriate users, and seek support from trusted adults and school personnel.

Additional safeguards include monitored digital learning platforms, staff supervision of virtual learning spaces, AI-assisted content monitoring for potential safety concerns, and access to counselors, crisis counselors, social workers, and other support personnel. Together, these measures create a comprehensive, preventative approach that protects student information, promotes safe online behavior, mitigates cybersecurity risks, and ensures a secure learning environment for all students.