



Brownsville Independent School District

Agenda Category: General Function Board of Education Meeting: 04/07/2026

Item Title: 2026-2028 Innovative Services for Students with Autism, Grant from the Texas Education Agency X Action Information Discussion

BACKGROUND:

The district applied for and has been selected to receive the 2026-2028 Innovative Services for Students With Autism grant for \$2,000,000.00 from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as authorized by the 89th Texas Legislature. This competitive two-year grant supports Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in developing innovative evidence-based programs for students with autism. Grant funded initiatives will focus on increasing district capacity through the implementation of evidence-based instructional practices, expansion of meaningful inclusion opportunities, parent training, and on-going staff development. The TEA approved funding allocation for Year 1 is \$1,000,000.00. Year 2 funding allocations will be approved at a later date by TEA. As part of the grant requirement from TEA, BISD will also need to include teachers from another school district to participate in staff development activities related to the grant. San Benito CISD will be the district participating in the professional development opportunities afforded by the grant.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

No cost to the district.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval to accept the grant award and authorize district administration to implement all 2026-2028 Innovative Services for Students with Autism grant activities in compliance with TEA requirements. No cost to the District.

Adriana Q. Lippa *Alippa*
Submitted by: Principal/Program Director

Recommended by: Asst. Supt./Exec. Dir.
BAH
Beatriz Hernandez
Approved by: Chief Officer

Approved for Submission to Board of Education:

Jesús H. Chávez
Dr. Jesús H. Chavez, Superintendent

March 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Notice of Selection for the 2026-2028 Innovative Services for Students with Autism Grant

Dear Diana Barron:

The Texas Education Agency is pleased to inform you that the application submitted on behalf of Brownsville ISD has been selected to receive an award from the Innovative Services for Students with Autism Grant. The award is as follows:

Approved Funding Allocation Year 1
\$1,000,000.00

Year 2 funding allocations will be approved at a later date. The next step is to apply for the **approved funding allocation** amount with TEA. The 2026-2028 Innovative Services for Students with Autism, Cycle 3, Year 1 application will open on Wednesday, March 25, 2026. Visit the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page for detailed information about the grant, including allocations for eligible applicants. Search by the grant application name. Additional information on how to apply for a grant is available on the [Applying for a Grant](#) page.

The next step is to submit your application to TEA. The application has two parts - Part 1 (PDF) and Part 2 (Excel spreadsheet). These forms are available on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Application Due Date

Eligible applicants must apply through the TEA system by **5:00 p.m. Central Time, April 24, 2026**.

Contact information

For program information, contact the Department of Special Education at 512-463-9414, or specialeducation@tea.texas.gov.

For questions related to the PDF application, contact your assigned negotiator listed on the [Grants Administration Contacts](#) page.



Commissioner Mike Morath

1701 North Congress Avenue • Austin, Texas 78701-1494 • 512 463-9734 • 512 463-9838 FAX • tea.texas.gov

For funding information and any other grant-related questions, contact the Grants Administration Division at (512) 463-8525, or grants@tea.texas.gov.

Congratulations on your selection.

Sincerely,

Nathan Pullen

Nathan Pullen
State Autism Coordinator
Texas Education Agency
Division of Special Education

Autism Grant 2026-2028

Information

Funding Request Name	Autism Grant 2026-2028	Funding Program	Innovative Services for Students with Autism 2026-2028
Application Date	2/10/2026	Type	Collaborative Application
Date/Time Submitted	2/10/2026, 10:12 AM	Funding Request Number	001067
Total Amount Requested	\$2,000,000.00		

Applicant

District Account	BROWNSVILLE ISD
Small, Rural, Small/Rural	Does not apply
Region	Region 1
Applying Contact	Diana Barron

General Application Information

# Students projected to be impacted	1,463	# Educators projected to be impacted	695
--	-------	---	-----

Current Needs

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) provides a comprehensive continuum of services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in their least restrictive environment (LRE). Services span from Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Life Skills/Structured for Life, Resource, Inclusion, and Mainstream settings, individualized through the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee. BISD serves 6,972 students receiving special education services across 50 campuses, with 1,013 students (15%) identified as having ASD. Programming is aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and designed to ensure measurable progress toward IEP goals while maximizing access to general education settings. BISD's established strengths provide a foundation for growth through this grant. The district employs 191 special education teachers and leverages a multidisciplinary support model including behavior specialists, speech-language pathologists, counselors, and school psychologists. Behavior specialists provide consultation, conduct Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), support implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), and participate in ARD committees. The district contracts with Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) to provide specialized support as determined by ARD committees, ensuring individualized, evidence-based behavioral interventions.

Professional development is a key strength. During the 2024–25 and 2025–26 school years, teachers, behavior specialists, psychologists, and counselors completed trainings through Region One ESC and district provided training on Crisis Prevention Intervention, de-escalation strategies, FBA and BIP development, IQ and achievement analysis, disability awareness, positive behavior strategies, mindfulness training, behavioral IEPs, and CORE team collaboration. These efforts build staff capacity and promote consistent, evidence-based instruction for students with ASD. BISD also has strong systems for data collection, progress monitoring, and collaboration.

Special education teachers track progress using multiple data sources, including grades, assessments, behavioral data, and general education teacher input. IEP summaries and accommodations are provided at the start of each school year and after ARD meetings. Collaboration occurs every six weeks between special education and general education teachers and prior to annual ARD meetings to ensure comprehensive planning and informed decision-making.

Despite these strengths, areas of need remain. Increasing enrollment of students with ASD, variability in staff experience, and complex behavioral, communication, and sensory needs require more intensive, targeted professional development and ongoing instructional coaching. Limited access to BCBAs and specialized resources restricts the district's capacity to provide sustained, proactive support and consistent implementation of evidence-based practices across all settings.

This grant will strengthen current programming by expanding autism-specific professional development, increasing access to specialized instructional and behavioral supports, and providing targeted campus and student-level coaching to ensure high-fidelity implementation. In addition, structured parent coaching and training will empower families to reinforce communication, behavior regulation, and social skills across home, school, and community settings. These enhancements will increase district capacity, promote consistent, high-quality programming, and improve measurable student outcomes in communication, behavior, engagement, and academic achievement while strengthening school-home collaboration.

Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

This program aims to enhance district capacity to provide evidence-based support for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), ensuring improved student outcomes, family engagement, and sustainable professional growth.

Goal 1: Strengthen parent engagement – Conduct grade-level ASD-focused parent conferences and provide targeted resources, aiming for 80% parent participation and 90% positive feedback on usefulness. Outcome: Parents gain knowledge and confidence, supporting consistent interventions at home.

Goal 2: Build teacher expertise – Train all teachers in PECS and provide BCBA-led coaching, with 25% proficiency gains in assessments and completion of 10 coaching sessions annually with a stipend of \$500.00 dollars. Outcome: Teachers and speech pathologists demonstrate high-fidelity implementation of communication and behavioral strategies, improving student engagement and learning.

Goal 3: Enhance evaluation practices – Provide PD for evaluation staff on ASD protocols, with 90% demonstrating competency. Outcome: More accurate, actionable IEP recommendations that support individualized student success.

Goal 4: Develop para-educator skills – Support with Behavior Technician training for paras, with a \$375.00 stipend upon completion and 100% certification goal. Outcome: Paras deliver consistent, high-quality behavioral interventions across classrooms.

Goal 5: Build sustainable behavioral expertise – Support Behavior Specialists in completing BCBA coursework, targeting two specialists during the grant period with a stipend of \$500.00. Outcome: District gains in-house BCBA-level expertise, reducing reliance on external consultants.

Goal 6: Empower campus leadership – Provide PD for administrators to include BCBA-led training on LRE placement and ASD interventions, targeting 90% attendance. Outcome: Administrators make informed, evidence-based placement decisions, ensuring improved student outcomes and compliance.

By implementing these targeted, measurable objectives, the program will strengthen ASD support across parents, teachers, paras, evaluators, behavior specialists, and administrators, creating sustainable, high-quality practices that directly improve student outcomes and engagement.

Program Overview

The district will implement a comprehensive, systems-based Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) capacity-building program designed to address needs identified through the district needs assessment, including inconsistent parent engagement, variable fidelity of evidence-based practices, limited internal behavioral expertise, and the need for improved evaluation accuracy and informed Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) decision-making.

To address gaps in family engagement, the district will provide grade-level ASD parent conferences aligned to developmental needs and parent-identified priorities, increasing parent participation to at least 70% and strengthening consistency between home and school interventions.

Teacher capacity will be enhanced through structured PECS training and ongoing BCBA-led coaching cycles, addressing identified needs for consistent implementation of evidence-based communication and behavioral practices. This job-embedded professional learning model ensures fidelity of implementation, accountability, and measurable improvements in instructional practice.

Evaluation staff will participate in targeted professional development focused on ASD-specific assessment protocols and best practices, improving the accuracy and quality of recommendations and strengthening alignment between evaluation data, instructional planning, and IEP development.

Paraeducators supporting students with ASD will complete Behavior Technician supported through grant-funded training and a \$375.00 upon completion. This investment addresses the identified need for a highly trained frontline workforce capable of implementing consistent behavioral interventions across settings.

To ensure sustainability, district Behavior Specialists will be supported in completing BCBA coursework, building internal behavioral expertise, and reducing long-term reliance on external consultants. Campus administrators will participate in BCBA-led professional development focused on evidence-based ASD practices and LRE decision-making, supported through a \$500 participation stipend, strengthening leadership capacity to make informed, compliant placement decisions.

Sustainability is embedded through the development of internal expertise, certified staff, and scalable professional learning systems. Training frameworks, evaluation protocols, coaching models, and parent resources will be institutionalized within district professional development and implementation structures, ensuring continued impact beyond the grant period and improved outcomes for students with ASD.

Student Achievement and Improvement Data

The district will collect and analyze multiple sources of empirical, student-level academic, communication, and behavioral data to monitor program implementation and improve outcomes for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Data collection aligns evidence-based practices embedded in the program and supports continuous improvement.

Baseline data will be established at the start of the grant period using existing student records, including IEP present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFPs), communication

assessments, IEP goal progress, behavior data (frequency, duration, and intensity), and current instructional and placement settings. For students utilizing alternative communication systems, baseline data will include PECS phase levels, frequency of independent exchanges, and functional communication attempts. Existing Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and observation data will establish behavioral baselines.

Progress monitoring will occur on a consistent schedule. Communication outcomes will be monitored biweekly using PECS data sheets and classroom observations.

Behavioral outcomes will be monitored weekly through data collected by teachers and paraeducators, including frequency and duration of targeted behaviors and replacement skills. Academic progress will be monitored each grading period using curriculum-based measures and IEP progress reports.

BCBA-led coaching sessions will include fidelity checklists to monitor implementation of evidence-based strategies, with fidelity data reviewed monthly.

Evaluation and placement data will be reviewed annually and during ARD committee meetings to assess alignment between evaluation findings, instructional recommendations, and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) decisions. Evaluation report quality and recommendation accuracy will be monitored using rubric-based reviews following targeted professional development for evaluation staff.

Use of data will occur at both campus and district levels. Campus teams will review student-level data monthly to adjust instruction, communication supports, and behavioral interventions. District teams will review aggregated data each semester to monitor trends, implementation fidelity, and professional development needs. Parent participation and feedback data from ASD conferences will be reviewed each semester to strengthen family engagement strategies.

Student outcomes will be determined by measurable growth in communication skills, progress toward IEP goals, reductions in targeted behaviors, increased access to instruction in the LRE, and improved consistency of supports across settings. Data-driven decision-making will ensure effective implementation, continuous improvement, and sustained impact of the program.

Budget Narrative

The requested \$1,000,000 grant award is essential for Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) to implement and sustain autism-specific programming aligned with district needs and student outcomes. Currently, approximately 97% of BISD's special education budget is allocated to required personnel costs to meet federal and state compliance mandates, including instructional staff, related service providers, and evaluation personnel. An additional 2% supports essential campus operations, leaving approximately 1% for districtwide professional development and program initiatives. This structure significantly limits the district's ability to implement comprehensive, evidence-based training and behavioral supports needed to address the growing number and increasing complexity of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Grant funds will directly address this gap.

Staffing and Contracted Services:

A significant portion of the grant will fund contracted Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and autism specialists to provide districtwide training, coaching, and consultation. These services will support high-quality implementation of Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), communication systems, and self-regulation strategies. Contracted experts will build internal capacity by coaching teachers, specialists, and campus leaders to ensure consistent implementation of evidence-based practices across settings.

Professional Development and Training:

Grant funds will support structured professional development for special education teachers, general education teachers, administrators, related service providers, and district leaders. Training will focus on the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), positive behavior supports, self-regulation strategies, and autism-specific instructional practices. Administrator training is included to strengthen campus-level leadership, monitoring, and long-term sustainability. These efforts align with program goals to improve student communication, behavior regulation, and engagement.

Parent Training and Family Engagement:

Funds will support parent training and coaching to promote the generalization of skills across home and school environments. Training will focus on communication supports, behavior strategies, and alignment with student IEP goals, strengthening collaboration and supporting sustained progress.

Supplies and Instructional Resources:

The budget includes PECS materials, visual supports, sensory regulation tools, data collection systems, and substitutes necessary for implementation and progress monitoring across campuses.

Travel and Implementation Support:

Limited travel funds will support participation in required trainings, coaching sessions, and regional professional learning opportunities aligned with grant objectives.

Sustainability:

This grant represents a strategic investment in capacity building. By prioritizing training, coaching, and systems development, BISD will develop internal expertise that can be sustained beyond the grant period. Strengthened staff capacity, leadership systems, and parent partnerships will allow continued implementation of evidence-based autism practices using existing funding streams.

Overall, the \$1,000,000 award will enable BISD to move beyond compliance-driven spending and implement the training, behavioral supports, and family engagement necessary to meet the complex needs of students with ASD, improving communication, regulation, engagement, and academic outcomes while strengthening districtwide capacity.

Evidence-based Practices

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) implements evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across all settings to improve communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and academic outcomes. Programming, professional development, and service delivery align with NPDC ASD (2015), the National Autism Center (2015), and the Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT). This grant will expand EBPs across BISD, addressing gaps while building capacity among staff, administrators, and families.

Structured Teaching & Visual Supports – BISD uses visual schedules, task analysis, and structured environments to promote predictability and independence (NPDC ASD, 2015). Grant-funded training and coaching will build staff capacity, ensure fidelity of implementation across classrooms, and embed practices into daily routines for sustainable impact.

Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) & Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) – Behavior specialists and BCBA's implement FBAs and individualized BIPs based on Applied Behavior Analysis (NPDC ASD, 2015; National Autism Center, 2015). Grant resources will expand BCBA-led coaching, strengthen high-fidelity behavior supports, and build districtwide sustainability of evidence-based behavioral practices.

Positive Behavior Supports & Crisis Prevention – Staff receive training in positive behavior strategies, de-escalation, and mindfulness, EBPs shown to reduce disruptive behavior and improve engagement (NPDC ASD, 2015). Grant-funded professional development and administrator oversight will extend capacity, ensure consistent implementation, and embed practices into campus behavioral systems for long-term sustainability.

Communication Supports – Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) – PECS is used to increase functional communication for students with limited verbal skills (NPDC ASD, 2015; National Autism Center, 2015). Grant funding will support districtwide PECS training for teachers, related service providers, and parents, strengthening capacity, promoting generalization of communication skills, and supporting sustainable implementation across home, school, and community settings.

Parent Coaching & Training – Structured parent coaching is an EBP shown to promote skill generalization and improve student outcomes (Wong et al., 2015; NPDC ASD, 2015). Families will learn strategies aligned with IEP goals to reinforce communication, behavior regulation, and self-management, building capacity and sustainability for long-term student progress.

Professional Development & Coaching – Staff training covers FBAs, BIPs, structured teaching, positive behavior strategies, and behavioral IEP development. Grant-funded coaching cycles for teachers, related service providers, and administrators will ensure fidelity, strengthen districtwide capacity, and embed EBPs into ongoing professional development for sustained implementation.

Integrating structured teaching, FBAs/BIPs, positive behavior supports, PECS, parent coaching, and ongoing professional development builds capacity at the student, staff, administrator, and family levels, ensures high-fidelity implementation, and promotes sustainable, evidence-based autism programming that improves outcomes districtwide.

References:

• National Autism Center. (2015). National Standards Report: Evidence-Based Practices for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Randolph, MA.

Inclusion

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) implements evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across all settings to improve communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and academic outcomes. Programming, professional development, and service delivery align with NPDC ASD (2015), the National Autism Center (2015), and the Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT). This grant will expand EBPs across BISD, addressing gaps while building capacity among staff, administrators, and families.

Structured Teaching & Visual Supports – BISD uses visual schedules, task analysis, and structured environments to promote predictability and independence (NPDC ASD, 2015). Grant-funded training and coaching will build staff capacity, ensure fidelity of implementation across classrooms, and embed practices into daily routines for sustainable impact.

Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) & Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) – Behavior specialists and BCBA's implement FBAs and individualized BIPs based on Applied Behavior Analysis (NPDC ASD, 2015; National Autism Center, 2015). Grant resources will expand BCBA-led coaching, strengthen high-fidelity behavior supports, and build districtwide sustainability of evidence-based behavioral practices.

Positive Behavior Supports & Crisis Prevention – Staff receive training in positive behavior strategies, de-escalation, and mindfulness, EBPs shown to reduce disruptive behavior and improve engagement (NPDC ASD, 2015). Grant-funded professional development and administrator oversight will extend capacity, ensure consistent implementation, and embed practices into campus behavioral systems for long-term sustainability.

Communication Supports – Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) – PECS is used to increase functional communication for students with limited verbal skills (NPDC ASD, 2015; National Autism Center, 2015). Grant funding will support districtwide PECS training for teachers, related service providers, and parents, strengthening capacity, promoting generalization of communication skills, and supporting sustainable implementation across home, school, and community settings.

Parent Coaching & Training – Structured parent coaching is an EBP shown to promote skill generalization and improve student outcomes (Wong et al., 2015; NPDC ASD, 2015). Families will learn strategies aligned with IEP goals to reinforce communication, behavior regulation, and self-management, building capacity and sustainability for long-term student progress.

Professional Development & Coaching – Staff training covers FBAs, BIPs, structured teaching, positive

behavior strategies, and behavioral IEP development. Grant-funded coaching cycles for teachers, related service providers, and administrators will ensure fidelity, strengthen districtwide capacity, and embed EBPs into ongoing professional development for sustained implementation.

Integrating structured teaching, FBAs/BIPs, positive behavior supports, PECS, parent coaching, and ongoing professional development builds capacity at the student, staff, administrator, and family levels, ensures high-fidelity implementation, and promotes sustainable, evidence-based autism programming that improves outcomes districtwide.

References:

• National Autism Center. (2015). National Standards Report: Evidence-Based Practices for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Randolph, MA.

Professional Development

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) will implement a comprehensive professional development plan to strengthen staff capacity in evidence-based practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including PECS implementation and behavior supports. The plan provides initial and ongoing multi-day training, coaching, and feedback to ensure fidelity of implementation and continuous improvement across all campuses.

PECS Training for Teachers and Speech Pathologists – Special education teachers and related service providers, and general education staff will participate in multi-day PECS training covering assessment, classroom implementation, and skill generalization. Grant funds will support substitutes, training materials, and coaching stipends. Following training, staff will receive ongoing coaching and feedback from BCBA's to ensure fidelity and strengthen capacity to implement PECS consistently. Trained teachers will serve as internal coaches to ensure sustainability.

BCBA Training for Behavior Specialists – Behavior specialists will participate in multi-day BCBA-led training on Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), positive behavior supports, and strategies for self-regulation. Training includes case-based learning, modeling, and practice sessions, followed by structured coaching cycles, classroom observation, and feedback sessions to ensure high-fidelity implementation. This builds staff capacity and establishes internal expertise for sustained behavior support across campuses.

Administrator and Leadership Training – Campus and district administrators will be trained to monitor fidelity, supervise staff, and support inclusive practices. Administrators will review training effectiveness, analyze student data, and provide oversight to ensure consistent implementation and sustainability of professional development initiatives.

Parent Coaching and Training – Parents will participate in structured coaching on PECS and behavior strategies, learning to reinforce communication, behavior regulation, and social skills at home and in the community. Coaching sessions include feedback and progress monitoring to ensure fidelity and promote long-term capacity for skill generalization.

Fidelity Monitoring and Continuous Improvement – All training includes follow-up support through classroom observations, coaching logs, data review, and collaborative reflection. Staff refine strategies in real-time, ensuring high-fidelity, evidence-based implementation. Administrator oversight and structured coaching cycles ensure continuous improvement and sustainability.

BISD's professional development plan builds capacity, fidelity, and sustainability across teachers, behavior specialists, administrators, and parents. Multi-day training, coaching, substitutes, and follow-up feedback ensure high-quality implementation of PECS, behavior supports, and inclusive practices, improving outcomes for students with ASD and embedding evidence-based practices across all campuses.

Parent/Family Support

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) is committed to providing robust family support and collaboration to enhance outcomes for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The program will incorporate multiple strategies to foster partnerships between parents, educators, and community organizations, ensuring families are active participants in the educational process. Key partnerships include collaboration with a rural district, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), Texas Southmost College, Region One Educational Service Center, Texas Parent to Parent, Cameron County Resource Group, Autism Advocacy Groups, Texas Tropical Behavioral Health, and local community organizations to provide resources, training, and ongoing support for families. These partnerships will create opportunities for parents to engage with educators and connect with other families to share experiences, strategies, and resources, strengthening the home-school connection.

Training for parents will be provided in both face-to-face and virtual formats, including live sessions and recorded content for future viewing. This ensures accessibility for families with varying schedules, transportation limitations, or other barriers. Training will focus on behavior strategies, behavior regulation, and evidence-based practices, equipping parents with practical tools to reinforce communication, social, and self-regulation skills in home and community settings. By combining live instruction, interactive workshops, and recorded resources, parents can revisit training content and continue building expertise throughout the year.

Relevant resources shared with families will include behavior strategy guides, visual supports, social skills tools, step-by-step guides for implementing communication systems such as PECS, and tips for promoting inclusion and positive interactions. Materials will be provided digitally and in print as needed, ensuring accessibility for all families. Additionally, parents will receive updates on student progress, accommodations, and individualized strategies aligned with their child's IEP goals.

Ongoing communication and feedback will be facilitated through multiple channels, including monthly parent

meetings, follow-up coaching sessions, virtual conferences, email updates, and collaborative discussion forums. Parents will be encouraged to provide feedback on training content, share challenges and successes, and request additional support as needed. Structured opportunities for feedback will allow the program to adjust training, coaching, and resources to meet family needs effectively and ensure continuous improvement.

By integrating families as active partners, providing flexible training modes, sharing relevant and actionable resources, and maintaining ongoing communication, the program strengthens parental capacity, fosters collaboration, and ensures sustainability of evidence-based practices across home, school, and community settings. These strategies directly support student growth in communication, behavior regulation, and social engagement, while embedding family-centered practices as a cornerstone of BISD's ASD programming.

Coordination of Services

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) is committed to ensuring effective coordination of services for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by collaborating with local, regional, and community-based partners. To enhance the reach and impact of grant-funded initiatives, BISD plans to partner with a rural district, community organizations, and the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). These partnerships will allow for shared access to professional development, training opportunities, and technical assistance, creating a collaborative network that benefits both staff and students across multiple districts and communities.

Through this collaboration, BISD will provide teachers, behavior specialists, special education counselors, administrators, and parents access to the trainings and professional development offered through the grant. The rural district will serve as a partner in replicating evidence-based practices, supporting capacity-building for staff and providing additional classrooms and campuses for implementation feedback. Community organizations will assist in extending training resources, supporting parent engagement initiatives, and providing expertise on social, behavioral, and family-centered interventions. UTRGV will contribute higher education expertise, offer research-based best practices, and assist in professional development delivery, coaching, and evaluation.

The coordination of services will be facilitated through both face-to-face and virtual training formats, including live sessions and recorded modules for ongoing access. Shared calendars, structured communication channels, and periodic planning meetings will ensure that partner districts and organizations are aligned in their delivery of training content and professional development objectives. This structure ensures that staff across all collaborating organizations receive consistent, high-quality instruction, reinforcing fidelity of implementation and promoting sustainability of grant-funded practices.

Additionally, shared professional development with partners will foster networking, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building, enabling educators, specialists, and families to support students with ASD effectively across both school and community settings. Data collected from collaborative training and implementation will inform ongoing program adjustments, allowing BISD and its partners to refine and improve services, track outcomes, and identify areas for expansion or additional support.

By leveraging partnerships with a rural district, community organizations, and UTRGV, BISD ensures a coordinated and integrated approach to professional development and services. These collaborations enhance access to evidence-based practices, promote consistent implementation across multiple settings, support family engagement, and provide a sustainable model for expanding high-quality ASD programming within BISD and potentially across other LEAs in Texas.

Replicate the Program

BISD plans to replicate the program by systematically scaling professional development and coaching across additional classrooms and campuses. Trained teachers, behavior specialists, special education counselors, evaluators, and supervisors will serve as internal coaches and mentors, ensuring consistent implementation of evidence-based communication and behavior strategies. Administrators and evaluators, in collaboration with supervisors, will monitor fidelity, track student outcomes, and provide data-driven feedback to staff to support continuous improvement. Parent training and coaching will be extended to additional families, reinforcing skills across home, school, and community settings, and promoting generalized outcomes for students.

Barriers to replication include limited staffing, time for multi-day training, and competing instructional priorities. BISD addresses these challenges through the use of grant-funded substitutes, virtual and recorded training sessions, and internal coaching networks that include teachers, behavior specialists, special education counselors, evaluators, and supervisors. Partnerships with other districts, UTRGV, and community organizations provide additional expertise, technical assistance, and evaluation support to facilitate program expansion.

Through structured professional development, coaching, evaluator and supervisor oversight, parent engagement, and strategic resource allocation, BISD will replicate and scale successful programming for students with ASD while ensuring fidelity, sustainability, and high-quality implementation. This approach maximizes the impact of the grant, supports student outcomes across campuses, and positions BISD as a model for other LEAs seeking to enhance ASD programming statewide.

Professional Development Alignment

The Professional Development Alignment response demonstrates how BISD's plan supports program goals, staff and student needs, inclusion strategies, and fidelity of implementation. Multi-day training for teachers, behavior specialists, and parents in evidence-based practices such as PECS, FBAs, BIPs, and positive behavior supports directly addresses student communication, behavior regulation, and social engagement needs. Staff receive ongoing coaching, classroom observation, and feedback to build capacity and ensure fidelity, while administrators oversee implementation to maintain high-quality practices. Inclusion is promoted through co-teaching, peer-mediated instruction, and social communication strategies, providing meaningful

opportunities for interaction with non-disabled peers and strengthening inclusion.

Parent coaching reinforces skill generalization at home and in the community, supporting sustainability. Together, these elements align professional development with program goals, ensure consistent application of evidence-based strategies, and strengthen long-term outcomes for students with ASD across BISD campuses.

Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) is committed to sustaining and scaling evidence-based programming for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across additional classrooms and campuses within the district and, potentially, across other LEAs in the state. The professional development and training provided through this grant will build capacity among teachers, behavior specialists, special education counselors, administrators, parents, evaluators, and two special education supervisors. These staff will implement and monitor evidence-based practices with fidelity, provide coaching, and support replication across campuses. By embedding these practices into instruction, behavior supports, family engagement, and program evaluation, BISD ensures the sustainability of grant-funded initiatives beyond the funding period. This grant opportunity provides funding to address areas historically limited due to budget constraints. Funds will support multi-day staff training in PECS, BCBA-led behavioral supports, substitutes to ensure uninterrupted instruction, instructional materials, coaching stipends, parent training, evaluator support, and two special education supervisors, each receiving a \$2,500 annual stipend to monitor grant implementation and fidelity. These investments provide critical assistance to students, teachers, special education counselors, parents, administrators, evaluators, and supervisors, laying the foundation for program replication and expansion.

Grant Funds Requested: Year 1

1: 8100 Payroll Costs \$491,125.00

1: 8100 Details and Description

Payroll costs totaling \$491,125.00 are requested to support personnel and substitute services essential to the implementation, monitoring, and sustainability of grant-funded Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) programming. These funds support duties beyond regular contract responsibilities and ensure uninterrupted instruction during required grant activities. Expenditures include stipends for two Special Education Supervisors (\$2,500 each annually) to coordinate grant implementation, monitor fidelity of evidence-based practices, review student achievement and behavioral data, and ensure alignment with program goals and evaluation requirements. Payroll also supports stipends for paraeducators who complete Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) certification, strengthening frontline behavioral support capacity. Additional costs include compensation for teachers, behavior specialists, and related staff providing after-hours professional development, instructional coaching, evaluation support, and parent training aligned to grant objectives. Activities include PECS training, BCBA-led coaching, data collection and progress monitoring, and parent education sessions outside the instructional day. Funds also support substitute coverage to allow teachers and paraprofessionals to attend required multi-day trainings and coaching sessions without disrupting student services. Substitute coverage ensures participation in grant-required activities while maintaining instructional continuity. These payroll expenditures increase staff capacity, improve fidelity of implementation, and sustain evidence-based ASD programming. All costs

supplement, not supplant, existing district funding and are necessary to implement high-quality, outcomes-focused services districtwide.

1: 6200 Professional & Contract Services \$388,284.00

1: 6200 Details and Description

Contracted services totaling \$388,284.00 are requested to provide specialized expertise required to implement and sustain high-quality, evidence-based Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) programming districtwide. These services address identified gaps in internal capacity and support fidelity of implementation, staff training, evaluation practices, and parent engagement.

Grant-funded contracted services include Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) services to deliver districtwide professional development, coaching, and technical assistance aligned to evidence-based practices. BCBA support will include consultation and coaching related to Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), PECS implementation, positive behavior supports, and data-driven instructional decision-making. Contracted BCBAs will coach teachers, behavior specialists, evaluators, and paraprofessionals to ensure consistent, high-fidelity implementation across campuses.

Additional contracted services support autism-specific professional development for evaluation staff focused on ASD assessment protocols and best practices, improving the accuracy and quality of recommendations and alignment with IEP development. Contracted expertise will also support structured parent training and coaching, strengthening home-school collaboration and promoting generalization of communication and behavior strategies across settings.

These contracted services directly support program goals of increasing staff capacity, improving fidelity of evidence-based practices, strengthening evaluation and instructional decision-making, and ensuring sustainability. All contracted services supplement, and do not supplant, existing district resources and are essential to improving student communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and access to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

1: 6300 Supplies and Materials \$72,831.00

1: 6300 Details and Description

Supplies and materials totaling \$72,831 are requested to support the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across district campuses. These expenditures are essential to ensure fidelity of implementation, consistency of supports, and alignment with student IEP

goals.

Grant-funded supplies include Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) materials, such as communication books, icons, binders, laminating supplies, and replacement components required for daily classroom use and skill generalization across instructional settings. Additional materials include visual supports and structured teaching tools that promote communication, independence, and access to instruction.

Funds will also support sensory regulation and behavior support materials, including sensory tools and self-regulation resources used to implement Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) and positive behavior supports. These materials reduce barriers to learning, increase student engagement, and support participation in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

Supplies further include data collection and progress-monitoring materials, such as behavior tracking tools, fidelity checklists, and instructional resources used by teachers, behavior specialists, and RBT-trained paraeducators to monitor student progress and ensure high-fidelity implementation.

Materials will also support parent training and coaching, including printed and digital resources and home-use materials aligned to communication and behavior strategies. Providing consistent materials across home and school settings promotes skill generalization and strengthens family collaboration.

All supplies and materials directly support program goals, supplement existing district resources, and are necessary to improve communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and academic outcomes for students with ASD.

1: 6400 Other Operating Costs	\$0.00
1: 6600 Capital Outlay	\$0.00
1: Indirect Costs	\$47,760.00
Total Year 1 Budget	\$1,000,000.00

1: 6400 Details and Description

NA

1: 6600 Details and Description

NA

1: Indirect Cost Details and Description

Indirect costs represent the general administrative and operational expenses incurred by the district that support the implementation and oversight of federally and state-funded programs but cannot be directly attributed to a single grant activity. These costs are essential to ensure compliance, fiscal accountability, program monitoring, and overall organizational effectiveness.

Grant Fund Requested: Year 2

2: 6100 Payroll Costs \$491,125.00

2: 6100 Details and Description

Payroll costs totaling \$491,125.00 are requested to support personnel and substitute services essential to the implementation, monitoring, and sustainability of grant-funded Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) programming. These funds support duties beyond regular contract responsibilities and ensure uninterrupted instruction during required grant activities. Expenditures include stipends for two Special Education Supervisors (\$2,500 each annually) to coordinate grant implementation, monitor fidelity of evidence-based practices, review student achievement and behavioral data, and ensure alignment with program goals and evaluation requirements. Payroll also supports stipends for paraeducators who complete Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) certification, strengthening frontline behavioral support capacity. Additional costs include compensation for teachers, behavior specialists, and related staff providing after-hours professional development, instructional coaching, evaluation support, and parent training aligned to grant objectives. Activities include PECS training, BCBA-led coaching, data collection and progress monitoring, and parent education sessions outside the instructional day. Funds also support substitute coverage to allow teachers and paraprofessionals to attend required multi-day trainings and coaching sessions without disrupting student services. Substitute coverage ensures participation in grant-required activities while maintaining instructional continuity. These payroll expenditures increase staff capacity, improve fidelity of implementation, and sustain evidence-based ASD programming. All costs supplement, not supplant, existing district funding and are necessary to implement high-quality, outcomes-focused services districtwide.

2: 6200 Professional & Contract Services \$388,284.00

2: 6200 Details and Description

Contracted services totaling \$388,284.00 are requested to provide specialized expertise required to implement and sustain high-quality, evidence-based Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) programming districtwide. These services address identified gaps in internal capacity and support fidelity of implementation, staff training, evaluation practices, and parent engagement.

Grant-funded contracted services include Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) services to deliver districtwide professional development, coaching, and technical assistance aligned to evidence-based practices. BCBA support will

include consultation and coaching related to Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), PECS implementation, positive behavior supports, and data-driven instructional decision-making. Contracted BCBA's will coach teachers, behavior specialists, evaluators, and paraprofessionals to ensure consistent, high-fidelity implementation across campuses.

Additional contracted services support autism-specific professional development for evaluation staff focused on ASD assessment protocols and best practices, improving the accuracy and quality of recommendations and alignment with IEP development. Contracted expertise will also support structured parent training and coaching, strengthening home-school collaboration and promoting generalization of communication and behavior strategies across settings.

These contracted services directly support program goals of increasing staff capacity, improving fidelity of evidence-based practices, strengthening evaluation and instructional decision-making, and ensuring sustainability. All contracted services supplement, and do not supplant, existing district resources and are essential to improving student communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and access to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

2: 6300 Supplies and Materials \$72,831.00

2: 6300 Details and Description

Supplies and materials totaling \$72,831 are requested to support the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across district campuses. These expenditures are essential to ensure fidelity of implementation, consistency of supports, and alignment with student IEP goals.

Grant-funded supplies include Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) materials, such as communication books, icons, binders, laminating supplies, and replacement components required for daily classroom use and skill generalization across instructional settings. Additional materials include visual supports and structured teaching tools that promote communication, independence, and access to instruction.

Funds will also support sensory regulation and behavior support materials, including sensory tools and self-regulation resources used to implement Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) and positive behavior supports. These materials reduce barriers to

learning, increase student engagement, and support participation in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

Supplies further include data collection and progress-monitoring materials, such as behavior tracking tools, fidelity checklists, and instructional resources used by teachers, behavior specialists, and RBT-trained paraeducators to monitor student progress and ensure high-fidelity implementation.

Materials will also support parent training and coaching, including printed and digital resources and home-use materials aligned to communication and behavior strategies. Providing consistent materials across home and school settings promotes skill generalization and strengthens family collaboration.

All supplies and materials directly support program goals, supplement existing district resources, and are necessary to improve communication, behavior regulation, engagement, and academic outcomes for students with ASD.

2: 6400 Other Operating Costs	\$0.00
2: 6600 Capital Outlay	\$0.00
2: Indirect Costs	\$47,760.00

2: 6400 Details and Description

NA

2: 6600 Details and Description

NA

2: Indirect Cost Details and Description

Indirect costs represent the general administrative and operational expenses incurred by the district that support the implementation and oversight of federally and state-funded programs but cannot be directly attributed to a single grant activity. These costs are essential to ensure compliance, fiscal accountability, program monitoring, and overall organizational effectiveness.

Total Year 2 Budget \$1,000,000.00

**Funding Request Roles
FR-001276**

District **BROWNSVILLE ISD**
 Role **Applicant**
 Last Name **Barron**
 First Name **Diana**
 Small, Rural or Small/Rural

FR-001277

District **BROWNSVILLE ISD**
 Role **Applicant**
 Last Name **Lippa**
 First Name **Adriana**
 Small, Rural or Small/Rural

FR-001278

District **SAN BENITO CISD**

Role Collaborative LEA

Last Name Manriquez

First Name Ernesto

Small, Rural or Small/Rural Small/Rural