



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting Date: March 16, 2026

Agenda Section: Discussion and Possible Action

Agenda Item Title: Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) Cycle 4 Grant

From/Presenters: Dr. Jennifer Gutierrez, Deputy Superintendent

Description: Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) Cycle 4 Grant is a single, consolidated application that combines grants, allotments, and in-kind supports, bundled around a few key strategies to accelerate academic gains. South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) has been selected to receive:

LIFT(Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas) grant funds for the 2026-27 school year in the amount of \$1,091,000.

LIFT Add-On: School Improvement PLC Support (LIFT SI PLC) grant funds for the 2026-27 school year in the amount of \$480,000.

School Improvement Curriculum and Instruction Support Grant (SI CISG) grant funds for the 2026-27 school year in the amount of \$200,000.

Through this grant, all schools in SSAISD (through one or more of the above named grants) will engage in capacity-building supports aligned to their implementation stage, grounded in strong instructional leadership, coherent systems, and continuous improvement.

The LIFT grant requires an approved vendor to provide direct service in the development of Instructional Leaders. The recommendation for an *approved vendor* is **NIET (National Institute for Education in Teaching)**. NIET partners with school systems to increase student achievement by strengthening the most powerful lever for change: educators and their leaders. NIET provides direct support to school systems in implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) with aligned professional learning and strong instructional leadership.

Historical Data: N/A

Recommendation: Approve the state approved vendor NIET for the LASO Cycle 4 grant.

Purchasing Director and Approval Date: N/A

Funding Budget Code and Amount: 429-E-XX-6299-00-804-6-99-0XX

Goal 1: SSAISD will increase academic achievement for all students and thus closing the gap between student populations in pursuit of advanced performance.

**National Institute for Excellence in Teaching Proposal of Services
For
South San Antonio ISD
March 3, 2026**

March 3, 2026

Saul Hinojosa
South San Antonio ISD
5622 Ray Ellison Blvd
San Antonio, TX 78242

Dear Dr. Hinojosa,

We are pleased to present South San Antonio ISD with this Proposal of Services from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. Please find included in the following pages an outline of proposed services for training and support during the 2026-27 school year.

South San Antonio ISD has requested NIET support for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years for the LASO 4 Leadership and Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT), Implementation Phase, SI PLC grant, and SI CSG grant. NIET support will include a cohesive set of supports designed to strengthen instructional systems, build educator capacity, and drive sustainable improvement across schools and districts. Services are designed to support the effective implementation of HQIM and TX LIFT priorities. Support will include:

- Full access to the EE PASS Content Library;
- Comprehensive needs assessment conducted on each campus;
- District action plan that outlines priorities, milestones, and implementation;
- Training offerings to meet district and school needs (as identified in the action plan);
- Coaching and support, which helps to build consistent routines and observation and feedback practices that support instruction and implementation of HQIM with fidelity;
- At a minimum, LIFT and Qualifying PLC Add-on campuses will receive support as outlined in the TEA LIFT program guidance;
- Project management and implementation planning to ensure partnership components are coordinated, timely, and aligned to outcomes. This includes establishing timelines, managing deliverables, supporting communication structures, attending required training, and ensuring clarity across all stakeholders.

The total cost is \$1,143,700 (inclusive of travel). This agreement is effective immediately and will continue through June 30, 2027; additional details are outlined in Appendix A. The parties acknowledge and agree that the General Terms and Conditions along with the additional details outlined in Appendix A are hereby incorporated into this Statement of Work.

Please find attached Appendix A with more details on the specific proposed support plan and costs. We look forward to supporting South San Antonio ISD.

Sincerely,



Joshua H. Barnett, Ph.D. | Chief Executive Officer

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching
<https://www.niet.org/>



Appendix A: NIET Proposal of Services

Time Period	Training/Support	# of Days	Target Participants	Actions
2026-27 SY	EE PASS (Portal and CODE)	0		NIET's Educator Effectiveness Preparation and Support System (EE PASS) is a subscription-based interactive Web tool that provides real-time access to individualized trainings and support in order to improve instruction and evaluation. At their fingertips, school leaders can gain real-time access to the latest trainings to download, review and deliver to teachers in order to improve instruction. EE PASS with CODE ensures fair and meaningful educator evaluations through use of an interactive data management tool for storing and analyzing teacher evaluations/observations and/or student teacher data and other school data.
2025-26 SY	TX LIFT District Action Plan	1		NIET will collaborate with district leadership to develop a District Action Plan that outlines priorities, milestones, and implementation strategies. This plan ensures coherence across schools, aligns systems to instructional goals, and provides a roadmap for monitoring progress and adjusting support throughout the year.
2025-26 SY	TX LIFT Project Planning and Management	0		NIET will provide planning and management to ensure LIFT grant components are coordinated, timely, and aligned to outcomes. This includes establishing timelines, managing deliverables, supporting communication structures, and ensuring clarity across stakeholders.
2026-27 SY	TX LIFT Project Planning and Management	0		NIET will provide planning and management to ensure LIFT grant components are coordinated, timely, and aligned to outcomes. This includes

				establishing timelines, managing deliverables, supporting communication structures, and ensuring clarity across stakeholders.
2025-26 SY	TX LIFT Strengths-Based Needs Assessment (SBNA)	24		The LIFT Strengths-Based Needs Assessment (SBNA) is a two-day service designed to provide schools with an evidence-based understanding of current instructional practices and leadership systems. Findings highlight strengths, identify priority areas, and guide the design of targeted supports aligned to school and district goals.
2026-27 SY	TX LIFT Support Days	232		District and school leaders receive ongoing coaching and implementation support, delivered both onsite and virtually. Coaching may include modeling, observation, and feedback; leadership development; co-planning; and support for executing the District Action Plan.



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NIET Estimated Costs for Outlined Services

Proposed Training/Support	Days	Cost
2025-26 SY and 2026-27 SY		
EE PASS (Portal and CODE)	0	\$ 72,000.00
TX LIFT District Action Plan	1	\$ 3,000.00
TX LIFT Project Planning and Management	0	\$ 60,140.00
TX LIFT Project Planning and Management	0	\$ 240,560.00
TX LIFT Strengths-Based Needs Assessment (SBNA)	24	\$ 72,000.00
TX LIFT Support Days	232	\$ 696,000.00
Total		\$ 1,143,700.00

Please note: NIET issues invoices on a monthly basis for support outlined in this Proposal. NIET invoices in half and full day increments based on direct hours of support. For 3 or fewer hours, a half-day will be invoiced. For more than 3 hours, a full-day will be invoiced. This Proposal of Services is valid for 60 days from the date hereof, and becomes binding if signed and delivered by both parties during that period.

SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

**LEARNING ACCELERATION SUPPORT
OPPORTUNITIES (LASO) CYCLE 4 GRANT**



MARCH 16, 2026

LASO CYCLE 4 GRANT OVERVIEW

Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) Cycle 4:

- A consolidated grant application that combines grants, allotments, and supplemental supports.

Focus:

- Accelerate academic gains through key instructional strategies.
- South San Antonio ISD has been selected to receive multiple LASO supports.



HOW GRANT FUNDS WILL SUPPORT SSAISD

All SSAISD schools will participate in capacity-building supports.

Supports align to each school's stage of implementation.

Focus Areas:

- Strengthen instructional leadership
- Coherent instructional systems
- Continuous improvement practices



LIFT GRANT REQUIREMENTS

The LIFT grant requires SSAISD to partner with an approved provider to deliver direct services.

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET).

- Partners with school systems to increase student achievement.
- Builds capacity with educators and instructional leaders.
- Provides support for High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM).
- Includes aligned professional learning and strong instructional leadership.



SSAISD GRANT AWARDS FOR 2026-2027



LIFT Grant SSAISD	LIFT Add-On: School Improvement PLC Support Carrillo ES, Madla ES, Dwight MS, SSHA	School Improvement Curriculum & Instruction Support Grant Dwight MS
\$1,091,000	\$480,000	\$200,000
Provider - 70% of Grant \$763,700	Provider - 50% of Grant \$240,000	Provider - 70% of Grant \$140,000
Support for HQIM Implementation: - Salaries - Supplemental Materials	Support for HQIM Implementation: - Salaries	Support for HQIM Implementation: - Salaries - Contracted Services

QUESTIONS

THANK YOU!

