



MEMORANDUM

To: Tornillo ISD Board of Trustees
From: Karina Schulte, District Instructional Specialist
Subject: Request for Approval to submit the Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) 4 Grant Application to TEA
Date: October 29, 2025

HISTORY: Tornillo ISD has successfully received funding through the LASO 1, 2, and 3 grant cycles. These grants have played a vital role in equipping our teachers, instructional specialists, and administrators with the necessary tools for effective planning and implementation of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM).

RATIONALE: The LASO 4 grant includes 15 initiatives under a single consolidated application. Tornillo ISD is eligible to apply for the following initiatives:

LASO 4 Initiative	Responsible Personnel
Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)	Karina Schulte, District Instructional Specialist/LASO 3 Grant Lead
Blended Learning Grant (BLG)	Loretta Aguilar, Raymond Bonilla-Instructional Specialists (Blended Learning)
Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles (APCSP)	Alejandro Olvera, High School Principal
Virtual Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA)	Alejandro Olvera, High School Principal
PREP Program Allotment PREP Residency Preservice Program	Lizeth Carroll, Human Resources, UTEP Lead
PREP Program Allotment PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program	Lizeth Carroll, Human Resources, UTEP Lead
PREP Program Allotment PREP Mentorship Program	Lizeth Carroll, Human Resources, UTEP Lead
Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grants	Lizeth Carroll, Human Resources, UTEP Lead

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is no cost associated with submitting the LASO 4 grant application

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION: Administration recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the submission of the LASO 4 grant application to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) by the December 3, 2025, deadline.

Leadership & Instructional Foundations for Texas (LIFT)

(LIFT merges programs formerly known as Strong Foundations- SF, Texas Instructional Leadership- TIL, and Texas Lesson Study- TXLS)

High Level Program Description

The LIFT grant provides a three-year program to strengthen instructional systems across districts and campuses, building instructional capacity around Bluebonnet, in the following key areas:

- **Curriculum Adoption Support:** Needs assessment of current instructional materials to guide Bluebonnet curriculum adoption (Planning Phase).
- **Training & Skill-Building:** Professional development to build staff understanding of the curriculum, strengthen skills, and set up schoolwide systems (Planning Phase).
- **Observation and Feedback Cycle Development:** Support to launch and refine observation and feedback systems that improve instructional quality (Planning and Implementation Phase).
- **Implementation Training:** Ongoing training to ensure effective use of Bluebonnet curriculum (Implementation Phase).
- **Instructional Leadership Coaching:** Coaching and feedback for leaders to strengthen instructional leadership and schoolwide routines (Implementation Phase).

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are Texas public school systems that meet the following criteria:

- Commit to selecting and implementing a [State Board of Education \(SBOE\)](#)-approved high-quality instructional material (HQIM) in the 2027–28 school year, or
- Commit to implementing a Bluebonnet Learning (BL) product in the 2026–27 school year.

Participation in other grant programs does not disqualify applicants but may be considered during prioritization.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- Comprehensive support to adopt and implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), including technical assistance for planning, training, and building enabling conditions for long-term success.
- Structured instructional leadership development through coaching, feedback cycles, and schoolwide routines aligned to Research-Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS).

- A multi-year phased approach to instructional improvement with options to begin in either a planning phase (HQIM adoption) or implementation phase (Bluebonnet Learning rollout).

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allocation Available** - ~\$248 million
- **Initiative Duration**- 3 years
- **Estimated Total Value of Award*** - \$855K-4.5M
- **Estimated Number of Awards** - 350 to 475

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Begin Date:** March 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Product use and Board, Superintendent, CAO/Equivalent Approval:** Commit to (with Board approval) implementing a Bluebonnet Learning (BL) product in the 2026–27 school year (if applying to the “Implementation Phase”) or committing to selecting and implementing a State Board of Education (SBOE)-approved high-quality instructional material (HQIM) in the 2027–28 school year (if applying to the “Planning Phase”).
- **Approved Provider:** Contract with a single Approved Provider from the LASO Cycle 4 State Approved Provider list for the duration of the program.
- **Fidelity of Implementation:** Submit instructional framework artifacts, implementation plans, district level observation data, student outcomes data, and progress updates as requested by the Approved Provider or the TEA.
- **Professional Learning:** Engage in upfront training, implementation support, and coaching.
- **Participation of Leaders and Coaches:** Appoint a designated LIFT Lead as the primary point of contact and identify at least two additional contacts. The primary point of contact should be the equivalent of a senior academic team member or manager of campus principals. Participate in required TEA-led activities, including a grant kick-off and communities of practice

Contact Information

lift@tea.texas.gov

*Estimated Total Value of award reflects direct grant funds and in kind supports available in the current LASO cycle 4 in addition to potential continuation grants over the full program duration.

Blended Learning Grant (BLG)

High Level Program Description

The Blended Learning Grant (BLG) supports the design and implementation of a blended learning program, in the following key areas:

Academic Cohort

- **Software Access:** Licenses for approved blended learning products.
- **Professional Development:** Training for designing and implementing a blended learning program.

Strategic Operations Cohort

- **Blended Learning Manager Support:** Payroll funding to hire or assign a Blended Learning Manager.
- **Vendor Partnership Funding:** Funds to contract with an approved implementation vendor.
- **Teacher Incentives:** Stipends to support innovative teacher staffing models

Eligibility

Blended Learning Academic cohort: School Systems who have previously participated or are currently participating in a strong Tier 1 math and/or reading curriculum planning through a TEA initiative (i.e. LASO 2 Strong Foundations and LASO 1 Strong Foundations).

Blended Learning Strategic Operations: School Systems who have previously participated in TEA Blended Learning Grants. Applicants must have shown high usage in approved supplemental products in math and/or reading language arts for grades K-8 in spring of 2025.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- A high-quality blended learning model in math and literacy.
- The creation of a coherent Tier 1 curriculum and supplemental product strategy
- The implementation of a performance management system, such as weekly Data-Driven-Instructional meetings, to drive student usage of supplemental math or RLA products to research-backed targets.

Funding Estimates (over 3 years)

- **Estimated Total Allocation Available** - ~\$ 6 million
- **Initiative Duration**- 3 years
- **Estimated Total Value of Award*** – Up to \$450K (Academic); Up to \$720K (Strategic Operations)
- **Estimated Number of Awards** – 15 to20

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Begin Date:** March 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Project Management:** Designate and provide a project manager (other than Superintendent) who will be available to dedicate approximately 50% of his or her time grant management.
- **Planning Deliverables:** Academic- Submit implementation calendar, student progress and unit assessment data. Strategic Operations - establish a steering committee, develop and submit strategic planning deliverables in the six months of the grant.
- **Implementation:** Use an online curriculum, including an adaptive software program and Tier 1 High-Quality Instructional Material, both approved by TEA.
- **Training:** Complete all required training to build competency in the online curriculum.
- **Communities of Practice:** Participate in required communities of practice, including campus site visits each semester and any additional grant program meetings.
- ***Do-Now Consideration:** Gather usage evidence from the provided supplemental product vendor for Spring 2025

Contact Information

blendedlearning@tea.texas.gov

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Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles (APCSP)

High Level Program Description

The AP Computer Science Principles program supports the development and sustainability of a computer science pathway with the implementation of the AP Computer Science Principles course, in the following key areas:

- **Course Materials:** Funds for supplies and materials to support AP Computer Science course implementation.
- **Teacher Training:** Funding for AP Computer Science professional learning
- **AP Exam Support:** Funds to cover AP test costs for students.

Eligibility

- All Texas Schools

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- Support for increasing CCMR outcomes for high school students.
- Support for building a computer science CTE pathway for students.
- Support for purchasing equipment and supplies for an AP CSP course.
- Support for providing a FREE AP exam for students enrolled in an AP CSP course.
- Support for planning professional development opportunities for AP CSP teachers.

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allocation Available** - ~\$1.29 million
- **Initiative Duration**- 1 year
- **Estimated Total Value of Award*** - \$10K to \$100K
- **Estimated Number of Awards** - Up to 50

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Begin Date:** March 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Approved Participation:** Complete the necessary district process to obtain school board approval to include the AP CSP course in the district's course catalog for the 2026-2027 school year
- **Teacher Recruitment and Retainment:** Recruit teachers for the AP CSP course and train them through a College Board-endorsed professional development provider.
- **Course Curriculum and Materials:** Select an appropriate course curriculum and purchase the necessary equipment, technology and materials needed for student success in the course and on the AP exam.
- **Student Support Plan:** Plan and provide the support necessary for students to prepare for a score of 3 or higher on the AP CSP exam.
- **Sustainability Plan:** Continue providing the current level or increasing the number of AP CSP course opportunities.

Contact Information

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PREP Program Allotment: PREP Residency Preservice Program

High Level Program Description

The Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Program Allotment aims to strengthen the quality of teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship leading to increased educator effectiveness and retention.

The PREP Residency Preservice Program empowers school systems to play a central role in cultivating a pipeline of well-prepared, highly qualified teachers, in the following key areas:

- **Paid Classroom Experience:** Provides funding for teacher residents to work in classrooms with experienced teachers while earning teaching certificates
- **Practice-based Prep:** Extensive practice under the supervision of an effective host teacher

Eligibility

- Any school system, which includes open-enrollment charter schools, and SB 1882 Operating Partners who read and agree to the requirements in relevant sections of the Texas Education and Texas Administrative codes cited in these guidelines is eligible for the PREP Allotment.
- School systems who are partnered with an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) approved by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) to offer the teacher residency route must have formal written partnership agreement(s) with the EPP(s). School systems will have residents for SY 26-27.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- Hiring teacher residents for the 26-27 school year
- Partnering with SBEC approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Provider(s)
- Sustaining the residency model

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allotment Allocation Available** - ~\$146 million (for all 3 allotment options)
- **Initiative Duration**- 1 year
- **Estimated Total Range of Award*** - \$24K to \$1.6M
- **Estimated Number of Awards** - All eligible districts may receive the allotment

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Anticipated Award Announcement:** February 2026
- **School system verification of participation:** April 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Teacher Resident:** Provide teacher resident with a year-long clinical teaching experience aligned to the candidate's certification area in a PK-12 classroom
- **Training:** Train resident cooperating teachers via the Texas Mentorship Training. Ensure cooperating teachers, once fully certified, are mentored during their first and second year of employment and that the teacher of record is a mentor teacher who has successfully completed the Texas Mentorship Training.
- **EPP Expectations:** Commit to quarterly governance meetings with the EPP to review programmatic data and make informed decisions to support candidate progress.
 - Commit to regular collaboration (e.g. co-observation, co-coaching, meetings,) with the EPP's field supervisor at least three times per semester
 - Work collaboratively with the EPP to ensure that a candidate's schedule supports them to access and complete all required coursework in the residency program.
 - Appoint a school system and EPP representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment and PREP Preservice Residency Communications.
- ***Do-Now Consideration:** Ensure a written agreement with SBEC approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Provider

Education Prep Program (EPP) Information

- [Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Educator Preparation Program](#)
- Matched District Partnerships (coming soon)

Contact Information

teateacherresidency@tea.texas.gov

*Estimated Total Value of award reflects direct grant funds and in kind supports available in the current LASO cycle 4 in addition to potential continuation grants over the full program duration.

PREP Program Allotment: PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program

High Level Program Description

The Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Program Allotment aims to strengthen the quality of teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship leading to increased educator effectiveness and retention.

The PREP Grow Your Own (GYO) Program enables school systems through partnering with qualified institutions of higher education and educator preparation programs to establish innovative staffing pipelines that prepare and retain educators, in the following key areas:

- **Employee Degree & Certification Support:** Supports school system employees in completing a bachelor's degree and teacher preparation program while employed
- **Student Career & Teacher Prep:** Supports high school students in completing CTE courses that prepare them for teaching careers

Eligibility

- School systems may participate in the PREP GYO Program only if they have been approved to participate in a partnership preservice program. For the LASO 4 application cycle, school systems must apply for and also participate in the PREP Residency Preservice Program.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- Support with cultivating a strong talent pipeline by changing the trajectory of prospective teachers' pathways to the classroom and ultimately, having lasting impact on the quality of instruction for Texas students
- An opportunity to support school system employees and high school students with quality teacher preparation
- Support with building robust partnerships with institutions of higher education and educator preparation programs

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allotment Allocation Available** - ~\$146 million (for all 3 allotments options)
- **Estimated Total Range of Award** - \$8K to \$480K
- **Estimated Number of Awards** - All eligible districts may receive the allotment

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Anticipated Award Announcement:** February 2026
- **School system verification of participation:** April 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Engagement & Partnerships:** Form a written agreement partnership with an institution of higher education or educator preparation program by the 2026-2027 SY that supports (A) school system employees who do not hold a teaching certificate in completing a bachelor's degree to enable the person to enroll in an educator preparation program and become a certified teacher while employed by the school system, and if applicable (B) high school students in completing career and technical education courses that help prepare the students to become classroom teachers
- **Program Representative:** Appoint a school system representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment & PREP Grow Your Own Program communications

Education Prep Program (EPP) Information

- [Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route Educator Preparation Program](#)
- Matched District Partnerships (coming soon)

Contact Information

gyogrant@tea.texas.gov

PREP Program Allotment: PREP Mentorship Program

High Level Program Description

The Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Program Allotment aims to strengthen the quality of teacher recruitment, preparation, and mentorship leading to increased educator effectiveness and retention.

The (PREP) Mentorship Program aims to increase beginning teacher effectiveness and retention, by providing strong mentorship, in the following key areas:

- **Mentor Stipends:** Funds to compensate mentor teachers
- **Mentorship Training:** Funding for district mentorship staff to complete the Texas Mentorship Training
- **Mentoring Release Time:** Funding to provide release time for mentor teachers and beginning teachers to participate in mentoring activities

Eligibility

- Any school system, which includes open-enrollment charter schools, and SB 1882 Operating Partners who read and agree to the requirements in relevant sections of the Texas Education and Texas Administrative codes cited in these guidelines is eligible for the PREP Allotment.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- Support with designing and implementing a high-quality mentorship program
- Research-based mentorship training

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allotment Allocation Available** - ~\$146 million (for all 3 allotments options)
- **Estimated Total Range of Award** - \$3K to \$120K

- **Estimated Number of Awards** - All eligible districts may receive the allotment

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Anticipated Award Announcement:** February 2026
- **School system verification of participation:** April 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Engagement:** Commit to communicating and partnering with an approved Texas Mentorship Training (TMT) Provider. The list of approved TMT Providers can be found in the PREP Mentorship Program Guidelines
- **Program Representative:** Appoint a school system representative to engage in all required PREP Allotment & PREP Grow Your Own Program communications
- **Training:** Ensure all required participants complete the Texas Mentorship Training as the agency-adopted mentorship trainings. Additionally, district and campus leaders will also engage in mentorship program design and implementation sessions to fulfill training requirements
- **Mentoring Activities:** Provide at least 12 hours of mentoring activities per semester

Texas Mentorship Training (TMT) Information

Approved TMT Providers (coming 9/22)

Contact Information

mentorship@tea.texas.gov

Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies (TSS) Grants

High Level Program Description

The Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies program supports school systems and educator preparation program (EPP) make staffing and scheduling decisions driven by immediate and long-term instructional needs, in the following key areas:

- **Program Coordination:** Funding for a staff member to oversee residencies and coordinate between the district, technical assistance provider, and EPP.
- **Technical Assistance:** ESC-provided guidance to design and implement sustainable teacher residencies.
- **Resident Support:** Support for structuring paid residencies, including funding for instructional roles like tutoring, substitute teaching, or paraprofessional duties.

Eligibility

- School systems, which include districts and open-enrollment charter schools, are eligible to apply for the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant
- Have a signed EPP Verification form from each EPP partner with a State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC)-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route ([TTRPR](#)).
- Not be recipients of the 2025-27 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency Program (award list [here](#)).
- Not be recipients of the 2024-2025 Sustainable Residency Continuation Grant (award list [here](#)).

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- An opportunity to extend the reach and impact of the Preparing and Retaining Educators through Partnership (PREP) Preservice Residency Program
- A method to implement and sustain high-quality and paid teacher residencies to address teacher workforce needs within the school system
- Additional technical assistance to help with designing and implementing a paid residency program using strategic staffing models to address both short- and

long-term instructional needs through teacher residencies

Funding Estimates

Estimated Total Allocation Available - ~ \$2.92 million

Initiative Duration - 2 years

Estimated Total Value of Award* - \$58,400

Estimated Number of Awards - Up to 50

Approximate Program Timeline

Begin Date: March 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

Program Manager: Appoint a School System Strategic Staffing Lead who will serve at least 20% of their time and effort to oversee the Texas Strategic Staffing for Residencies Grant and as the point of contact for the ESC technical assistance provider.

Prepare and Participation: Develop clear companion guides, which include parameters for the selected strategic staffing model and communication plans, and share them with all stakeholders involved with resident placement in the school system and educator preparation programs (EPPs). The applicant and EPP(s) must attend sustainability meetings with their technical assistance provider each semester of SY 2027-28 (implementation year) to determine sustainable strategic staffing model and funding sources, as applicable, after the life of the grant.

Data and Deliverables: Share data, such as historic teacher vacancies or student characteristic data, with the ESC technical assistance provider to inform design and implementation year decisions. Submit data to TEA data on grant implementation and outcomes.

***Do-Now Consideration:** Have a signed EPP Verification form from each EPP partner with a State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC)-approved Texas Teacher Residency Preparation Route ([TTRPR](#)).

Contact Information

txstrategicstaffing@tea.texas.gov

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Virtual Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA)

High Level Program Description

The Virtual and Hybrid Program Accelerator (VHPA) supports the development and refinement of high-quality virtual and hybrid programs, in the following key areas:

- **Technical Assistance:** Customized coaching to design, launch, and improve high-quality virtual or hybrid programs.
- **Program Design:** Guidance on creating strong student learning experiences, staffing models, and operational systems.
- **Academic Strategy:** Support for developing rigorous curriculum and personalized learning for virtual/hybrid settings.
- **Teacher Development:** Training on effective virtual instruction and technology integration.

Eligibility

- School districts or open-enrollment charter schools serving K-12 students
- All participants of a previous VHPA program are not eligible to apply.

Best Fit for school systems seeking:

- An opportunity to develop hybrid programs and campuses that leverage the benefits of in person learning with flexible, student-paced virtual instruction to meet diverse learner needs
- A way to support students and families with non-traditional schedules by offering virtual learning with adaptable pacing and expanded access to support personalized student goals and post-secondary readiness
- A strategy to expand course access, integrate dual credit, career pathways, and work-based learning, and address staffing limitations especially in rural areas through virtual and hybrid models

Funding Estimates

- **Estimated Total Allocation Available-** \$5 million
- **Initiative Duration-** 2 years
- **Estimated Total Value of Award*-** Up to \$230K
- **Estimated Number of Awards-** 10 to 14

Approximate Program Timeline

- **Begin Date:** March 2026

Key Program Commitments to Consider

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all assurances or requirements. The full list of requirements is provided in the program guidelines.

- **Program Management Team:** Establish a dedicated VHPA Team responsible for developing and implementing the full-time virtual or hybrid campus or program.
- **Board Approval:** Obtain formal approval from the LEA's governing board to launch a virtual/hybrid program or campus. For campuses, ensure this approval is secured prior to applying for authorization.
- **Engagement:** Collaborate with a TEA-assigned technical assistance (TA) provider and participate in TA-supported activities such as cohort workshops, coaching calls, step backs, planning sessions, or implementation deliverables.
- **Planning:** Develop and implement plans to achieve program objectives, including an academic plan that outlines curriculum, instructional methods, approaches for monitoring student progress, and support strategies for special populations and at-risk students.
- **Data and Deliverables:** In year 1, submit a comprehensive launch plan if operating a virtual or hybrid program or apply for authorization if launching a full-time virtual or hybrid campus. During the two-year grant period, engage in 3 scheduled improvement cycle sessions using data to inform ongoing development
- ***Do-Now Consideration:** Gather data to demonstrate adequate interest among stakeholders in implementing a virtual or hybrid model through methods such as surveys, focus groups, and pilot programs.

Contact Information

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