



Request for Proposals Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium Fund at the Austin Community Foundation Pre-Kindergarten Advocacy Project

Background

The Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium is a geographically and politically diverse consortium of 35 private, corporate, and community foundations from across Texas working together to promote, protect and improve public education. The Consortium's members guide its work and determine its public policy priorities. In 2015 the Consortium's membership decided to examine the implementation of House Bill 4 from the 2015 Texas Legislature to improve the quality of pre-kindergarten in Texas. House Bill 4 provided \$118 million in state funds through a grant program to school districts across the state that are interested in improving the quality of their pre-kindergarten programs. School districts applied in early 2016 and grants were disseminated in June 2016.

The Consortium has partnered with Texans Care for Children and five regional partners to research how House Bill 4 is being implemented in school districts across Texas. Texans Care for Children and its partners are analyzing:

- School district participation in pre-k quality efforts
- School district non-participation in pre-k quality efforts
- Local choices and variations in priorities for school districts implementing quality pre-k

Quality Pre-K programs have been proven to have immediate and long-term positive effects on a child's cognitive, social, and emotional skill development. House Bill 4 provides grant funds to school districts and charter schools to improve curriculum, teacher development, data collection, and accountability. The demand for high quality pre-k in Texas was demonstrated with the majority of ISD's applying for grant funding, comprising 86% of students in traditional school districts. Before the Texas Legislature will approve any further efforts to improve access to quality of pre-kindergarten, House Bill 4 must prove itself. This research will help fill the data gap concerning which districts applied for funding, which did not, and the reasons behind those decisions.

As part of its ongoing efforts to provide objective and non-partisan data on public education in Texas, the Consortium is immediately seeking proposals from organizations to assist with dissemination of these research findings to the general public, media, and policymakers.



Details and Required Activities

The Consortium will award grants to nonprofit organizations, public entities, or for-profit organizations with demonstrated experience and capacity to engage diverse audiences in important education issues. Each organization may only submit one proposal. Proposals should include a full budget and not exceed \$15,000. No funds may be used for lobbying as defined by the IRS.

Grant recipients must agree to:

- Conduct outreach to diverse audiences in at least three large metropolitan areas (Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and/or San Antonio).
- Engage stakeholders in the implementation of HB 4 and high quality pre-kindergarten to identify successes and challenges of the new quality pre-k law, as well as opportunities to build on HB 4. Priority will be given to proposals focused on engagement of parents of public school students and non-traditional voices for pre-kindergarten, including but not limited to the military, law enforcement, business, and the faith community.
- Participate in regularly scheduled conference calls and select Consortium meetings over the course of the grant period.
- Produce a brief report, outlining successes and challenges of selected outreach strategies at the conclusion of the grant period.
- Partner with the Consortium to engage and educate relevant policymakers and members of the media leading up to and through the 2017 Texas Legislative Session.

Application Process

The application deadline is October 21, 2016. Grant awards determined by the Consortium will be announced by October 28, 2016. The grant period will begin November 1, 2016 and end on July 1, 2017. Applicants should submit proposals via email to Jennifer Esterline, TEGAC Executive Director, at jennifermesterline@gmail.com. All proposals should include:

- Cover letter on organization's letterhead and signed by director
- Executive summary
- Narrative (no more than 5 pages) with project description, goals, activities, timeline, budget, key staff, & plan to measure results
- Organization background
- If the applicant is a nonprofit organization:
 - IRS determination letter and 990
 - List of Board of Directors and officers
 - Organization operating budget