Application for T-STEM Designation - New/Provisional

2016-2017

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Texas Education Agency
Application for T-STEM Designation
Statutory Authority: Texas Education Code §39.235

Overview of Designation

In order to operate as a Texas Education Agency (TEA)-approved Texas - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (T-STEM) Academy, a district must seek and receive T-STEM designation from TEA. In order to receive the T-STEM designation, a school must exhibit key traits from the T-STEM Academy Design Blueprint included in this application. The intent of this designation is to ensure that districts operating T-STEM Academies: integrate all the key characteristics of well-researched and well-designed STEM education while serving students who may not have otherwise considered the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math.

Benefits of Designation

Recognition as an Approved T-STEM Academy:
Schools designated by TEA as state-approved T-STEM Academies will receive various forms of media recognition including, but not limited to: identification on TEA's website as a state-approved T-STEM Academy and recognition in press releases.

Participation in T-STEM Convenings:
Special events hosted by TEA for T-STEM Academy administrators and principals to provide input on policies and procedures that impact T-STEM Academies.

Membership in the T-STEM Network:
Frequently opportunities are provided for principals, teachers, and students in designated T-STEM Academies through the T-STEM network to share best practices through conferences and technical assistance sessions. Membership in the T-STEM Network allows T-STEM Academies to access online exemplars, professional development, and webinars.

Access to Professional Development and Technical Assistance:
Designated T-STEM academies will have access to high-quality technical assistance which includes advice and information from a Leadership Coach who has successfully facilitated the design and implementation of the majority of T-STEM Academies operating in Texas.

Strength of T-STEM Model:

- Through the designation process, TEA will recognize those T-STEM Academies that effectively incorporate T-STEM Design Blueprint elements. The designation process will enable districts and their partners to engage in the research and planning necessary to ensure that their T-STEM Academies are set up in the most effective way possible.
- The T-STEM Blueprint provides a framework for T-STEM Academies to access college and career opportunities that support post secondary success.

Questions about Completing the Application

Who can fill out a T-STEM Academy designation application?

Any district or charter school campus may apply to be designated as a T-STEM Academy. Potential applicants are encouraged to carefully review the T-STEM Design Blueprint to determine readiness for implementation of the model.

Will have to fill out the same application each year?

No. New designation applicants and those T-STEM Academies that are provisionally designated will complete the comprehensive form. T-STEM Academies that are fully designated must complete the abbreviated T-STEM designation application yearly. The abbreviated renewal application will require a designated T-STEM Academy to provide updates regarding changes in the design and operation of the Academy. However, the primary focus of the annual renewal will be to gather evidence on the Academy's progress along the T-STEM Academy Design Blueprint continuum.

Will this application be required for T-STEM Academy grantees in the future?

Yes. In future funding cycles, completion of this application will be a program requirement for T-STEM Academy grant recipients.

Who can I contact for help filling out this application?

- **New applicants** may contact the T-STEM Program Manager at tstem@tea.state.tx.us.
- **2016-2017 designated T-STEM Academies** may contact their current T-STEM coach.

Application Information

General Information:

- A district or charter must submit a separate application with the required attachments on behalf of each proposed T-STEM Academy.
- The application must be submitted via the online system by **5:00pm, March 4th, 2016**
- A campus must be designated prior to the beginning of the school year in order to operate as a T-STEM Academy for that year. T-STEM Academy approval is valid for a maximum of one year. T-STEM Academy designated must be applied for each year via the TEA T-STEM designation process.

Timeline & Process:

- March 4th, 2016: Applications are due to TEA in order to open a campus as a designated T-STEM Academy during the 2016-2017 school year.
- June 2016: Districts submitting applications by March 4th, 2016 will be notified of the selection or non-selection of the campus as a designated T-STEM Academy on or about June 2016. Applications submitted prior to the March 4th, 2016 deadline may be approved prior to June 2016.
- The district will receive a notification letter of selection or non-selection for each campus it proposes to operate as a T-STEM Academy.

Required Attachments:

- **Official signature:** Official signature of a district or charter official authorized by the local board to bind the applicant organization in a legally binding contractual agreement.

Required Supporting Documents:

- The Academy must have current versions of the following documents on file.
- Each applicant is required to provide an assurance that each of the supporting documents is current for the 2016-2017 school year, signed by all parties, and provides detailed information regarding the specific assurance.
  - **Dual Credit MOU**
  - **Professional Development Plan**
  - **Business/Industry Agreement**
  - **2016-2017 Master Schedule**

Questions:

T-STEM Program Manager
tstem@tea.state.tx.us

Required T-STEM Academy Design Program Elements

The following design elements are the minimum requried components that must be demonstrated through this application in order to be designated as a T-STEM Academy:

- The T-STEM Academy must serve grades 9 through 12 and may serve grades 6, 7, and 8.
- A campus must be designated prior to the beginning of the school year in order to operate as a T-STEM Academy for that year. T-STEM Academy approval is valid for a maximum of one year. T-STEM Academy designated must be applied for each year via the TEA T-STEM designation process.

I. Mission Driven Leadership:

- The Academy's mission statement and planned advisory board must reflect the mission and vision of the T STEM Initiative.
- The Academy must use program review and formative evaluation to achieve its mission and goals.
- The Academy must promote leadership development and collaboration within the Academy and T-STEM Network.
- For Academies that include 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, leadership teams from the middle school and high school must collaborate on a regular basis.

II. Academy Culture and Design:

- The T-STEM culture must foster positive student identities through meaningful adult and peer relationships.
- All students graduating from the Academy must be prepared for postsecondary coursework and careers in the STEM fields through the integration of the Governor's economic workforce clusters and AchieveTexas STEM cluster into the curriculum.
- The Academy must support all students to graduate high school with four years of math, four years of science, four years of STEM electives, an Endorsement (with a primary focus on STEM endorsements), and a Performance Acknowledgement for a Distinguished Level of Achievement.

III. Student Access, Success,and Persistence:

- The Academy must have a clear plan for student support and success to achieve persistence rates above 70%.
- The Academy must instill the expectation that students expand their participation and leadership in STEM activities outside the classroom and provide the opportunity to do so.

IV. Teacher Selection,Development, and Retention:

- The Academy faculty must possess extensive subject knowledge and integrate project based learning (PBL) and STEM pedagogy into the classroom.
- The Academy must adopt and implement a plan for sustained professional development.

Required T-STEM Academy Design Program Elements cont.

V. Curriculum.Instruction.and Assessment:

- The Academy must align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to provide students with rigorous STEM focused instruction.
- The Academy must deliver Innovative STEM programs that are well-defined, embed critical thinking and problem solving, foster innovation and invention, and are aligned to state and/or national standards, and industry expectations.
- The Academy must integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics throughout the curriculum.
- The Academy must continually monitor student progress through assessments and data collection.
- The Academy must promote STEM literacy and prepare students with 21st Century skills.
- The Academy must support three years of STEM electives at middle school and four years of STEM electives at high school.

VI .Strategic Alliances:

- The Academy must promote family involvement in student success.
- The Academy must integrate business partnerships into the curriculum and student learning experience.
- The Academy must partner with IHEs and college/career-preparation entities to ensure that students graduate with college credits and prepared for postsecondary success.

VII. Sustainability and Advancement:

- The Academy must have a plan for continuous improvement and growth.
- The Academy must adopt and implement a plan for sustained professional development.

Scoring of the Application

- Each applicant will be reviewed by T-STEM subject-matter experts from across the state.
- New applicants will be reviewed based on the proposed plan and a follow up with the applicant, if necessary.
- Each applicant will receive a notification letter from TEA indicating which designation category it has been assigned: Designated, Provisionally Designated, or Denied.
- The T-STEM Academy Design Blueprint has been consolidated in the application to highlight priorities for the planning period of designation. Applicants should focus on the benchmarks presented in answering the questions.

PART 1: CONTACTS

1.1 T-STEM Academy

T-STEM Academy Name	Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS
County District Campus Number	108912010
Mailing Address - Line 1	801 North College Drive
Mailing Address - Line 2	
Mailing City	La Joya, TX
Mailing Zip Code	78560

1.2 School District

School District name	La Joya ISD
Mailing Address - Line 1	201 East Expressway 83
Mailing Address - Line 2	
Mailing City	La Joya, TX
Mailing Zip Code	78560

1.3 Education Service Center Region

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1.4 Person Completing this Application

First Name	DaLee
Initial	
Last Name	Garcia
Title	Principal
Phone	(956) 580-5912
Email	d.garcia2@lajoyaisd.net

1.5 Academy Principal/Director

First Name	DaLee
Initial	
Last Name	Garcia
Title	Principal
Phone	(956) 580-5912
Email	d.garcia2@lajoyaisd.net

1.6 Superintendent

First Name	Alda
Initial	
Last Name	Benavides
Phone	(956) 323-2000
Email	a.benavides@lajoyaisd.net

1.7 T-STEM Academy Partner Information

IHE Partner	South Texas College
STEM Business Community Industry Partner	Elvia Saenz

1.8 Authorized School District or Charter Official

First Name	Alda
Initial	
Last Name	Benavides
Title	Dr.
Phone	(956) 323-2000
Email	a.benavides@lajoyaisd.net
Signature	(Attached)

PART 2: BACKGROUND

2.0 Is your campus currently designated as an Early College High School (ECHS) through the TEA ECHS designation process? Yes

2.1 First year of Academy Operation 2016-2017

2.2 Years in Operation 0

2.3 Academy Model:
What is the design of the T-STEM Academy requesting designation? Stand-Alone Academy - All students on the campus are enrolled in the T-STEM Academy

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2.4 Target Population

Grades of students to be served	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total Enrollment
2016-2017 projected enrollment	0	0	0	140	0	0	0	140
2015-2016 enrollment (if designated in the 2015-2016 school year)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PART 3: BENCHMARKS

T-STEM Blueprint Instructions

The T-STEM Academy Design Blueprint consists of seven benchmarks that drive the success of an Academy. Each benchmark highlights program requirements and offers a rubric score of developing, implementing, mature, or role model. T-STEM Academies use this tool to measure growth and progress along the continuum.

All seven benchmarks are included in the application. However, applicants may notice the program requirements are not numbered sequentially. This is because not all program requirements are included in the Designation Application. Applicants are not expected to meet or even consider all program requirements at this stage in the process. Instead, those program requirements that form the building blocks of a successful designated Academy are included in the Designation Application. Focused consideration of those particular program requirements will mean a successful applicant will have a strong foundation as a designated T-STEM Academy. The technical assistance that comes as a result of designation will allow the designated Academy to implement the Blueprint Benchmarks' full program requirements over time.

Benchmarks 1-4, 6 & 7
Applicants should first review the program requirements for each benchmark presented in the body of the application. The questions that follow pertain to those specific requirements (i.e. Benchmark 1 questions pertain to Benchmark 1 program requirements). Applicant responses should reflect a close consideration of the highlighted rubric areas in the context of what the campus has in place currently and could feasibly implement during the first designated year. Applications will be scored on the response's evident understanding of the continuum of growth along the rubric, evidence of existing programs, and feasible plan to move forward for each requirement.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Applicants should review the program requirements presented in each section and rate the campus's existing system in the rubric's check boxes. Applicants are then asked to justify the ratings with evidence, reflection, and a plan to move forward, bearing in mind that with designation comes the tools and assistance necessary to progress along the continuum. Successful applicants will reflect an understanding of Benchmark 5 and are not necessarily expected to have all elements in place before designation.

Benchmark 1: Mission-Driven Leadership

Program Requirements

1.2.C.	Develops and demonstrates support from an advisory board (AB) consisting of representatives from the Academy, school board, district, community, higher education, and STEM businesses to support and guide facility requirements, resource acquisition, curriculum development, internship, externships, and student/community outreach to ensure a successful 6-20 STEM academic and career pipeline.
1.3.A.	Integrates and assesses the level of mission-driven and data-driven decision making evident in the daily work of the Academy.
1.4.A.	For 6-12 campuses, middle school and high school leadership teams regularly collaborate to advance 6-12 alignment and student retention in STEM.

Key Elements for Success

- Job descriptions and roles for design team, leadership team, and advisory board
- Mission is posted and can be articulated by teachers, staff, students, key stakeholders, etc.
- MOUs with T-STEM Centers

	Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1.2.C.	Advisory Board (AB) established.	AB positions and subcommittees are identified.	AB develops innovative and creative approaches to support Academy mission and vision.	AB addresses major shifts in STEM, educational standards, industry expectations, and analyzes SWOT of Academy, resulting in measurable action items.
1.3.A.	Little or no evidence of data-driven and mission-driven decision making.	Data is used to design student interventions, Annual Action Plan (AAP), and to inform teaching and learning aligned to the mission.	Teachers work interdependently as teams to review data across content areas, develop targeted interventions, and develop common formative assessments.	The Academy's continual analysis of results for improvement is critical to the school's system of interventions and culture of celebration.
1.4.A.	Academy leadership occasionally collaborates with each other (6th - 12th), with T-STEM centers, and T-STEM Coaches.	Academy leaders and staff collaborate with each other (6th - 12th), and with T-STEM Centers and Coaches to integrate STEM teacher preparation, teaching, and learning. *And meets criteria from Developing*	Academy plans with regional T-STEM Center, vertical alignment teams 6th - 12th (at least quarterly), and meets with their T-STEM Coach, virtually or Face-to-Face (at least monthly). *And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	Academy dialogues on a regular, ongoing basis in vertical alignment teams (6th - 12th), with T-STEM Centers and Coaches, and utilizes available T-STEM resources to improve student achievement and teacher preparation. *And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Benchmark 1: Mission-Driven Leadership

- Program Requirement 1.3.A. addresses the use of data to drive design, decision making, and program review in a T-STEM Academy.
- Designated campuses will be expected to meet or exceed “Implementing” on the rubric above (Data is used to design student interventions, Annual Action Plan, and to inform teaching and learning aligned to the mission) by the end of the first designated year.

Describe below how the campus will meet or exceed this expectation.

The La Joya ISD stakeholders, Advisory Board, and community leaders recognized the need to provide its students with a STEM-focused education, opportunities for authentic, real world application of math and science concepts, and to produce a better prepared workforce for the jobs of the future. Due to the high interest in STEM-related occupations as evidenced by responses from middle school student surveys, the La Joya ISD Board of Trustees approved the opening of an second early college with a focus on STEM fields in 2012. The need to expand this mission and offer, yet more opportunities to students drives the district to seek T-STEM designation for this campus. The district also recognizes the need to promote leadership development and collaboration within the academy and T-STEM network and acknowledges the strength of the T-STEM model as critical to this endeavor.

La Joya ISD recognizes the need to implement program review and consistent formative assessment. For this reason, it uses the Collaborative Assessment Protocol that is closely aligned to Benchmark 1.3A which addresses the use of data to drive design, decision making, and program review in a T-STEM Academy. Academy students will be required to take six weeks common assessments, semester/final exams, and midyear benchmarks. Data is disaggregated using Data Management Assessment and Curriculum (DMAC) software to progress monitor students, create individual profiles, facilitate grouping reports, and inform instruction. DMAC reports are also used to conduct item analysis, analyze trends and patterns in the data, and to provide real time data for faculty Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions. Reports allow teachers to inform instruction, modify curriculum timelines, and create alternate plans for re-teaching and/or acceleration. Teachers use the grouping reports to identify groups of students with similar gaps in learning or weaker areas of performance to provide additional Tier II and III instruction during our 8th period intervention block. Staff will participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to promote leadership development and collaboration within the Academy and T-STEM network.Teacher-led PLCs will also be used to develop three week formative assessments based on the Common Instructional Framework strategies of Classroom Talk, Writing to Learn, Question Stems, and Collaborative Learning.

- Program Requirement 1.2.C. details the requirements for an Academy's advisory board (AB).

List the planned AB members and their job title (example: John Smith, School Board Member; Jan Smith, STEM Business Leader, etc.). Detail how this board will support the Academy work.

Esperanza Ochoa School Board Member
Dr. Alda Benavides Superintendent of Schools, La Joya ISD
Dr. Gisela Saenz Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Alfredo Vela Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Finance
Dr. Anysia Trevino Executive Director for Secondary Education
Sofia Villarreal Executive Director for Alternative Education
DaLee Garcia Principal, Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS
Sylvia Sepulveda Principal, Jimmy Carter ECHS
Sofia Pena South Texas College ECHS Director
Elvia Saenz STEM Business Partner, Saenz Pharmacy

The Advisory Board will support Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS by meeting four (4) times a year to review campus data including student enrollment/retention, academic progress, funding allocations, course offerings, and opportunities for student internships, summer bridge activities/camps, and to review and revise the Annual Action Plan.

Program Requirement 1.1.A: Provide the Academy mission statement below.

Thelma Salinas STEM Early College High School will provide students with a relevant, rigorous education emphasizing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics resulting in graduation from high school with dual credit coursework up to 60 semester hours. We commit to develop students prepared leadership competencies necessary to excel in STEM careers. Our mission is reinforced by a structured system of academic, social, and emotional support, sustained by a strong partnership with South Texas College, and supported by local STEM-related businesses, organizations, and foundations.

- Program Requirement 1.4.A details the requirements for 6th-12th campuses to collaborate on a regular basis to advance 6th-12th alignment and student retention in STEM.

Describe below how the campus will meet or exceed this expectation. If Academy is 9th-12th write, "Not Applicable".

Not Applicable

Texas Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Benchmark 2: T-STEM Academy Culture and Design
Program Requirement: 2.1 Personalization

2.1.A Addresses in AAP and strategic plan the details for remaining small, allowing for personalization and maintaining collaborative learning communities of students.
2.1.B Plans and implements a non-graded student advisory program that is regularly scheduled, noted in the master calendar/schedule, and focuses on personalizing the student experience, (builds relationships with students and parents, develops character, and fosters global literacy).
2.1.C Develops a process for hearing and responding to student voice.

Key Elements for Success	Example Artifacts
• Student IGPs w/ CCRS, Endorsements, and Performance Acknowledgement plans • Master schedule for advisory • Student enrollment	• Opportunities for orientation sharing and team building activities both on- and off-site • Advisory class curriculum • Student goal setting and reflection logs • Teacher mentors assigned to students • Pre- and post-assessments of advisory class goal • Students sit on advisory board and/or have voice in student work products, clubs, competitions, governance, and course offerings • School wide activities to build/share culture • Student ambassadors serving as classroom greeters and/or guide tour groups • Teacher/student ratios, actual class sizes • Surveys documenting students' elective requests

Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1. District and Academy resources are allocated to ensure teaching staff and facilities remain small.	1. Annual Action Plan and Academy handbook address plan for maintaining personalized, small, learning communities.	1. Students are regularly afforded multiple opportunities to build relationships with staff and peers such as working in academic and/or competitive teams horizontally and vertically.	1. Protocols are developed to ensure students have a clear and documented voice in the Academy (student council, advisory committee to the director, suggestion box, etc.
2. Student advisory is regularly scheduled and focuses on relationships, building school capital, developing and fostering global literacy.	2. Advisory class has written curriculum with goals, expectations, scope, sequence, and pacing guides.	2. Teachers work in teams to develop systemic advisory programs with horizontally and vertically aligned student outcomes.	2. Annual resources are allocated to develop, revise, and sustain advisory program with input from students, teachers, parents, and external partners.
	And meets criteria from Developing	*And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	*And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Texas Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Benchmark 2: T-STEM Academy Culture and Design

Program Requirement: 2.1 Personalization

2.1.D Arranges for a flexible school day with blocks of time that support student learning (tutorials, collaboration, meetings).

2.1.E Celebrates high quality student work through student exhibits on-site, web-based, and/or in state and national forums.

2.1.F Provides every 6th – 12th student with an individualized STEM-focused high school graduation plan that addresses: four years of math and science; an Endorsement in STEM, Business and Industry, Public Service, or Arts and Humanities; identifies target areas for Performance Acknowledgements; and is at least annually reviewed and revised with the counselor, student, and family.

Example Artifacts

- Honor roll, grade level/school-wide celebrations
- Classroom and building displays
- Number of students participating in student exhibits
- Agendas/signatures for IGP meetings with students and family
- IGP, record folder/portfolio, 6th -16th course plan
- Master schedule, tutoring schedule
- Minutes/action items from site based committees, etc.
- Website showcasing student work
- Documentation of at least annual 6th – 12th IGP meetings with parents and students

Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1. Academy develops a flexible schedule that supports student success.	1. Schedule is developed with input from teachers, counselors, content coaches, extracurricular and internship/capstone requirements.	1. Teachers work in teams to adjust daily schedule to facilitate interdisciplinary PBL.	1. Schedule is adjusted to meet student needs according to data, student, teacher, and parent voice; intervention and extension plans.
2. Academy regularly schedules for students to share their knowledge and work products.	2. Students participate in panel presentations, debates, academic fairs, webinars, online challenges, competitions, design challenges, etc.	2. Resources are allocated to provide students with opportunities to participate in state and national forums, conferences, and competitions (financial, facilities, staffing, transportation, etc.).	2. Academy establishes protocols with input from key stakeholders to gauge the effectiveness of student participation in competitions, challenges, etc. towards promoting college and career readiness as well as Academy goals.
3. Academy develops IGP for each 6th – 12th student that addresses STEM pathways, THECB College and Career Readiness Standards.	3. Student, counselor, and family regularly review and revise the IGP to address student goals for courses, grades, Endorsements, Performance Acknowledgements, college entrance exams, PSAT/ACT/SAT, career aspirations, etc. *And meets criteria from Developing*	3. Annually reviews and revises IGP according to previously established protocols and timelines. *And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	3. Mentors are assigned to students to develop intervention contracts to address deficiencies or acceleration opportunities in IGP. *And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Texas Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Benchmark 2: T-STEM Academy Culture and Design
Program Requirement: 2.2 Culture

2.2.A Collaborates with stakeholders to develop a new handbook or modify the existing handbook with clear procedures, policies, and consequences that support the development of a strong T-STEM culture.

2.2.B Involves all stakeholders in developing a culture of respect, responsibility, trust, and meaningful adult and peer relationships throughout the Academy in order to foster positive student identities.

2.2.C Creates a professional learning community environment of collaboration, teaming, and high expectations among administrators, teachers, and stakeholders, with a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student.

Example Artifacts

- Handbook, attendance/discipline goals/data
- Customs and celebrations, modeling lessons for respect, responsibility, trust
- Student, teacher, parent surveys address culture
- Sharing of ideas and strategies and joint problem-solving are widespread.
- School developed common vocabulary for evidence of "good teaching"
- PLC protocols and expectations (meeting times, book studies, goals, results based on interventions, reflections on results – new actions, etc.)
- Collaborative planning of learning and teaching activities
- Widespread teamwork involving teachers and support staff
- Peer walkthroughs, lesson evaluations, and critical friends reflections

Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1. Handbook is developed to address student, parent expectations and a culture of respect, responsibility and trust.	1. Handbook addresses key tenets of cultural beliefs of Academy (student ability and achievement, efficacy and effort, power, distributed leadership, cultural sensitivity, proactive and reflective practice, etc.).	1. Handbook is developed with input from key stakeholders with clear policies, procedures, and consequences (attendance, discipline, student contracts, teacher extended days, etc.).	1. There is a high degree of commitment to school-wide professional values and a strong sense of cohesion and consistency of approach, with protocols to analyze, build, and assess effectiveness of culture.
2. Professional Learning Community (PLC) is developed which supports staff devoting effort, energy, time, and resources into incorporating valuable new strategies into their practice.	2. An inquiry-based continuous improvement orientation to practice is pervasive, with data informing practice and learning widely shared.	2. Staff regularly and consistently plans together, collaborates and shares ideas through meetings, website resources, teaming, team teaching etc., and garners input from external experts.	2. A desire to do the best for *all* students pervades the school as evidenced by protocols for regular and deep school-wide dialogue about good teaching, assessment, learning, projects, and successes of individual students.
	And meets criteria from Developing	*And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	*And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Benchmark 2: T-STEM Academy Culture and Design

- Applicants should consider the program requirements listed above as they pertain to a student’s individualized learning experience.

Describe the campus's efforts to support students to reach this goal. This description should include plans for: an advisory period, a positive school culture, enhanced relationships with parents, and responding to student voice.

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS high school is designed with an early morning zero period and an advisory period at the end of the instructional day Zero period is a flexible time where students can choose to meet with their study groups or receive additional instruction from faculty members. 8th period is structured to ensure students receive small group instruction in areas of need at least twice a week. The remaining days are used for advisory lessons, college readiness, and club meetings. Since class sizes in the core area are small (ranging from 15 to 18 students), instructors are able to personalize learning and identify students in need of extra assistance such as English language learners, at risk learners, and students working below grade level. Each student has an Individualized Academic Plan where progress is monitored and interventions are documented.

The purpose of Advisory Lessons conducted during our advisory period is to foster positive and meaningful relationships between adults and peers. Lessons are designed to be both engaging and interactive allowing for staff to share their experiences and mentor students throughout their four years at our school. These lessons also allow for the integration of the Governor's economic workforce clusters and the AchieveTexas STEM cluster for the purpose of educating our students to make informed decisions on future careers.

Parent meetings are organized based on the STEM field interests of their students. Students present information on the topics they have been studying and share data related to the STEM careers of their choice. Parents also complete surveys and suggest what meeting agenda items they would like addressed in subsequent meetings. We value the support of our parents and continue to use strategies to enhance relationships with parents such as the Parent Connection call out software, training parents on the use of the La Joya ISD Parent Portal, and the assignment of a certified Social Worker to assist needy families.

In the area of student voice, each grade level at the STEM high school has a full slate of class officers who in addition serve on the campus student council along with the presidents of each of our clubs and organizations. All student presidents serve on the Principal Advisory Council who is charged with planning and organizing all school-wide activities. Our campus is also represented on the Superintendent Student Roundtable and on the High School Advisory Pack. Our district leadership strongly supports the inclusion of students in decision-making opportunities and requires that we keep our students informed.

Applicants should consider the program requirements listed in the "Benchmark 2 Program Requirements" link above as they pertain to postsecondary college and career success.

- 6th-12th STEM-focused high school graduation plan: IGP with Endorsement, Performance Acknowledgement, and Distinguished Achievement.
- 6th-12th STEM career and college exploration, and college readiness preparation with students and parents to include college transition plan.
- Collaboration with IHE.
- All students should graduate with 12-30 hours college credit and be prepared for postsecondary coursework in STEM fields.

All students at Thelma Salinas STEM Early College High School will graduate high school with 4 years of mathematics, four years of science, four years of STEM electives, a STEM Endorsement, and a Performance Acknowledgement, for a Distinguished Level of Achievement. All staff will understand the importance of embedding concepts, topics, and issues related to STEM careers, and college readiness. These topics should not only be addressed in advisory lessons and special classes, but also in the core subjects and related electives. Students will be immersed in the language of the sciences, technology , engineering, and mathematics. as well as be exposed to the college admissions requirements of at least four universities. Students will also be required to complete a resume that can be updated each year and to keep a portfolio of college essays based on the most common prompts. Parents will be kept informed of student progress towards college readiness through meetings, individual conferences, and student-led conferences..

As a current ECHS, Thelma Salinas STEM continues to have extensive collaboration with South Texas College, our higher education partner. Our current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) addresses all pertinent requirements between the college and our district. With their assistance and support, we are able to offer a variety of dual credit courses in the STEM fields in the areas of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Engineering, and Mathematics as well as the core areas of English, History, Spanish, Fine Arts, Speech, Psychology, and Philosophy.

- Program requirement 2.2.C. highlights the importance of a strong Professional Learning Community for the success of all students.
- Review at the rubric continuum and tools in Example Artifacts from a successful Academy.

Describe how the campus will use these tools to progress into a "Mature" campus over time. "Staff regularly and consistently plans together, collaborates and shares ideas through meetings, website resources, teaming, team teaching, etc., and garners input from external experts." This description may include inquiry-based approaches, data informed decision making, Professional Learning Communities, collaboration, and integration of technology.

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS staff has received four days of training on Professional Learning Communities from the Region One Educational Service Center. In addition, our faculty has three PLC certified trainers on staff to offer technical assistance to the grade level and departmental teams. The Salinas STEM master schedule ensures that each grade level along with their corresponding electives have identical conference periods to promote team planning to strengthen alignment, reinforce/maintain process skills, embed critical/creative thinking skills, and implement Project-based Learning (PBL). Department or subject area meetings are held after school once a week to enhance vertical alignment 9th-12th.and share best practices and instructional strategies. Staff consistently uses DMAC reports to inform decision-making to improve instruction, planning, grouping, and intervention strategies. In addition the TEKS College/Career Readiness Standards must be referenced on all lesson and PBL unit plans. The campus receives ongoing feedback from both external experts and internal instructional specialists on the district staff.

Collaboration, integration of skills, interdisciplinary unit plans, inquiry-based approaches, and team teaching is clearly evident at Salinas STEM ECHS. Teachers emphasize that in the real world of STEM careers, a team of professionals often work together to investigate and solve a problem, create a product, or launch a marketing campaign. Teachers introduce students to the 4 types of careers: producers, improvers, builders, and thinkers (Adler, 2013) and give students opportunities to experience all four during collaborative group projects. In order to enhance student mastery of technology, the campus provides tech devices such as IPads, laptops, and chromebooks at a 1 to 1 ratio and offers CTE courses in graphic design, animation, and audio/video production. Students are expected to be able to create videos, short films, marketing campaigns, websites, and master basic programming in at least C++. These additional tools give students the skills to be creative and innovative while enhancing the collaboration and integration of TEKS/CCRS between core and elective teachers.

Texas Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Benchmark 3: Student Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention
Program Requirement: 3.1 Recruitment and 3.2 Open Access

3.1.A Develops structures and processes for marketing and recruitment to encourage participation from underserved students and families (transportation or plans for transportation to the school, child care for family events, and translation of all recruitment and marketing materials).
3.1.B Actively partners with feeder middle and/or elementary schools to develop student interest in STEM education and to increase advancement rates from middle school STEM to high school STEM.
3.1.C Develops a systemic recruitment plan that includes students, parents, counselors, teachers, district, and community.
3.2.A Develops an admission policy to include an open access, lottery-based selection process that encourages applications from all students. The application will not be based on state assessment scores, discipline history, teacher recommendation, minimum GPA, or other requirements that would be used to limit selection.
3.2.B Consists of a population that is 50% or greater economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students.

Key Elements for Success	Example Artifacts
• Written admission policy and application with lottery explained	• Recruitment schedule and locations (schools, churches, community centers, etc.) • Brochures and marketing items in English, Spanish, and/or relevant second language • Survey data (community input, enrollment trends, etc.) • STEM feeder school crosswalk recruiting curriculum • Plan to recruit with feeder schools • Documented support efforts (transportation, child care, etc.) • Needs assessment • Number and percentage of students matriculating from middle school STEM to high school STEM

Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1. Academy details a plan and process for marketing to and recruiting from appropriate communities and feeder schools to reach high need and underrepresented students.	1. Marketing and recruitment plan developed with input from key stakeholders, and targets feeder pattern, community needs, and cultural relevance.	1. Marketing plan highlights Academy's STEM pathways and Endorsements; and industry and higher education partners. Recruitment efforts include Academy staff, students, and parents. At least 80% of 8th grade MS STEM students matriculate to HS STEM Academy.	1. Students and staff from Academy collaborate with feeder schools to develop, deliver, and monitor recruitment results from STEM crosswalk engagement lessons conducted at the feeder middle schools. At least 90% of 8th grade MS STEM students matriculate to HS STEM Academy.
2. Academy has at least 50% economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students, via an open, lottery based admission policy, where the application *does not* include requirements that might deter students such as STAAR, grades, teacher recommendation, discipline, or attendance.	2. Clearly communicated admission policy that indicates target enrollment goals and implements support processes structures such as transportation, child care, etc. to meet goals. *And meets criteria from Developing*	2. Academy tracks enrollment data and indicates some increases in recruitment/enrollment rates. *And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	2. Academy employs a needs assessment to analyze demographic trends to ensure equitable access and recruitment of greater than 50% economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students and sustains a full complement of students at each grade level. *And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Texas Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Benchmark 3: Student Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention

Program Requirement: 3.3 Student Support and Retention

3.3.A Develops and implements systemic, tiered strategies for student support and retention (outreach, early intervention strategies, mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and other supports for academic and socio-emotional growth).

3.3.B Hosts 5th – 6th and 8th – 9th orientation session(s) and summer bridge program(s) to facilitate successful student transitions and retention into a STEM-focused, college preparatory, project-based learning environment.

3.3.C Provides all students with opportunities and the expectation to assume roles of responsibility within the classroom, Academy, and community.

3.3.D Supports and monitors 6th – 12th student participation in STEM activities both within and outside the classroom to ensure that all students engage in STEM clubs, STEM competitions, and STEM field experiences.

3.3.E Hosts parent seminars to develop deep understanding and commitment to the rigor of college readiness and the high expectations of a STEM Academy.

Example Artifacts

- Student, parent, staff contracts
- Student retention and persistence plan
- Orientation and bridge agendas
- Exit interviews
- IGPs Minutes from persistence meetings, retention/attrition data
- Program adjustments due to student and community voice
- Copies of trainings and participation of parents/community
- Satisfaction/interest surveys from students, parents, community, staff, etc.
- Lists of clubs, service learning projects, STEM activities, STEM field experiences, and planned competitions

Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
1. Academy develops a strategic plan for student retention and persistence, and maintains persistence rates above 70%.	1. Student persistence rates range between between 70-80% and the strategic plan addresses research-based supports such as annual IGP review, parental involvement, tiered interventions, and cultural relevance.	1. Student persistence rates range between 81-90%, and the strategic plan includes yearly metrics, analysis of why students leave, and a plan to identify and prevent at-risk students from leaving.	1. Campus engages in ongoing dialogue to address persistence data (lack of course credit, leaving the Academy) and uses data to ensure persistence rates above 90%.
2. Academy develops student orientation/summer bridge program(s), student clubs, and plans for external STEM activities and competitions.	2. The orientation/summer bridge program sets priorities and includes a timeline with skills, tools, and resources for students to successfully transition to a STEM environment.	2. The orientation/summer bridge program is implemented as planned and continually refined annually, with a complete scope and sequence and supporting materials.	2. The orientation/summer bridge program monitors initial student success, identifies struggling students early on, and ensures those students have additional support.
3. Students can select from a small number of leadership opportunities available.	3. The staff encourages students to select leadership opportunities.	3. The staff monitors student involvement in leadership and STEM activities, clubs, and competitions; and develops interventions for students who have minimally participated.	3. Student leadership is evidenced in nearly every non-classroom related initiative or event and at least 90% of students participate in leadership and/or STEM activities, clubs and competitions.
4. Academy creates STEM Academy orientation for parents and stakeholders.	4. Opportunities exist for parents and stakeholders to participate in service learning, and/or attend student presentations.	4. At least bi-annual opportunities exist for parents and stakeholders to participate in STEM activities.	4. Annual parent and stakeholder participation goals are developed and monitored for continued improvement.
	And meets criteria from Developing	*And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	*And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature*

Benchmark 3: Student Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention

- Review Program Requirement 3.1.A/B/C and 3.2.A/B.

Describe the Academy's open-access admission policy, the marketing, and recruitment plan to parents, students, and the community; and partnering with feeder schools to increase advancement rates in STEM from elementary to middle to high school.

Thelma Salinas STEM high school has developed and implemented a Recruitment Plan which includes a timeline and enrollment events such as school visits, presentations by both students and staff, informal question/answer sessions, tours of the STEM campus for interested students, and parent meetings. In addition, the STEM campus was given a booth at the district-sponsored Why La Joya? event on February 6, 2016 which was well attended by parents and community members. Recruitment materials are published in the district and local newspapers, and the campus is featured on KLJS Channel 17 during their Campus Spotlight program. In addition, recruitment materials are available in both English and Spanish and are distributed to feeder schools and to other appropriate locations in the community. Our student ambassadors are also vital members of our recruiting team because many of them are classified as at risk and can share their experiences as they overcame barriers to become college ready and excel in dual enrollment classes. We have seen how 8th graders respond to high school students as they shared their lessons learned after a year at STEM ECHS. For the purpose of increasing awareness in both middle and elementary schools, our computer science students have developed a recruiting video highlighting classrooms and school-wide activities, and they have also trained 5th grade elementary students in Scratch Programming and participated in the Hour of Code to raise awareness in the field of programming.

A performance-blind, open access lottery system that encourages and considers applications from all students was implemented to ensure all students had an equal opportunity for acceptance for 2016-2017 school year regardless of background or academic performance. Approximately 140 9th grade students were accepted for enrollment as the new Freshmen cohort joining the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students participating in the existing Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS model. Enrollment decisions were not based on state assessment scores, discipline history, teacher recommendation, or minimum grade point average.

- STEM Academies host orientation, summer bridge, and college preparatory seminars for parent and students; encourage student leadership, monitor student participation in STEM activities, clubs, competitions and field experiences; and develop intervention plans for students who minimally participate.
- STEM Academies maintain persistence rates above 70%, with a goal of at least 90%

Describe the campus plan to progress to "Mature" on the continuum for Program Requirement 3.3 Student Support and Retention (review the "Benchmark 3 Program Requirements" link at the top of this page).

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS conducts a four week summer bridge for incoming 9th graders to assist students to transition from the eight different middle schools from around the district to our specialty high school. The bridge program is staffed by four current 9th grade teachers assisted by currently enrolled upper classmen who serve as student ambassadors, teaching assistants (TAs), and Activity Leaders. Incoming 9th graders receive lessons on college readiness, Texas Success Initiative (TSI) orientation/practice and team building activities designed to unify the student body. The four week program culminates with an opportunity for students to take the TSI Reading Assessment.

College preparatory activities for students are conducted during both our Zero and Advisory Periods. If we need to accommodate a guest speaker or recruiter during the school day, we make special arrangements to use our campus lecture hall. Parent meetings on college preparatory topics are held both during the school day and in the evening.

The importance of student leadership is stressed at Salinas STEM. Every 9th grade student is required to take Business Information Management (BIM) which contains a six week leadership strand. Students explore topics such as leadership styles, leadership characteristics and responsibilities, and the contributions of famous leaders past and present. In addition, each 10th grader is enrolled in a Student Leadership class for local credit.that builds upon the 9th grade leadership unit and delves deeper into leadership in the STEM fields.

Salinas STEM ECHS offers students a variety of clubs and organizations that provide opportunities for students to engage socially with one another, enhance leadership skills, participate in community service activities, and engage in competitions.
The following clubs and organizations are active at Salinas STEM ECHS: Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers-Jr. Chapter, STEM Biological Society, Science Research Club, Technology Student Association, STEM Robotics, Health Occupations Student Association, STEM Chess Club, National Honor Society, STEM Gamers Club, Anime Club, STEM Performance Band, Intermural Sports Teams, and our UIL Teams.

Benchmark 4: Teacher Selection, Development, and Retention

4.1.E.	Provides opportunities for ongoing professional development to improve teachers' content knowledge, technology embedded instruction, integrative STEM pedagogy, college and career readiness standards, instructional strategies for ensuring a successful P-20 pipeline, and leadership capacity.
4.2.A.	Develops a Professional Development (PD) plan for a sustained professional development model of continuous learning based on student results, teacher development, and the short- and long-term goals of the Academy.
4.2.B.	Adopts a systemic professional development model of continuous learning that addresses prioritized needs as informed and evaluated by multiple sets of quantitative and qualitative data (student assessment data, instructional/classroom evaluations, technological developments, workforce demands, demographic changes, and community/societal expectations and needs).
4.2.C.	Sustains a PLC by instituting job-embedded ongoing opportunities for continuous learning, peer coaching/mentoring, STEM externships, and participation in STEM teacher and leader cadres for teachers and administrators (research-based practices, content competence, new instructional strategies, technology integration, reflective inquiry, and student artifact analysis).
4.3.C.	Adopts and implements a plan for new teachers to include orientation, induction, acculturation, mentoring, professional development, and administrative support.
4.3.D.	Designs or employs innovative programs to support the recruitment and selection of highly qualified STEM teachers.

Key Elements for Success

- Master schedule with common planning time
- Teacher turnover rate
- Teacher mentoring program
- Written recruitment plan

	Developing	Implementing	Mature	Role Model
4.1.E	Academy has authority to hire "best" qualified for goals of the Academy and STEM blueprint requirements.	Develops a written plan for creative recruiting to ensure high qualified, effective teachers.	Develops annual needs assessment and actively implements a teacher recruitment and placement program.	Resources are allocated for recruitment of best qualified candidates, with the Academy partnering with teacher preparation programs such as UTeach, to recruit highly qualified teachers for Academy needs.
4.2.A. 4.2.B.	Develops PD plan with clear pedagogy expectations, aligned with mission goals, teacher needs, and student needs	Academy regularly uses diverse assessment tools/processes, enhanced media, adult learning theories, professional reflection time, problem-solving protocols, and self-paced learning with computer and human interaction for support, coaching, mentoring, and collegial interaction.	Needs assessment and PD plan address teacher and student retention to include teacher, student, and parent voice in decision-making process.	Meaningful partnerships with external organizations ensure progressive expectations for educators' application of content knowledge, curriculum design, and delivery.
4.2.C.	Develops a PLC plan that identifies ways in which teachers will work in collaborative teams to build shared knowledge and formative/summative data.	Teachers collaboratively develop 6th - 12th common essential student outcomes which reflect their efforts to build shared knowledge regarding best practice, (STEM integration, college and career readiness, 21st century skills,).	Teachers collaboratively clarify the criteria they use to judge quality of student work and criteria is consistently applied horizontally and vertically.	Teachers participate in externships and mentorships with higher education and industry. PLC plan is annually monitored, evaluated, and revised for effective practice.
4.3.C	Develops an Orientation plan aligned to Academy mission and vision, and teacher enculturation.	Induction plan addresses Academy expectations for instructional skills; interactions with students, parents, and community; classroom management; assessment of learning; technology; professional development; and mentoring.	Induction process is clearly enunciated, consistently practiced, and evaluated and revised for effectiveness.	Each new teacher participates in the induction process, is assigned a mentor teacher, understands the strategic goals of the Academy, and completes a Needs Assessment that identifies areas for individual professional development.
4.3.D.	Common planning time within the school day focuses on PLC collaboration.	Teams develop team-time norms, set goals, and evaluate effective use of team-time for curriculum development, student artifact reflection, parental involvement, etc. *And meets criteria from Developing*	Teams develop common metrics to measure and inform, in order to identify strengths and weakness in their individual practice, and to collaboratively improve their individual and collective efforts to help all students learn. *And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing*	Collaborative school-level planning is judged effective as evidenced by student learning outcomes. *And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing and Mature*

Benchmark 4: Teacher Selection, Development, and Retention

- Review program requirements for benchmark 4 in the link above.

Describe how the Academy will recruit, support, and retain highly qualified teachers. This should include plans for:

- Teacher recruitment and retention plan
- Sustained professional development (PD) plan which incorporates project-based learning and an integrated STEM curriculum into instructional practices based on qualitative and quantitative student data. (A timeline of planned PD will be uploaded in Benchmark 7.)
- A job-embedded Professional Learning Community with common planning times for collaboration.
- New teacher support (new to Academy and/or teaching profession).

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS faculty possesses extensive subject matter knowledge. Of the current 28 faculty members, 13 have masters-level degrees in the subject area they teach. 10 faculty members teach dual credit courses approved by our higher education partner, South Texas College. Department chairs from the college revise/approve syllabi, conduct classroom visits, meet regularly with Dual Enrollment staff to ensure consistency and alignment.

As required by our district, the ECHS model, and this application, a thorough Professional Development Timeline has been developed and is included in the Salinas STEM ECHS Improvement Plan and the ECHS Policies and Procedures Manual. The plan includes update trainings in Project-based Learning (staff was trained two years ago), the Common Instructional Framework (required by ECHS), Literacy, 21st Century Skills, and Technology Integration.

As was indicated previously, Salinas STEM faculty has received four days of Professional Learning Community (PLC) training. We are assisted by 3 faculty members who serve as campus PLC trainers. Staff members have common planning time to meet as grade levels and as subject area teams to collaborate, plan lessons and intervention activities, and address pertinent topics.

New teachers are assigned a mentor teacher with specialized training in supporting teachers new to the profession. This training (TxBESS) is provided by the Region One Service Center and is designed to support beginning teachers early in their careers in order to reduce teacher turnover. Mentor teachers develop formative coaching skills needed to assist new teachers. They are required to meet regularly with their assigned novice teacher and conduct activities such as peer observations, review of classroom practices, and parent conference protocols. New teachers are also given the opportunity to observe experienced teachers teaching in their subject area.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.1

- Course syllabi, lesson plans, unit lessons, PBL, scope, sequence, pacing guides
- Lessons include STEM standards, state standards, national standards, college and career readiness standards, 21st century skills
- Benchmark schedule, course passing rates, retention rates
- Student portfolios, IGPs, counseling, advising, college crosswalk, and feedback loop
- Plans for PSAT, Accuplacer, TSI, CTE, interventions, etc.
- Horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum
- Students graduate with Endorsements & Performance Acknowledgements

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.1.A.	Aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment (such as, but not limited to, Texas CCRS, national and state standards, content, context, culture, cognitive level, competencies, skills, processes, 21st century skills, and STEM synthesis).		*Implementing*		
5.1.B.	Develops a scope, sequence, and pacing guide for a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum centered on state standards, career and college readiness standards, STEM integration, and industry expectations.		*Implementing*		
5.1.C.	Develops an assessment and intervention plan to address gaps in student achievement and areas for extension.		*Implementing*		
5.1.D.	Supports and encourages all students to successfully complete four years of mathematics, four years of science, four years of STEM electives, and at least one Endorsement in STEM, Business and Industry, Public Services, or Arts and Humanities, with a primary focus on a STEM Endorsement; and earn a Distinguished Level of Achievement as well as a Performance Acknowledgement in order to graduate college ready.		*Mature*		
5.1.E.	Offers dual credit, articulated concurrent enrollment, AP or IB courses that all students will graduate with 12-30 college credit hours.		*Mature*		
5.1.F.	Establishes curriculum expectations, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms that are reflectively revised to ensure a constancy of mission purpose (aligned resource allocation, integrated STEM curriculum development, teacher professional growth, and student results).		*Implementing*		

5.1 Rigor

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 5.1 Rigor on the previous page.

Describe how the Academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- Alignment of curriculum and instruction as supported by assessment
- Assessment/intervention or acceleration plans for students
- Plan for four tears of math, science, and 12-30 college credit hours (dual credit/AP/IB)
- HS Endorsements available to Academy students

The staff of Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS strives to ensure the alignment of content curriculum to instruction. Curriculum Timelines or Pacing Guides are available for all courses offered, and weekly lessons plans are required. PBL unit plans that are planned for longer than one week are also submitted for documentation and feedback. Course syllabi for all offerings including high school credit only classes are on file at the front office. Common assessments are developed, analyzed, and revised to ensure that assessments are valid and reliable measures of student learning. Rubrics for PBL projects, writing assignments, research papers, and speeches/presentations have been developed to ensure consistency and fairness in grading. Rubrics are created to reflect process skills and can be modified to include content based items. All rubrics are shared with students at the beginning of the project or assignment to communicate clear expectations.

Students in need of interventions are identified by the third week of the grading period and assigned to an intervention period twice a week. Upper classmen Peer Tutors are available to assist target students in core subject areas and in key STEM electives. Faculty documents re-teaching sessions and retesting opportunities in the electronic gradebook. Students that are three or more years below grade level in Reading and/or Mathematics are progressed monitored using the district Response to Intervention protocols.

All students enrolled at Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS must complete four years of Mathematics, four years of Science, and four years of STEM electives. Students are regularly scheduled in TSI practice sessions and have multiple opportunities to take the TSI in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS is a certified TSI testing center. Students have a wide variety of opportunities to enroll in dual enrollment courses in the STEM fields, Core Component, and can complete up to 60 hours of college credit. The STEM Endorsement will be available to Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS students beginning with the graduating class of 2018.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.2

- Defined engineering coursework (Infinity Project, Project Lead the Way)
- Student journals, student presentations, peer performance assessment rubrics, and peer mentors
- Self-paced learning, student contracts, progress reports, exit interviews, parent/teacher/student conferences
- Lessons include work force clusters, expert practitioners, field-based learning, research of current issues, PBLs, guest speakers, differentiation, intervention and acceleration plans, student choice
- Number of offerings and number of students participating in co-curricular activities, clubs, academic teams, and competitions (UIL, Brain Bowl, Science Olympiad, Model UN, FIRST, BEST, Vex etc.)
- Design conceptual internships, identify STEM opportunities, business partners, scientific organizations, and universities
- IGP w/capstone project (research, annual review, and analysis)

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.2.A.	Delivers innovative STEM programs that are well-defined, embed critical thinking and problem solving, innovation and invention, and are aligned to state and/or national standards and industry expectations.	*Developing*			
5.2.B.	Supports and encourages students to complete three years of STEM electives at middle school and four years of STEM electives at high school.	*Implementing*			
5.2.C.	Develops performance-based and project-based assessments aligned to these innovative programs and state/national/industry standards.	*Implementing*			
5.2.D.	Develops and implements a plan for supporting accelerated student achievement for students with demonstrated deficiencies or proficiencies in mathematics and science, to promote all students graduating ready for enrollment in credit-bearing postsecondary courses (e.g. Algebra I enrollment by 8th grade).	*Implementing*			
5.2.E.	Incorporates into the curriculum work-based contextual learning with a global perspective.	*Developing*			
5.2.F.	Participates in extra-curricular academic activities centered on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; i.e. STEM field experiences, clubs, and competitions.	*Implementing*			
5.2.G.	Develops 6th-12th students' portfolios of interest in: STEM capstone projects, STEM internship opportunities, and global STEM college, degree, and career explorations. Requires all high school students to complete an internship, and/or a STEM-related capstone project, presentation, and defense; primarily focused in the state's STEM-related economic development clusters (information and computer technology, energy, petroleum refining and chemical products, advanced technologies and manufacturing, aerospace and defense, biotechnology and life sciences.).	*Developing*			

5.2 STEM-Focused Curriculum

- Review program requirements for Benchmark 5.2 STEM-Focused Curriculum on the previous page.

Describe how the Academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- Well-defined STEM programs that are aligned with state, college and career readiness, and industry standards and embed critical thinking and problem solving, and foster innovation and invention
- Three years of STEM electives at middle school and four years of STEM electives at high school. For high schools, list the CATE elective pathways and courses that support each Endorsement offered by the Academy
- Performance and project-based assessments aligned to state, college and career readiness, and industry standards
- Work-based and contextual learning in the curriculum
- STEM-focused extracurricular activities (field experiences, clubs, and competitions)
- STEM-related internships and/or senior capstone projects, presentation, and defense
- Plan for 6th-12th student STEM portfolios

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS offers programs that are aligned with state, college and career readiness standards which embed critical thinking, problem-solving, and foster innovation and invention.. Guided by the AchieveTexas STEM Cluster Crosswalks, students must take four years of STEM electives in their field of interest, and students have the opportunity to receive dual credit for some of the upper level CTE courses. CTE Engineering courses available to students include: Concepts of Engineering Technology, Engineering Design and Presentation, Electronics, and Engineering Design and Problem Solving.
Dual credit courses in Engineering offered are Introduction to Engineering, Engineering Graphics, and Electrical Circuits. CTE Technology courses offered are Principles of Information Technology, Computer Programming, Advanced Computer Programing, and Research in Information Technology Solutions. Dual credit courses in computer science include Computer Programming I, II, and III, Advanced Structured Languages, and Machine Languages. CTE courses in Health Science offered include Principles of Health Science, Medical Terminology, Anatomy and Physiology, and Medical Microbiology. Dual credit courses available for students interested in this field include Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, and Microbiology.

Performance, problem/project-based assessments aligned to state standards and CCRS are implemented through the delivery of our Project Based Learning model. These assessments include a detailed Challenge Brief explaining all instructions and expectations, a list of driving questions the project must answer, a real world, authentic context, extensive research, evidence of student voice/choice, and reflection/feedback. These assessments are evaluated by rubrics that have been clearly explained to the students.

STEM focused extracurricular activities include the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers-Jr. Chapter, STEM Biological Society, Science Research Club, Chess, Technology Student Association, STEM Robotics, Health Occupations Student Association, and the Science, Math, Computer Science, and Writing UIL teams. Students have competed in a variety of events sponsored by the leadership of their organizations. Students have competed in the following events this year: Robotics, HOSA, Chess, Science Fair (district, regional, and have qualified for state), TSA, and several UIL meets.

STEM students have participated in various internships sponsored by Texas A&M Computer Science Department, Mission Regional Hospital, Rio Grande Regional Hospital, Valley Birding Center, and the UTRGV High School Summer Research Internship Program. The campus is planning to implement senior capstone projects for the 2016-2017 school year.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.3

- Peer observations, mentors, cross-curricular teams
- Walkthroughs, observations, model lessons
- Data informs scaffolding, re-teaching, and extension
- Team planning that defines student products, assessments, rubrics, and standards for cross-curricular and other PBLs, teacher research on STEM field expectations, current issues, and technology.
- Student presentations include digital materials, peer and internal/external expert evaluation
- Academy teachers have mentors at university and industry level that provide input to curriculum development
- Year-at-a-glance checklist documenting course coverage of state standards, 21st century skills, college readiness standards throughout grading period

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.3.A.	Incorporates data-driven instruction.	*Implementing*			
5.3.B.	Creates an environment for shared teacher responsibility and accountability for student learning across programs, content areas, and classrooms.	*Implementing*			
5.3.C.	Organizes instructional expectations around problem-based and project-based learning with clearly defined learning outcomes for students and teachers that address state and national performance standards, college and career readiness standards, and industry expectations.	*Implementing*			
5.3.D.	Ensures teachers' use of the aligned scope and sequence and integration across the disciplines.	*Implementing*			
5.3.E.	Ensures teachers' use of high-quality curricular materials aligned with state and national standards, college and career readiness standards, and industry standards.	*Implementing*			
5.3.F.	Provides opportunities for students to exercise choice and voice within a relevant and rigorous context.	*Implementing*			

5.3 Instructional Practices

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 5.3 Instructional Practices on the previous page.

Describe how the academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- Data driven instruction
- Shared teacher responsibility and accountability (PLC)
- Project Based Learning (PBL)
- Alignment of scope and sequence with state, CCRS, and industry standards
- Students exercise choice/voice within relevant and rigorous curriculum

The implementation of data driven instruction is facilitated by the use of DMAC software that generates reports for all common assessments, six weeks exams, and benchmarks. Faculty members meet in PLC teams to analyze data, modify timelines, and embed/integrate skills needing additional re-teaching and practice. Faculty also plan ways to cross curricular lines and co-teach skills and concepts allowing for students to make generalizations, connections, and solidify learning.

Project Based Learning (PBL) requires instructors to carefully identify the content based standards and merge them with the 21st century process skills such as critical/creative thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration skills. Tools to teach, model, and formatively assess self-management skills are also crucial to the success of a PBL unit. At the same time, the project must answer a set of driving questions, be an authentic, real world issue, allow for student voice and choice, allow for students to reflect on their learning while using constructive feedback to improve their work, and give students an avenue to explain, display, and present their work beyond the classroom. At Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS, subject area departments participate in 2 PBL units a year (1 per semester).

All La Joya ISD curriculum guides, scope and sequence documents, and pacing guides are cross-referenced with the TEKS, the CCRS, and the ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards). In addition, STEM staff has embedded the 21st Century Skills of Critical/Creative Thinking and Design, Problem-solving, Communication, and Collaboration to enhance student engagement, create meaningful, real world contexts for learning skills and concepts, and prepare students for the job environments of the future. The Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS faculty value the importance of student choice/voice and provide multiple opportunities for student to exhibit learning in a variety of platforms including artistic media, technology applications, film/video, and writing/research.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.4

- Project Based Learning (PBL)
- Systemic expectations for number of presentations per class, documentation of students presenting to internal and external panels
- Design teams, group projects, multiage projects, simulations, robotics teams, green teams
- Project scenarios based on real-world issues (Future City, FIRST, Odyssey of the Mind, etc.)

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.4.A.	Promotes instructional strategies that challenge students to think critically, innovate and invent to solve real-world, contextual problems.	*Implementing*			
5.4.B.	Exposes students to critical readings in STEM-related fields and requires students to demonstrate their understanding of STEM disciplines in a work-based, contextual environment.	*Implementing*			
5.4.C.	Offers standards-based STEM programs that incorporate integrative STEM literacy and innovative instructional tools.	*Implementing*			
5.4.D.	Promotes applied and collaborative learning, and provides students with opportunities to present/defend their work to peers, community, industry, and university leaders.	*Implementing*			
5.4.E.	Promotes a rich culture that incorporates a natural use of current technologies to enhance instruction, curriculum, teaching, and learning, and STEM literacy.	*Implementing*			

5.4. STEM Education Integration

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 5.4. STEM Integration on the previous page.

Describe how the Academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- Students apply critical thinking, innovation and invention, to problem-solve real-world scenarios.
- Student exposure to STEM related fields and understanding of STEM disciplines in a work-based, contextual environment
- Students present/defend their learning (PBLs and capstone projects) to external experts
- Use of current technologies to enhance instruction, curriculum, teaching and learning, and STEM literacy

Through the implementation of PBL, students have opportunities to apply critical thinking, innovation and invention, and problem solving to address real world, authentic issues. Students are exposed to STEM related fields and gain understanding of STEM disciplines in a contextual environment when they work in collaborative groups to complete a task. Students take turns assuming the role of thinker, producer, improver, designer, and marketer and experience how to work in teams, appreciate the strengths of one another, compensate for weaknesses, give and receive constructive feedback, and to celebrate the finished product. Teachers give students opportunities to display/present their learning in a variety of settings outside of the classrooms and to other audiences including STC staff, elementary/middle school students, parents Edinburg Children's Hospital, Amigos Del Valle Adult Day Care, local community centers,

Current technologies available to our students to enhance instruction, curriculum, teaching/learning, and STEM Literacy include computer labs equipped with Microsoft Visual Studio 2012, an engineering lab equipped with SolidWorks software and 3D Printing capabilities, a robotics lab,fully equipped Biology, Chemistry, and Physics labs, Ipads, laptops, Chromebooks, AppleTVs in all classrooms, and recently acquired, a graphic design/audio/visual production lab. Planned and already budgeted for the 2016-2017 school year are a STEM focused reference library, an Electrical Circuits Lab, and an additional Organic Chemistry lab.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.5

- Academy-developed process in place to identify STEM and content relevant vocabulary and just-in-time literature
- Plan for vertical and horizontal expectations, per grade level, of STEM vocabulary and relevant literature
- Literature- and language-rich environment which includes technical language journals, articles, periodicals, current events newspapers, online resources, webinars, and texts
- STEM-focused strategies and activities such as word walls, student journals, literature circles, mock trials, student forums, debates
- Stakeholder input into selection of STEM instructional materials student goals and reflections (literacy in STEM, 21st century skills, technology, etc.)
- Integrative instruction and instructional materials

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.5.A.	Promotes technologically proficient and scientifically literate students with highly developed academic vocabulary and STEM technical vocabulary.	*Implementing*			
5.5.B.	Graduates 21st century literate students proficient in: English, reading, speaking, writing, numeracy, arts, health, sciences, and world languages; government, civics, history, and geography; environmental science; global awareness; information, communications, and media technology; and financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurship.	*Implementing*			
5.5.C.	Selects appropriate STEM curriculum and culturally relevant instructional materials that foster widespread use of literacy strategies within the STEM curriculum.	*Implementing*			
5.5.D.	Provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the relevancy of the content through reading, writing, speaking, and presenting.	*Implementing*			

5.5. Literacy

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 5.5 Literacy on the previous page.

Describe how the Academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- Technologically and scientifically literate students
- 21st Century skills-literate students
- STEM curriculum and culturally relevant instructional materials
- Academy literacy plan

The goal to create technologically and scientifically literate students for the STEM careers of the future must be strategic and inclusive. Students must not only master specific content and skills, but also must be able to dominate the 21st century skills of critical/creative thinking, design and innovation, problem solving, communication (oral and written), and collaboration. In a STEM focused curriculum, reading and writing are taught beyond the basic level to include comprehending scientific research/articles, using technical and scientific vocabulary, conducting research, and communicating results using graphs, data, and the written word and conventions effectively. Salinas STEM ECHS utilize a variety of culturally relevant instructional materials from a variety of sources including state adopted textbooks, college textbooks, scientific journals, websites, and other reputable sources.

With respect to Academic literacy, La Joya ISD has developed a K-12 Literacy Plans that establishes student outcomes for each grade level as well as sample interventions and resources suggested. Using the district format, Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS staff has augmented the plan to include more references non-fiction, informational, expository, persuasive, and scientific texts in addition to more writing assignments and research projects for grades 9-12.

Benchmark 5: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Example Artifacts: 5.6

- Data informs instruction, plan for gaps and extension
- Curriculum aligned with standards, STEM, industry, and higher education
- Formative, diagnostic, and summative assessments, lesson redesign
- Student artifact reflection is used to inform diagnostic tools and processes
- Pre/post tests, cumulative folders, parent conferences, parent portal, student learning logs
- Pre-assessments/ post-assessments, course offerings for interventions, grades, end of course exams, student presentations, narrative assessments, oral assessments, product based assessment
- IGPs, progress reports, student information sheets, home visits, parent conferences, PEIMS info, call logs, counseling schedule/visits
- Student designed projects, project rubrics, peer reviews, panel reviews, adult/expert reviews
- Project lists knowledge and skills, 21st century skills and levels of skill mastery; course syllabus provides list of performance-based assessments; PD for teachers on developing PBLs

In Benchmark 5, all program requirements are scored individually. There are no separate metrics. Assess the level of implementation for the program requirements below according to the standards to the right.		**Developing** Investigate, Research, and Create	**Implementing** Formalize, Revise, and Publish	**Mature** Data-driven evaluation of effectiveness of program requirements	**Role Model** Continually assesses to document successes and challenges with action plans implemented to correct deficiencies in performance
5.6.A.	Uses diagnostic, ongoing, and vertically and horizontally aligned formative and summative assessments for all students to drive instructional decisions.	*Implementing*			
5.6.B.	Uses state and national standards, college and career readiness standards, industry standards, and STEM program requirements to develop common benchmark assessments.	*Implementing*			
5.6.C.	Employs student readiness assessments or diagnostics to identify and address gaps in learning.	*Implementing*			
5.6.D.	Tracks and reports student progress using student information systems.	*Implementing*			
5.6.E.	Uses performance-based assessments that allow students to demonstrate their understandings of STEM concepts.	*Implementing*			

5.6 Assessments

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 5.6 Assessments on the previous page.

Describe how the Academy will progress along the continuum. This should include plans for:

- diagnostic, ongoing and vertically and horizontally aligned formative and summative assessments;
- state, college and career readiness, and industry standards alongside STEM program requirements;
- student readiness assessment to address gaps;
- student information systems to track progress; and
- performance based assessments that demonstrate student understanding of STEM concepts

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS uses diagnostic, ongoing, vertically and horizontally aligned formative and summative assessments. Through the utilization of DMAC tracking reports, item analysis, and tutorial grouping reports from common assessments, six weeks exams, and benchmarks, instructional staff have the data to inform instruction, conduct interventions, and close learning gap. In addition, the Common Instructional Framework strategies of writing to learn, question stems, classroom talk/conversations, and scaffolding activities provide effective suggestions for formative assessment that are used consistently in Salinas STEM classrooms. Faculty ensure that TEKS, CCRS, ELPS, TSI requirements, 21st Century skills, and critical STEM program elements are taught, mastered, and reinforced.

Assessments designed to identify student readiness and address gaps include the TSI Diagnostic, Star Reading and Math Placement, TELPAS Reading and Writing Collections, ACT Explore, ACT Plan, PSAT, and Quizlet Vocabulary Assessments,

Student information systems designed to track progress include DMAC software, Skyward, Reading Renaissance Diagnostic and Word Count Reports, and Math Renaissance Objective Mastery Reports.

Performance based assessments that demonstrate student understanding of STEM concepts are demonstrated through implementation of PBL as well as other short term classroom projects. A variety of rubrics are available and can be modified to fit content objectives certify mastery of performance based assessment.

Benchmark 6: Strategic Alliances

Program Requirements

6.2.A.	Identifies and secures key business, industry, and community partners to support STEM Academy efforts (mentorships, service learning projects, etc.).
6.2.C.	Identifies and secures key business and industry partners to provide STEM-related job shadowing, internships, and externships for students and teachers.
6.3.A	Develops a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for dual credit.
6.3.C	Develops partnerships to support a college going culture and to provide STEM graduates access to college support services (college trips, college entrance aid, GEAR UP and P-20 initiatives).
6.1.B	Provides opportunities to educate students/parents on STEM Academy expectations such as parental engagement, college connections, scholarship opportunities, mentorships, etc.

	Developing	**Implementing**	**Mature**	**Role Model**
6.2.A 6.2.C	Initiates a few partnerships with business, community, and industry.	Initial contact made and some support is provided by community business partners. Business and industry relationships are limited to onsite mentoring activities and some minor financial support.	Partnership with business and industry is formalized via established agreements. Outcomes and expectations are concrete and regularly reviewed. Partnership is evident by two-way communication of goals and vision as to what the STEM program provides.	Each major academic area is sponsored by corporate or community partners. Industry representation is a key component of the STEM strategic planning process. Integration of Academy students in business and community activities is visible.
6.3.A 6.3.C	Initial contact made and some support is provided by higher education organizations. Some courses are available to enhance STEM curriculum integration.	Develops Higher Ed connections to facilitate MOUs, crosswalk plans, teacher mentors, and externships.	Partnerships and MOUs with higher education communities are an integral component of Academy delivery model.	College credit is given to STEM students upon completion of academic work sanctioned by accredited colleges. Admission rates for STEM students to IHE exceed the normalized rates for all students within the sponsor school system.
6.1.B	Minimal strategic communications with parents and families.	Regularly scheduled distribution of communications is planned and presented to key stakeholder groups. *And meets criteria from Developing.*	Strategic communications are timely and are developed ad hoc as conditions warrant. Key messages are presented by leadership emphasizing the importance of the communication to the intended audiences, via community town halls, PTO meetings, advisory board meetings, and school board presentations. *And meets criteria from Developing and Implementing.*	Real time communications are evident via communications technologies such as websites, newsletter articles, and media presentations using the community's public service forums, (public television and radio). Leadership is easily accessible and continuously engages partnerships with stakeholders in community and student families. *And meets criteria from Developing, Implementing, and Mature.*

Benchmark 6: Strategic Alliances

- Review the program requirements for Benchmark 6 above.

Describe how these strategic alliances will support the Academy. The description should include details regarding the role of each IHE, business, and/or community partnership; along with parent/family partnerships and communication conventions with the Academy.

Strategic alliances will support Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS by participating in the revision of the Annual Action Plan, communicating information regarding the skills that the industry/business requires, presenting information about the business/industry to student groups, and providing opportunities for mentorships, job shadowing, and service learning projects for students as well as externships for staff. Business/Industry partners include Elvia Saenz-Saenz Pharmacy, Ortega Engineering, Pablo Gonzalez-Brownsville Weather Station Information Technology Officer, and Dr. Guy Janin-Space Debris Expert for the European Space Agency (retired).

Thelma Salinas STEM ECHS is indebted to our higher education partner, South Texas College, who assists, advises, and supports our mission and goals. A current MOU for dual credit and ECHS requirements between our school and the college is on file in our school office. STC staff has assisted us in creating a college-going culture, and will make it possible for 8/0 of our seniors to with associates degrees this May.

Parent and family partnerships are developed and valued at Salinas STEM ECHS. Parent meetings by field of study are held to orient parents to the type of education their children have selected to embark upon. Parents often request information on possible careers in chosen fields of study and want concrete examples of what is done in that career cluster. College requirements, degree plans, GPAs, financial aid (FASFA/TASFA), scholarships, and other pertinent topics are covered as well as study skills, time management, and tips to emotionally support a struggling college student.

Benchmark 7: Assurances

The following document must be attached in order for the T-STEM Designation application to be submitted.

Official signature: Official signature of a district or charter official authorized by the local board to bind the applicant organization in a legally binding contractual agreement.

View Document

Dual Credit MOU: The district or CMO provides assurance that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an Institution of Higher Education that defines the dual credit agreement is current (for the 2016-2017 school year). The MOU must be signed by all parties and ensure that sufficient detail are included and is on file at the T-STEM Academy. The executed IHE MOU for dual credit must be available for review by TEA upon request.

☑ Assurance Provided

If the T-STEM Academy is only providing AP coursework, list the AP courses that will be taught in the 2016-2017 school year.

N/A

Professional Development Plan: The T-STEM Academy applying for designation, provides assurance that a Professional Development Plan detailing the types, frequency, the provider of STEM professional development to be provided during the 2016-2017 school year, and is on file at the T-STEM Academy. The professional development plan must be available for review by TEA upon request.

☑ Assurance Provided

Business Agreement: The T-STEM Academy applying for designation, provides assurance that a minimum of one business agreement is current (for the 2016-2017 school year), signed by all parties, provides sufficient detail regarding the role of each party, (which allows students to participate in internship programs, capstone projects, or conduct field work) and is on file at the T-STEM Academy. The business agreement must be available for review by TEA upon request.

☑ Assurance Provided

2016-2017 Master Schedule: The T-STEM Academy applying for designation, provides assurance that the proposed master schedule, demonstrating a commitment to STEM education, rigorous coursework including Dual Credit, AP, or IB courses, and a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum is on file at the T-STEM Academy. The 2016-2017 master schedule must be available for review by TEA upon request.

☑ Assurance Provided