Always Innovating

South Texas ISD

RIO GRANDE VALLEY | GRADES 6-12

2026-2027

Title I, Part A
Rising Scholars Academy
Program Plan

South Texas ISD

Rising Scholars Academy

GRADES 6-8 | SAN BENITO

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PURPOSE OF TITLE I, PART A

The purpose of Title I of ESSA is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps. South Texas ISD is committed to achieving this purpose for all its students.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION *[Section 1112(a)(1)(A)]*

South Texas ISD consults with stakeholders, in a timely and meaningful manner, to develop and revise its Title I, Part A Program Plan. The stakeholders consulted are as follows:

ROLE		STAKEHOLDER NAME
Teachers	1	Saire Moreno- STPA
	2	Ariel Nieto- Health Professions
	3	
Principals	1	Reynaldo Rodriguez- RSA
	2	Cynthia Chairez- World Scholars
	3	
Other School Leaders	1	Karla Lopez- Assistant Principal
	2	Imelda Mora- Dean of Instruction
	3	
Paraprofessionals	1	Catherine Cantu- Virtual Academy Aide
	2	Felicia Faz- Special Education Aide
	3	
Specialized Instructional Support	1	Gilberto Arreola- Instructional Tech Medical Professions
	2	Eduardo Arias- Instructional Tech World Scholars
	3	
Charter School Leaders *(If LEA has an in-district charter school)*	1	
	2	
	3	
Administrators *(Including TIPC & TIPD program administrators)*	1	Sylvia Garza- CFO for Federal Programs
	2	Cynthia De La Garza- Director for Special Programs
	3	
Other Appropriate School Personnel	1	Delia Garcia- Finance Director
	2	Marissa Garza- Accountant
	3	
Parents of Children Served Under TIPA	1	Dorothy Trevino- Parent of STPA
	2	Susana Taw- Parent of Health Professions
	3	

PLAN COORDINATION *[Section 1112(a)(1)(B)]*

South Texas ISD coordinates its Title I, Part A Program Plan with the following:

✓	Other ESSA programs *(such as TIPA, TIPC, TIPD, TII, TIII, TIV, and TV)*
✓	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
✓	Rehabilitation Act of 1973
✓	Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
✓	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
☐	Head Start Act
✓	McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
✓	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
☐	Other Acts as appropriate

Rising Scholars Academy will provide opportunities for all children, including each of the subgroups of students to meet the challenging state academic standards; use methods and instructional strategies that strengthen the academic program, in coordination with other programs, in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education; and address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of those at risk of not meeting the challenging state academic standards.

MEETING the CHALLENGING STATE ACADEMIC STANDARDS *[Section 1112(a)(3)(B)]*

Rising Scholars Academy provides students with an array of strategies like tutorials, which include academic enrichment for targeted student supports, interventions, online learning programs, and benchmarking which provide a systematic approach to supporting student achievement. They allow educators to identify learning gaps, provide targeted instruction, monitor progress, and ensure students have the support and practice needed to meet challenging state academic standards.

REVIEW and REVISION *[Section 1112(a)(5)]*

South Texas ISD and its stakeholders will periodically review the Title I, Part A LEA Program Plan on an annual basis to ensure program fidelity and that staff are helping students meet the challenging state academic standards. Any revisions needed will be reviewed, updated, and reposted to ensure that students continue to meet the challenging academic standards.

LEA PROGRAM PLAN 13 REQUIRED DESCRIPTIONS *[Section 1112(b)(1-13)]*

1. How the LEA will monitor students' progress in meeting the challenging State academic standards by –

✓	developing and implementing a well-rounded program of instruction to meet the academic needs of all students;
✓	identifying students who may be at risk for academic failure;
✓	providing additional educational assistance to individual students the LEA or school determines needs help in meeting the challenging State academic standards; and
✓	identifying and implementing instructional instruction and other strategies untended to strengthen academic programs and improve school conditions for student learning

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a well-rounded education program for all students including low-income and minority students to have access to a high-quality education. The district will identify students using data from previous assessments in STAAR, IXL, Benchmarks, semester and quarter exams to place them in small group tutorial instructional settings. Once identified the district will provide small group remediation and tutorial within the school day using TEKS-based instruction by certified teachers.

2. How the LEA will identify and address any disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers

South Texas ISD hires teachers who are certified or in an alternative teacher certification program or have a degree. The District also hires non-certified teachers according to STISD District of Innovation handbook and permissible hiring practices. Furthermore, identified teachers in high need content areas will be provided professional development opportunities.

3. How the LEA will carry out its School Support and Improvement activities responsibilities under Section 1111 (d)(1) and (2)

Rising Scholars Academy uses a proactive approach to analyze and monitor student performance data, to identify student achievement gaps, underperforming outcomes, and implement district improvement, as well as, campus improvement plans to continuously provide students with the academic resources for student academic success.

4. The poverty criteria used to select school attendance areas under Section 1113 –

The poverty criteria that will be used to select school attendance areas under Section 1113 (Within Allocations Procedures). [Section 1112(b)(4)]

Rising Scholars Academy identifies low-income students ages 5-18 by requiring to complete the Family Income Survey, which is used to determine the eligibility for students. There are proactive protocols for the attendance process. When students are absent more than one day, the district contacts the parents; however, multiple absences will lead to sending letters home, and conduct home visits and wellness checks.

The Family Income Survey Questionnaire is used to measure poverty criteria:
Ages 5-17 in poverty based on census data
Free or reduced-price lunch
Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF)
Medicaid Program
Composite of any of the above measures

5. The nature of the programs to be conducted under Schoolwide (Section 1114) and Targeted Assistance (Section 1115) programs and, where appropriate, educational services outside such schools for children living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children, and for neglected and delinquent children in community day school programs

All district wide programs will target interventions and supplement resources that will be utilized to close the academic achievement gap and continue to support student progress with the use of Title I funds.

6. The services the LEA will provide homeless children and youth to support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth in coordination with the services the LEA is providing under the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act-

Rising Scholars Academy will provide homeless children and youth with the services to support enrollment, academics and student success by identifying homeless students through registration forms including student residency questionnaires. The district liaison contacts parents and guides them through the intake process. Throughout the year, if parents contact the District to provide residency updates, the District will provide guidance regarding the services available to them.

7. The strategies the LEA will use to implement effective parent and family engagement under Section 1116

Rising Scholars Academy will implement effective parent and family engagement practices and strategies by having parent and family engagement programs and events throughout the school year. These programs have strategies targeting Emergent Bilingual, Migrant, Special Education, as well as, Economically Disadvantage students to ensure parents are informed with comprehensive information about the programs available to Rising Scholars Academy students. These programs will play a vital role in how the district provides parents with resources to assist with student achievement growth and success.

RSA hosts Meet the Teacher Nights, Open House, and PTSO

8. If applicable, how the LEA will support, Coordinate, and integrate services provided with Title I, Part A, with early childhood education programs at the LEA or Individual school level, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs

STISD is comprised of seven magnet schools throughout the Rio Grande Valley. STISD serves middle school and high school students across three counties, Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy.

9. If applicable, how teachers and school leaders, in consultation with parents, administrators, paraprofessionals, and specialized instructional support personnel, in schools operating a Targeted Assistance program under Section 1115, will identify the eligible children most in need of services under Title I, part A

Based on the Campus-Low Income percentage, South Texas ISD is a Title I Schoolwide Program; therefore, support the whole school.

10. How the LEA will implement strategies to facilitate effective transitions for students from middle grades to high school and from high school to postsecondary education including, if applicable –

✓	through coordination with institutions of higher education employers, and other local partners; and
✓	through increased student access to early college high school, dual or concurrent enrollment opportunities, or career counseling to identify student interests and skills

The district will create several partnerships to expand their long-standing dual enrollment program to provide current and future STISD students with more opportunities to earn college credit while in high school. STISD continues to build and strengthen courses, programs, and certification opportunities through organizations that meet the individual interests and needs of our students.

11. How the LEA will support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, which may include identifying and supporting schools with high rates of discipline, disaggregated by each of the subgroups of students

Rising Scholars Academy provides various methods and options for managing student behavior, preventing and intervening in student discipline issues, and implementing appropriate disciplinary measures. These approaches will help keep students engaged in the classroom, minimize classroom disruptions, and reduce the risk of achievement gaps among students.

12. If applicable, how the LEA will support programs that coordinate and integrate–

✓	academic and career and technical education content through coordinated instructional strategies, that may incorporate experiential learning opportunities and promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations or industries in the State; and
✓	work-based learning opportunities that provide students in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit

South Texas ISD offers Rio Grande Valley students innovative educational opportunities that will offer various Programs of Study within several Career Clusters, all intended to provide students an advantage in their career. The district offers state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, with high quality instruction by expert teachers in each field, with a work-based learning approach which

will build connections with industry professionals and develop and practice technical, academic and employability skills needed for career success.

RSA currently offers the following CTE courses: Fundamentals of Computer Science, Introduction to Audio Visual Technology, Introduction to Health Science, Introduction to Engineering Design

13. Any other information on how the LEA proposed to use funds to meet the purposes of this grant and that the LEA determines appropriate to provide, which may include how the LEA will–

✓	assist schools in identifying and serving gifted and talented students; and
✓	assist schools in developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement

Gifted and talented students dictate learning experiences that differentiate from those provided for them in the regular school program through various online platforms; therefore, the district recognizes that special provisions must be made for these students in order to stimulate and maximize their achievement, as well as, provide for their social and emotional needs.

Rising Scholars Academy recognizes that gifted and talented students are found in all cultures, socioeconomic groups, geographic locales, and environments. South Texas ISD will serve the needs of those students who perform at or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment.

LEA ASSURANCES *[Section 1112(c)(1-7)]*

1. Ensure migratory children and formerly migratory children eligible to receive services are selected to receive services on the same basis as other children

The supplemental services Rising Scholars Academy provides our migrant students the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and student performance standards expected by all students. The Migrant Education Program provides support and appropriate educational services to migrant children who may experience obstacles such as educational disruptions as a result of their mobile lifestyles.

2. Provide services to eligible children attending private schools in accordance with section 1117, and timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials

Although the requirement that equitable services be provided to students and teachers in private nonprofit schools located within the District's boundaries, if the officials of the nonprofit school desire that their children and teachers receive the benefits of those federal programs, South Texas ISD is a magnet school district that stretches over three counties, and already serves middle school and high school students across the Rio Grande Valley.

3. Participate, if selected, in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading and math in grades 4 and 8

Rising Scholars Academy will present the Federal Report Card to the board. Once approved, the District will disseminate the state, LEA and campus-level report cards to 1) all LEA campuses, 2) parents of all enrolled students, and 3) the general public via widely available public means such as posting on the Internet, distribution to the media, or distribution through public agencies. STISD will post direct links to pdf files of the State, school system, and campus report cards on its web site. The District will notify parents of all students about the availability of the report cards and the options for obtaining them; provide appropriate translation (either oral or written) upon request; make hard copies available to parents upon request; and make hard copies available for viewing in public locations.

4. Coordinate and integrate services with other services for English Learners, children with disabilities, migratory children, American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children, and homeless children and youths to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation

South Texas ISD administration, in collaboration with Special Programs Department, Career & Technology Department, CCMR Director, Bilingual Instructional personnel, and several other department professionals, and highly-trained licensed professionals,

serve an array of special population students, including but not limited to English learners, children with disabilities, gifted and talented, migratory children, minorities, homeless children, to provide individualized attention and support to meet the diverse needs of every student.

5. Collaborate with State or Local child welfare agency to–

✓	designate a point of contact if the corresponding child welfare agency notifies the LEA, in writing, that the agency has designated an employee to serve as a point of contact for the LEA; and
✓	develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of the time in foster care. *(For details of what these procedures must ensure, see Section 1112(c)(5)(B)(i-ii].)*

Rising Scholars Academy will collaborate with state and local child welfare agencies through referrals, staff training, student support plans, and coordinated services to address students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs.

6. Ensure all teachers and paraprofessionals working in Title I, Part A supported programs meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification

Rising Scholars Academy will verify certification and licensure status of teachers and paraprofessionals working in Title I, Part A programs. The district will maintain current certification records, verify alternative certification requirements, and monitor renewal and compliance requirements.

7. For LEAs choosing to use Title I, Part A funds to provide early childhood education services to low-income children below the age of compulsory school attendance, ensure that services comply with performance standards established under section 641(a) of the Head Start Act

Rising Scholars Academy does not serve preschool students. South Texas Independent School District (STISD) serves middle school and high school students who live along the southernmost tip of Texas, the region known as the Rio Grande Valley.

PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW *[Section 1112(e)(1-3)]*

1. Information for Parents – Notify the parents of students attending Title I funded schools of the information available to them and information they may request relating to the education of their child.

Rising Scholars Academy will plan and coordinate at least two annual meetings, on different dates, and at different times to inform and educate parents and families of their school's participation, to explain the requirements of the Title I, Part A Program, to explain the right of parents to be involved, to explain the Parent's Right To Know, and to accept any feedback pertaining to the resources and programs being offered. Meetings are also provided in Spanish, or if needed, translation services will be provided.

2. Testing Transparency – Notify the parents of students attending Title I funded schools of the information available to them and information they may request relating any State or LEA policy regarding student testing.

Rising Scholars Academy will present the Federal Report Card to the board. Once approved, the District will disseminate the state, LEA and campus-level report cards to 1) all LEA campuses, 2) parents of all enrolled students, and 3) the general public via widely available public means such as posting on the Internet, distribution to the media, or distribution through public agencies. STISD will post direct links to pdf files of the State, school system, and campus report cards on its web site. The District will notify parents of all students about the availability of the report cards and the options for obtaining them; provide appropriate translation (either oral or written) upon request; make hard copies available to parents upon request; and make hard copies available for viewing in public locations.

3. Language Instruction – Notify the parents of students attending Title I funded schools and identified for participation in a language instruction educational program 1) the reason for the identification, 2) information regarding participation and exit of the program, and 3) through means of an effective outreach program, how they can actively participate in assisting their child.

Rising Scholars Academy will analyze and evaluate student data to identify academic progress, strengths, and areas of need. This information will be used to monitor student participation and progress in the Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) and guide appropriate instructional support.

OTHER STATUTORILY REQUIRED ASSURANCES

If the Title I, Part A LEA Program Plan under section 1112 is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the School System shall submit any parent comments with such plan when such School System submits the plan to the State. *[ESSA Sec. 1116(b)(4)]*

South Texas ISD will post and make public the Intent to Apply for ESSA, Title I Part A, which will provide the public the opportunity to sign up and submit for comments, and feedback for the programs being offered.

The Title I, Part A Plan is available to the School System, parents, and the public, and the information contained in the plan is in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand. *[1114(b)(4)]*

Rising Scholars Academy will make the Title I, Part A Program plan available to the public by having it posted to the district website. The District will also make the Program Plan available in hardcopy, if requested.

The notice and information provided to parents under this subsection shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand. *[1112(e)(4)]*

Rising Scholars Academy will provide the Program in English, as well as in Spanish.

OTHER GENERAL ASSURANCES *[20 U.S.C. Section 7846(a)(1-7)]*

Any applicant, other than a State educational agency that submits a plan or application under this Act, shall have on file with the State educational agency a single set of assurances, applicable to each program for which a plan or application is submitted, that provides that–

1. each such program will be administered in accordance with all applicable statues, regulations, program plans, and applications;

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. The District will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).

2. (A) the control of funds provided under each such program and title to property acquired with program funds will be in a public agency or in an eligible private agency, institution, organization, or Indian tribe, if the law authorizing the program provided for assistance to those entities; and (B) the public agency, eligible private agency, institution, or organization, or Indian tribe will administer the funds and property to the extent required by the authorizing statutes;

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. The District will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to develop the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).

3. the applicant will adopt and use proper methods of administering each such program, including – (A) the enforcement of any obligations imposed by law on agencies, institutions, organizations, and other recipients responsible for carrying out each program; and (B) the correction of deficiencies in program operations that are identified through audits, monitoring, or evaluation;

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. The District will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to develop the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and EDGAR.

4. the applicant will cooperate in carrying out any evaluation of each such program conducted by or for the State educational agency, the Secretary, or other Federal officials;

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. The District will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and EDGAR.

5. the applicant will use such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures as will ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, Federal funds paid to the applicant under each such program;

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. The District will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and EDGAR.

6. the applicant will– (A) submit such reports to the State educational agency (which shall make the reports available to the Governor) and the Secretary as the State educational agency and Secretary may require to enable the State educational agency and the Secretary to perform their duties under each such program; and (B) maintain such records, provide such information, and afford such access to the records as the State educational agency (after consultation with the Governor) or the Secretary may reasonably require to carry out the State educational agency's or the Secretary's duties; and

Rising Scholars Academy will implement a Title I, Part A Plan to ensure compliance with ESSA General Assurances. Rising Scholars Academy will analyze student progress, achievement growth, and individual needs to inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, and Campus Improvement Plans. The District will also implement federal grant policies and procedures to ensure compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and EDGAR.

7. Before the application was submitted, the applicant afforded reasonable opportunity for public comment on the application and considered such comment.

South Texas ISD will provide public notice of the district's intent to apply for the ESSA Consolidated Federal Grant Application, making the notice available to the community, in the following website; https://www.stisd.net/community/federal-programs

The district will submit the grant application as a discussion item in a regular scheduled board meeting, and allow for public comment. Furthermore, the District will consider public comments received before submitting the application to the Texas Education Agency.