



2024-2025 Stronger Connections Grant

Competitive Grant Application: Due 11:59 p.m. CT, July 18, 2023

NOGA ID

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA will only accept grant application documents by **email**, including competitive grant applications and amendments. Submit grant applications and amendments as follows:

Competitive grant applications and amendments to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

The application **MUST** bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement

Authorizing legislation:

Grant period:

Pre-award costs:

Required attachments:

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

1. Applicant Information

Name of organization

Campus name CDN Vendor ID ESC UEI

Address City ZIP Phone

Primary Contact Email Phone

Secondary Contact Email Phone

2. Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- Grant application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification
- Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances
- ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name Title Email

Phone Signature Date

Grant Writer Name Signature Date

Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization. Grant writer is not an employee of the applicant organization.

For TEA Use Only:

Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

3. Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not permitted for this grant.

4. Identify/Address Needs

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
Safety and School Climate: Strong relationships between students and staff	Implementing Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems, Restorative Practices, Increased On-going teacher training on mental health, positive climate practices, PBIS, and restorative practices.
Positive School Culture: Create a nurturing environment and help students overcome challenging and traumatic experiences and provide a sense of emotional and physical safety.	Implementing and investing in restorative practices and mental health practices as well as training for teachers and staff.
Reduce chronic absenteeism, improve academic results, reduce bullying and violence in the school	Provide alternative learning opportunities, invest in curriculum more tailored to our students needs, engage the community and parents to cut down on absences. Provide summer school. Provide free transportation for all students. The use of the restorative practices districtwide.

5. SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

Specific: Improve school culture and stakeholder satisfaction and retention.
 Measure: Stakeholder specific surveys that are sent at the beginning and end of each year; attendance and retention data; and discipline (restorative practice) data.
 Achievable: A safe, connected school that retains students and staff that is reducing absenteeism, dissatisfaction, and increasing retention.
 Relevant: Our district is nearly entirely impoverished, at-risk, students of color. Our priority is to retain those students through graduation and support their mental health as well as their physical, academic, and emotional development.
 Timely: Progress will be measured via school climate/culture surveys, as well attendance and student behavior data

6. Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

We will closely monitor the attendance % and behavioral data for each grade. We hope to get our attendance over 95%
 We also will look into our students academic improvements in reading and math, two subjects they have historically been behind grade level.
 Lastly, we will look at our staff retention from SY23 to SY24. We hope to retain >85% of our teachers

For TEA Use Only:
 Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)

Second-Quarter Benchmark

We will closely monitor the attendance % and behavioral data for each grade. We hope to get our attendance over 95%
We also will look into our students academic improvements in reading and math, two subjects they have historically been behind grade level.
Lastly, we will look at our staff retention from SY23 to SY24. We hope to retain >85% of our teachers
We will start to conduct SY24 year-end surveys.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

We will closely monitor the attendance % and behavioral data for each grade. We hope to get our attendance over 95%
We also will look into our students academic improvements in reading and math, two subjects they have historically been behind grade level.
Lastly, we will look at our staff retention from SY23 to SY24. We hope to retain >85% of our teachers

7. Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

We will evaluate our progress on a monthly and quarterly basis using staff and student attendance and retention data as well as behavioral data from the restorative program and PBIS. We will also give the School Climate and Satisfaction survey to stakeholders mid year to gauge progress in that domain. If progress is not being made, additional resources will be made available and utilized.

Student attendance and retention: Our counselors and family engagement staff will hold conferences with students and parents if necessary to determine why students aren't coming to school and putting a plan of action into place to ensure they do.

Faculty attendance and retention: Admin and leadership will meet with any staff or faculty that has issues with attendance or timeliness. An assistance plan will be put in place to facilitate attendance and overall satisfaction.

School culture and behavior: Monthly restorative PLCs will convene to review data and receive training/coaching on effective implementation of the Restorative Practices model.

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

8. Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this grant will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- 2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2024–2025 Stronger Connections Grant Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.
- 4. The applicant will formally establish a Student Support Program at three district campuses (one elementary, one intermediate/middle school, one high school) to address school climate and establish a student support team structure aligned to the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports and the regional ESC.
- 5. The applicant will allocate 6% of awarded funds for contracted services for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC. Complete the transaction with the regional ESC in a timely manner. Time is of the essence in completing the transaction to ensure that the program is implemented efficiently and effectively to successfully achieve the goals of the program.
- 6. The applicant will allocate 10% of awarded funds for professional and contracted services with a partner approved by the Texas Center for Student Support and TEA. Complete the transaction with the regional ESC in a timely manner. Time is of the essence in completing the transaction to ensure that the program is implemented efficiently and effectively to successfully achieve the goals of the program.
- 7. The applicant will use the family engagement playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to partner and build support with parents and families prior to a student support team assessment, and during the student support implementation process to facilitate a student support partnership with families.
- 8. The applicant will establish a parent, student, and staff advisory committee to provide input on the establishment of the Student Support Program.
- 9. The applicant will engage in Student Support Program planning activities from the beginning of the grant program through implementation at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.
- 10. The applicant will establish and implement at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, the Student Support Program aligned to the content and training provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports.
- 11. The applicant will incorporate a case management system into the student support team structure aligned to the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports.
- 12. The applicant will align the student support team structure with behavioral threat assessment team operation and outcomes to ensure that students are well supported and that the effectiveness of interventions are monitored.
- 13. The applicant will implement the data collection and reporting system developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to gather and analyze data to monitor efficacy of the implementation of the Student Support Program, including student support team structure, quality of support leading to positive outcomes, and data related to increases in desired outcomes (e.g. increase in student support team referrals for nonacademic needs, increase in effective supports received by students, reduction in disciplinary incidents, reduction in bullying and harassment, increase in referrals for mental health services, reduction in removals from class, etc.).
- 14. The applicant will provide timely response to requests from TEA for information and data regarding program development, implementation, and performance and evaluation measures.

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

9. Statutory/ TEA Program Requirements

1. Describe how the LEA will identify the campuses that will participate in the establishment of the Student Support Program described in the program description? Include the criteria or considerations that will influence the determination by the LEA.

Both the George Gervin Academy Main Campus and the Gorge Gervin Academy El Hombre de Heillo campus share similar demographics and will both participate in the grant.

2. Describe how the LEA will ensure that campus leaders and staff are committed to the success of the Student Support Program.

This grant closely aligns with our mission and our district-wide goals. We serve the students and families that this grant is aiming to help. Our campus leaders prioritize providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. Everyone prioritizes the well-being of our students and wants them to improve academically, socially, and emotionally.

Administrators will all be briefed on the purpose of this grant, if we are awarded it. The LEA will ensure everyone is aware of the requirements and the SMART Goals.

We will have regular meetings to track progress, measurable improvements, and funding status.

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

3. Describe how the LEA will engage parents and families to solicit support for the program.

We will utilize our strong community outreach team to start up support for this program. On back-to-school night, they plan to brief parents and ask for volunteers to support the program.

We plan to host morning "coffee chats" with parents and members of our community to improve in our SMART goals. We will invite everyone to join us for these chats so that they can support the program.

At our monthly Family Engagement events we will provide opportunities for parents, students, and any staff to provide feedback on progress and satisfaction.

4. Describe how the LEA will ensure that there is adequate staff to support the establishment and implementation of the Student Support Program.

We will closely monitor our headcount to make sure we maintain a low student-teacher ratio. If we maintain our goal of 15-1, that should allow for certain teachers to have extended planning time during the school-day. One goal of the extended planning time will be the Student Support Program.

A Restorative Justice coordinator or consultant would also be a consideration of we were awarded the grant. We need someone to train, support, and advise us as we implement with fidelity.

We would also like to hire a mental health counselor full-time. We have one offering part-time services now that have been extremely well-received. We have other students who need support, and a full-time counselor would help the Student Support Program.

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

5. Describe how each of the three campuses that will be supported by the grant program, if awarded, currently conduct behavioral threat assessments and how the campus will incorporate current systems into the student support team structure.

Main campus - Will get the majority of the resources (and counselor) and support since it serves ~95% of our student population.

Currently, behavioral threat assessments are:

1. Identifying, assessing, and managing appropriate interventions of individuals who are at risk for violence against themselves and others
2. Providing guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual. This can be done through counseling, parent conferences, or student conferences.

Off site campus -

Currently, behavioral threat assessments are:

1. Identifying, assessing, and managing appropriate interventions of individuals who are at risk for violence against themselves and others
2. Providing guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual. This can be done through counseling, parent conferences, or student conferences.

6. Describe how the LEA currently identifies student support needs and how it identifies and establishes partnerships with external mental health and behavioral health providers to meet student needs.

We have a part-time counselor/therapist (Pursuing Joy LLC), who is available on a per-hour basis as needed.

We have a close relationship with our students & parents since our school is smaller. This allows us to better identify student support needs. It is one of our primary focuses for grades K-12. We also get police reports if any of our students were involved in a police call/intervention in the last 24-48 hours.

All staff and faculty who interact with students, have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. This should assist in providing early intervention to students in crisis or potential crisis.

For TEA Use Only:

Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

7. Describe how the LEA currently partners with the regional ESC to support improvement in student mental health, behavioral and emotional health, physical health and wellbeing, and improving academic outcomes for students.

Our regional ESC has provided numerous trainings and webinars focused around this topic. Our campus leaders regularly attend them and bring back a wealth of information regarding current events, legislation, and upcoming grants that can help us improve. The campus leaders meet with their staff to ensure the message is spread campus-wide.

8. Describe how the LEA will use this grant program to supplement current work to improve services and supports for the mental health, behavioral and emotional health, and physical health and wellness of students.

We have a part-time counselor/therapist (Pursuing Joy LLC), who is available on a per-hour basis as needed.

We also have a safety coordinator that ensure the physical well-being of our students.

The Compliance Officer/Safety Coordinator is rebuilding the Safe and Supportive Schools Behavioral Threat Assessment and Safety Team. She is ensuring all staff receive required training and that the facilities are in compliance with current safety requirements.

Both have been a great help, but we could use some additional counseling. We'd prefer to hire a full-time counselor who can meet with each student and identify students who are in need of additional services. Our part-time counselor does a great job, but does not have the bandwidth to take on the entire school. We want to make sure students are not slipping through the cracks.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment: 728

10. Enter the Regional Educational Service Center that serves the LEA: 20

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

10. Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

11. PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

- Yes No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant?

- Yes No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Assurances

- The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	
4. Total current-year grant allocation	
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

12. Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

Payroll Costs

1.	Full-time mental health counselor (2+ years)	\$180,000
2.	Additional staff needed to assist with focus groups and tutoring (2 teachers, 2 years)	\$250,000
3.	Advisory counsel stipends (\$1000 per person, 5 members, 2 years)	\$10,000
4.	Additional staff needed to assist with focus groups and tutoring (2 assistants, 2 years)	\$160,000
5.		

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	\$47,400
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	\$79,000
8.	Additional counseling hours - consultant	\$100,000
9.		
10.		

Supplies and Materials

11.	Additional academic materials for absent students	\$40,000
12.	Improved curriculum for Middle School and High School alternative learning	\$50,000
13.		
14.		

Other Operating Costs

15.		
16.		
17.		

Debt Services

18.		
19.		

Direct administrative costs:

Indirect administrative costs:

TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

Appendix I: Negotiation and Amendments

Leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding.

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the Administering a Grant page of the TEA website and may be mailed OR faxed (not both). **To fax:** one copy of all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed page 1, to either (512) 463-9811 or (512) 463-9564. **To mail:** three copies of all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed page 1, to the address on page 1. More detailed amendment instructions can be found on the last page of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page.

For amendments, choose the section you wish to amend from the drop down menu on the left. In the text box on the right, describe the changes you are making and the reason for them.

Always work with the most recent negotiated or amended application. If you are requesting a revised budget, please include the budget attachments with your amendment.

Section Being Negotiated or Amended **Negotiated Change or Amendment**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

For TEA Use Only:
Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.