



# 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](mailto: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
- General Provisions and Assurances
- Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- Lobbying Certification
- 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.

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**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
The percent of GUSD students receiving disciplinary action in the 2022/2023 school year was 28.15%.	In order to reduce the numbers of students receiving disciplinary actions, GUSD will develop a school community through the establishment of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) teams focused on creating environments where students feel safe, supported, connected and included.
During 2022-2023, Galveston ISD had 343 discipline actions related to substance abuse and another 249 referrals related to fighting which establishes the need to reduce violence.	Galveston ISD will implement an Integrated Care System that supports safe and healthy students by partnering with Teen Health, Inc. and Family Service Center to develop and implement campus-based integrated mental health systems that foster systematic communication, shared decision-making, pro-active education.
Galveston ISD serves 80.37% economically disadvantaged students; 26% report having a parent who has been incarcerated and 27% report living with a parent with a substance use problem.	Galveston ISD will promote partnerships with students, families, educators, and communities to reinforce SEL in schools, foster school connectivity, and engage communities in dialogue about healthy relationships. GUSD will collaborate with and educate parents/caregivers through online resources and public meetings.

**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.

By May 23, 2025, Galveston ISD will improve students' sense of belonging by increasing the numbers of students who indicate that they are connected to a trusted adult on campus by 10% and by decreasing the numbers of students receiving disciplinary actions by 10%.

**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**

- Create a 2 year professional learning calendar for participating stakeholders
- Collaborate with ESC 4 for support and coaching
- Educate and equip educators at identified schools with tools to strengthen student-teacher relationships
- Develop a plan with Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Specialists focused on parent/guardian outreach
- Work with campus administration to create an SEL block of time within each campus schedule
- Create a Sustainability Plan

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**6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)**

**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

Increase the number of professional learning opportunities around student support systems for stakeholders  
Interface with Texas Center for Student Supports  
Review top 15 students receiving discipline referrals and why per campus  
Review top 15 teachers providing discipline referrals and to whom per campus  
Utilize the PBIS rubric to determine effectiveness of implementation  
Conduct Campus Threat Assessment reviews  
Establish student led support groups focused on strengthening student voice within the campus  
Conduct Pre-Student Sense of Belonging/Connectedness Survey in May 2024

**Third-Quarter Benchmark**

Conduct Post-Student Sense of Belonging/Connectedness Survey in May 2025  
Attend PBIS meetings at the designated campuses  
Analyze the number of Campus Threat Assessment reviews to determine patterns and trends  
Report the number of student led support group events  
Review top 15 students receiving discipline referrals and why per campus  
Review top 15 teachers providing discipline referrals and to whom per campus  
Correlate professional learning opportunities and decreases in discipline referrals

**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.

GISD will utilize the following data sources with the support of UTMB- Center for Violence Prevention to measure intermediate and long-term outcomes annually at the same time to demonstrate improvement in discipline referral rates; discipline referrals related to fighting, substance abuse and bullying; levels of chronic absenteeism; passing rates for grades 1 - 12; Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP); teacher retention rates; and Student Sense of Belonging/Connectedness Survey results. The results from these data points will assist the district in professional learning decisions for teachers and administrators; supports to parents/guardians and supports to students.

**Continuous Quality Improvement Monitoring**

Galveston ISD will partner with UTMB-Center for Violence Prevention to create and utilize various tools and evaluation methods for continuous monitoring of quality improvement efforts. Evaluations will be scheduled on a monthly basis at each grading period. Real time results will be provided to each campus to foster data-driven responsiveness.

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**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. If the applicant has few than three campuses or does not have three of the listed types of campuses, the applicant will establish the Student Support Program and the student support team structure at all campuses, up to three, served in the district.
- 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.

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**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.

Galveston ISD's Superintendent's Cabinet will review the demographic information of all its campuses along with campus discipline referrals. The Cabinet will take into consideration established support programs that are being implemented at campuses and the impact those programs may have. In addition, the Cabinet will analyze the current systems in place at each of the schools and make the determination of which campuses will be able to make the greatest impact and serve as a model for other campuses. Once the selection is made, principals will be asked if they are able to commit to the Student Support Program initiative.

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

Galveston ISD leaders and staff are committed to the success of the Student Support Program. All personnel new to the district participate in two days of Capturing Kids Hearts training which is focused on building relationships with students. In addition, campus principals and their assistants participate in an annual PBIS training where each campus team completes a Benchmark of Quality to assess their strengths and areas for growth. The campuses have established PBIS teams to support students and staff through the analysis of their data and the review of the processes and procedures. Each campus develops a plan that is submitted for review to the Teaching and Learning Team and the Student Support Team. The campus leaders share their findings and needs with the leadership from the Central Office.

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**9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)**

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

Galveston ISD employs two Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Specialists. They play an integral role in advocating for needed services for families in the district. They are connected to community agencies that provide support to families. The district will utilize the talents and expertise of the (FACE) specialists to assist with soliciting support for the program. GISD will also market the program through the district's Communication and Marketing Department. The District will communicate with families via ParentSquare, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The District also holds family events and engages families in educational experiences. Campuses host curriculum nights, literacy events, community gardens and health fairs to ensure that families have their needs met.

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

The campus leadership teams will build capacity among faculty and staff. Each campus will have access to the district's partners: Family Service Center of Galveston County (FSC), Teen Health Center, Inc.(Teen Health), and University of Texas Medical Branch Center of Violence Prevention (UTMB CVP). The campuses will also have access to the district's SEL specialists. Every campus has a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support Team as well as a counselor and a nurse or a nurse's aid. These stakeholders are invested in the students and will be critical to the establishment and implementation of the Student Support Program.

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**9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)**

5. Describe how each of the campuses 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.

Currently, each campus conducts their behavioral threat assessments through the support of our police chief along with the tools provided by the Texas Schools Safety Center. Each campus has created a threat assessment team made up of multiple individuals who play various roles within their campus (principal, counselor, teacher, mental health provider, ect.). This team then comes together to analyze threats (threat to self; threat to others) on their campus to determine the level of the threat and what system of support is needed to help with the student/students mental health, behavioral and emotional health, physical health and well-being. With the award of this grant, each campus will participate in the necessary training provided by the Region Service Center and the Student Support Program in order to improve the climate of their campus and strengthen the way in which they conduct behavioral threat assessments and decrease the number of discipline referrals on their campus. The district leadership team will work alongside those campuses to provide on-going support, data-driven decision making and specific/timely feedback, so that the systems of care put into place are both proactive and reactive, effective and sustainable.

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.

For over six years, Galveston Independent School District (GISD) has partnered with Family Service Center of Galveston County (FSC), Teen Health Center, Inc.(Teen Health), and University of Texas Medical Branch Center of Violence Prevention (UTMB CVP) through an innovative partnership known as Causeway Galveston (CG). FSC, a non-profit counseling agency, provides comprehensive outpatient mental health counseling services to residents in Galveston County. Teen Health, a school-based health center, provides free medical and mental health care to Galveston ' s youth ages 0 to 21 years. UTMB-CVP faculty and staff work to prevent violence by collaborating with academic, public, and governmental partners to develop and implement evidence-informed screening, prevention, and intervention programs. The CG partnership brings together resources across agencies and across disciplines of education, mental health, public health, and research.

Causeway Galveston (CG) emphasizes the critical link between healthy relationships, mental health and wellbeing, and academic success for all students. Together, the trio developed and implemented a comprehensive, school-based mental health model that consists of social emotional learning (SEL) and mental health supports. GISD provides the SEL training/coaching for educators and SEL supports for students through an SEL youth ambassador program. Housed on GISD campuses, FSC and Teen Health implement the mental health supports (i.e., group, individual therapy for students) for students deemed at risk of or presenting with mental health issues. Serving as CG ' s evaluation arm, UTMB CVP collects and analyzes both process and outcome data to inform implementation efforts and assess progress toward the goals. Inter-agency/disciplinary teams meet frequently to design and coordinate supports. By combining resources, the CG Team provided a higher quality of care and increased the number of students receiving mental health promotion, prevention, and intervention services.

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**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.

GISD has partnered with Region 4 ESC for multiple years to strengthen student mental health, behavioral and emotional health along with improving student outcomes. GISD has been fortunate enough to have various training and leadership network opportunities. For the past three years, GISD's SEL Coordinator has attended/participated in Region 4's Behavioral and Mental Wellness Leadership Network providing a strong communication line that keeps GISD up to date with educational news and resources focused on the mental health needs of students, parents and educators. Service Center trainings have provided GISD educators with tools to strengthen student relationships and student mental health. Examples include but not limited to: AS&K; Positive Behavior Support Systems; Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports; and Restorative practices.

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.

Galveston ISD will use this grant program to supplement the current work with Causeway Galveston (CG) to improve the services and supports for mental health, behavioral and emotional health and physical health and wellness of students. The district will employ two mental health/behavior specialists who will work with the campuses in aligning their current practices with the Student Support Program. Galveston ISD will examine its current menu of services and decide those that need refinement and those that need to be abandoned. In addition to providing a full set of SEL/MH supports for the targeted campuses, GISD plans to increase adult enactment of Social Emotional Learning behaviors. A designated group of individuals will develop a rubric for determining the level of SEL coaching that a teacher needs to build relationships with students. Counselors will strengthen adult mental health awareness through the training of our robust suicide prevention plan that is rooted in best practices. For student supports, GISD will fine-tune its criteria for matching students to a certain level and type of support and will further adjust the system for stepping down a student's level of support once progress has been made. By strategically addressing both adult and student behaviors, teacher and student outcomes will be enhanced.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment: 6486

10. Enter the Regional Educational Service Center that serves the LEA: 4

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**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	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>

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

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**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.	Safety and Security Specialist (75,000 plus benefits)	86,250
2.	Stipends	10,000
3.	2 Mental Health Therapists (60,000 each plus benefits)	140,000
4.	Research Manager	76,800
5.		

**Professional and Contracted Services**

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	59,224
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	98,706
8.	Emergency Plan Development	47,000
9.	TxSS School Safety Audit	26,500
10.		

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	PBIS and Bully Prevention Materials	200,000
12.	SEL Materials	150,000
13.	Print Shop	8,000

**Other Operating Costs**

15.	Family Engagement Resources	10,000
16.	Professional Learning	64,589
17.	Qualtrics (Survey/data Platform)	3,000

**Debt Services**

18.		0
19.		0

**Capital Outlay**

20.		0
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Direct administrative costs:

Indirect administrative costs:

**TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:**

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**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**

Dropdown menu

Text box for amendment details

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