



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
Reduce the number of incidents relating to bullying, violence, and acts of hate between the beginning and end of the school year by 30%.	Developing and implementing anti-bullying policies that clearly defined. Providing training to school staff on identifying and addressing bullying, violence, and acts of hate. Implementing proactive measures such as social-emotional learning programs, conflict resolution strategies, and restorative justice practices.
Providing safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments will result in 20% improved academic achievement by identified students within the designed program by TCSS.	Enhancing school climate through the development and implementation of programs and practices that foster positive relationships, mutual respect, and sense of belonging among students and staff. Professional development for teachers and staff on culturally responsive teaching, trauma-informed practices.
Addressing the mental, behavioral, emotional, and physical health and well-being of students by reducing the number of responses indicating "never feeling safe at school" by less than 1%	Providing access to mental health services through partnerships with external providers or the establishment of on-site counseling services. Increasing awareness and education around mental health topics, reducing stigma, and promoting help-seeking behaviors. Training staff on recognizing signs of mental health concerns and providing appropriate support and referrals.

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.

Between the beginning and end of the school year—during which time the bullying prevention program is implemented—student self-reports of school-based bullying incidents in the previous 30 days will be reduced by 30%. By September 2025, the percentage of student responses indicating “never feeling safe at school” on the School Climate Survey will decrease to less than 1%.

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

Formal Establishment of Student Support Program: The Student Support Program should be formally established at the designated campuses (pending results of comprehensive needs assessment) - Blackburn Elementary, Smith Intermediate, Brown Middle School, North Forney High School. This includes the creation of the necessary structures and processes to address school climate and the establishment of a student support team aligned with the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports and ESC Region 10.

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**

Family Engagement: Utilize the family engagement playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to partner and build support with parents and families. Engage families prior to a student support team assessment and throughout the student support implementation process, facilitating a collaborative partnership.

Advisory Committee: Establish a parent, student, and staff advisory committee to provide input on the establishment of the Student Support Program. This committee should be formed and actively involved in the planning and decision-making processes.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

Program Planning and Implementation: The program should be fully operational and actively providing support to students at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

Case Management and Data Collection: Incorporate a case management system into the student support team structure, aligned with the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports. Additionally, implement the data collection and reporting system developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to gather and analyze data, monitoring the efficacy of the program implementation and its impact on desired outcomes. Ensure effective communication and reporting mechanisms are in place to keep stakeholders informed and facilitate ongoing evaluation of the program's progress.

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.

Regular Monitoring: Implement a system for ongoing monitoring of program activities and outcomes. This may include collecting and analyzing data related to program implementation, participant engagement, and the achievement of specific goals and benchmarks.

Data Analysis: Analyze the evaluation data collected to assess the program's effectiveness and identify areas that require improvement. This analysis should include both quantitative data (e.g., outcome measures, survey results) and qualitative data (e.g., feedback from stakeholders, observations).

Identify Patterns and Trends: Look for patterns and trends in the evaluation data to identify areas where the program is not meeting its intended outcomes or where it may be falling short of the established benchmarks or SMART goals.

Root Cause Analysis: Conduct a thorough analysis to determine the underlying causes of the observed challenges or lack of progress. This may involve reviewing program processes, implementation strategies, stakeholder engagement, or external factors impacting the program's success.

Continuous Improvement: Foster a culture of continuous improvement within the program by regularly reviewing and reflecting on evaluation data, seeking feedback from stakeholders, and making iterative adjustments as necessary.

If benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, the evaluation data can serve as a critical guide for modifying the program for sustainability. By closely examining the evaluation findings, it becomes possible to identify specific areas where the program is falling short and to make targeted modifications. The data can inform decisions on adjusting program components, refining strategies, reallocating resources, or implementing additional support mechanisms. The goal is to use the evaluation data as a feedback loop, continuously improving and adapting the program based on evidence and stakeholder input to ensure its long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

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. 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.

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.

The LEA will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify campuses within the district that have a higher incidence of harmful, violent, and threatening behavior, behavioral and disciplinary incidents, chronic absenteeism, bullying and harassment, and lower academic outcomes. These campuses will be prioritized for participation in the program.

The LEA will consider the readiness and capacity of campuses to establish and improve school culture, fostering strong relationships between staff and students. Campuses that demonstrate a commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment and have a willingness to address harmful behaviors will be given preference.

The LEA will assess the existing mental health training, support, and resources available at the campuses. Campuses that show a need for improvement in these areas or have a higher demand for mental health services will be considered for participation.

The LEA will evaluate the capacity of the campuses to implement an effective student support team structure. This includes considering the availability of staff members who can serve as team members, the willingness to collaborate with external partners such as the Texas Center for Student Supports and ESC Region 10, and the alignment with best practices for student support.

The LEA will assess the readiness of the campuses to establish sustainable practices beyond the grant funding period. Campuses that demonstrate a commitment to continuing the program through their own resources and have a clear plan to expand the initiative to additional campuses within the district will be considered.

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

The LEA will clearly communicate the goals, objectives, and benefits of the Student Support Program to campus leaders and staff. This includes explaining how the program aligns with the district's overall vision for student support and academic success. By fostering a shared vision, campus leaders and staff will understand the importance and value of the program.

The LEA will actively involve campus leaders and staff in the planning and decision-making processes of the Student Support Program. This can be done through regular meetings, workshops, and forums where they can provide input, share concerns, and contribute to the program's design and implementation. Their involvement will foster a sense of ownership and commitment to the program's success.

The LEA will provide campus leaders and staff with professional development opportunities focused on the core components of the Student Support Program. This may include training sessions, workshops, and job-embedded support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports and ESC Region 10. By equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills, the LEA ensures that they are prepared to implement and sustain the program effectively.

The LEA will offer ongoing coaching and support to campus leaders and staff throughout the implementation of the program. This may involve regular check-ins, observations, feedback sessions, and guidance from external coaches or experts. The coaching and support will help address any challenges, reinforce best practices, and maintain a strong commitment to the program's success.

The LEA will allocate necessary resources, including staffing, time, and materials, to support the successful implementation of the Student Support Program. By demonstrating a commitment to providing the needed resources, the LEA sends a clear message to campus leaders and staff about the importance of the program and their role in its success.

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.

The LEA will initiate regular and effective communication with parents and families to inform them about the goals, objectives, and benefits of the Student Support Program. This can be done through newsletters, campus websites, social media, and other communication channels. The LEA will also actively reach out to parents and families through meetings, workshops, and community events to discuss the program and address any questions or concerns.

The LEA will utilize the family engagement playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to guide their interactions with parents and families. This playbook will provide strategies and resources to build strong partnerships between schools and families. The LEA will leverage these resources to foster a collaborative approach in supporting students' academic and nonacademic needs.

The LEA will establish a parent, student, and staff advisory committee specifically dedicated to providing input on the establishment of the Student Support Program. This committee will serve as a platform for parents and families to contribute their perspectives, suggestions, and concerns. The LEA will actively seek their input on program design, implementation strategies, and ongoing improvements.

The LEA will organize parent education and training sessions to enhance their understanding of the Student Support Program, its objectives, and the resources available to support their children. These sessions can cover topics such as promoting positive behavior, addressing bullying and violence, and accessing mental health services. By equipping parents with knowledge and skills, the LEA empowers them to be active partners in their child's education and well-being. The LEA will ensure that communication and engagement efforts are culturally sensitive and accessible to all families, including those with diverse backgrounds or language barriers. Translation services, interpreters, and culturally appropriate materials will be provided to enable meaningful participation and engagement. The LEA will establish channels for parents and families to seek individualized support and provide feedback on the Student Support Program.

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

The LEA will conduct a thorough needs assessment to identify the specific staffing requirements for implementing the program. This assessment will consider factors such as the number of campuses involved, student population size, existing student support services, and the scope of the program's objectives.

Based on the needs assessment, the LEA will develop a comprehensive staffing plan outlining the roles and responsibilities required for the successful implementation of the Student Support Program. This plan will identify the positions needed, their qualifications, and the allocation of staff members across campuses.

The LEA will initiate a targeted hiring and recruitment process to attract qualified individuals who possess the skills and experience necessary to support the program. This may involve advertising job openings, conducting interviews, and selecting candidates who demonstrate a strong commitment to student support and creating a positive school climate.

The LEA will provide professional development and training opportunities for staff members to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to effectively implement the Student Support Program. This may include workshops, conferences, coaching, or job-embedded training provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports and ESC Region 10.

The LEA will regularly evaluate the staffing structure and effectiveness of the Student Support Program. This evaluation will help identify any gaps or areas for improvement and allow the LEA to provide ongoing support to staff members. The LEA may offer additional training, professional development opportunities, or adjust staffing allocations based on the evolving needs of the 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 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.

The grant program will begin with an assessment of each campus's existing systems for conducting behavioral threat assessments. This assessment will evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and alignment of the current practices with best practices and guidelines for threat assessment.

Based on the assessment findings, the grant program will provide training and professional development opportunities to campus staff involved in conducting behavioral threat assessments. This training will focus on evidence-based strategies for threat assessment, risk assessment, intervention planning, and ongoing monitoring.

The grant program will assist each campus in integrating their behavioral threat assessment practices into the broader student support team structure. This integration ensures that threat assessments are not conducted in isolation but rather as part of a comprehensive system of support.

The grant program will facilitate collaboration and coordination between the staff responsible for conducting behavioral threat assessments and the student support team. This collaboration will ensure that the threat assessment findings inform the development of targeted interventions and support strategies within the student support team's framework. Through the grant program, each campus will have the opportunity to refine their processes for conducting behavioral threat assessments. This may involve reviewing and revising assessment protocols, documentation practices, information sharing mechanisms, and communication channels within the student support team. The grant program will provide ongoing support and evaluation to each campus throughout the implementation of the behavioral threat assessment practices. This includes regular check-ins, feedback sessions, and access to technical assistance and guidance from experts in the field.

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.

Forney ISD employs 36 School Counselors and 8 Student Support Counselors. These counselors are trauma-informed realizing the widespread impact of trauma. Counselors understand potential paths for recovery, recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others involved in the school system.

FISD Counselors respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies and procedures. Schools serve as a critical system of support for children and adolescents who have experienced trauma. We create trauma-informed environments that mitigate against the impacts of trauma and grief.

Forney ISD partners with many external mental health and behavioral health providers, including North Texas Behavioral Health Authority and Family and Youth Success, to meet the needs of students.

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.

The LEA partners with ESC Region 10 to provide training and resources that support the physical and mental wellness of all students in schools.

ESC Region 10 offers staff development and technical assistance to support Forney ISD. One example of this, is ensuring that MTSS is used organizing systems of processes and procedures. This provides all students equitable access to a quality education, supporting prevention, intervention and enrichment of behavior, academic and social-emotional for all students.

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.

Forney ISD is dedicated to promoting a positive school environment and improving the academic achievement of all students. Our Counselors help eliminate barriers to success by facilitating access to information, resources and support services appropriate to each student's needs.

This grant will allow our staff to be more intentional, and target areas that will benefit our students. It will also allow us to expand capacity and address root cause issues by implementing the family engagement playbook. The campuses being proposed for the program are on the same feeder pattern and will provide valuable data to evaluate the Student Support Program. This information and process will impact multiple campuses across Forney ISD once experience and implementation of the program is fulfilled.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment:

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

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	<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" value="16215"/>
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	<input type="text" value="5"/>
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	<input type="text" value="16220"/>
4. Total current-year grant allocation	<input type="text" value="1450000"/>
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	<input type="text" value="1218000"/>
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	<input type="text" value="232000"/>
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	<input type="text" value="14.30"/>
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	<input type="text" value="71.500"/>

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.	North Forney High School Student Support Coordinators (3)	\$396,000
2.	Brown Middle School Student Support Coordinators (2)	\$264,000
3.	Smith Intermediate Student Support Coordinators (2)	\$264,000
4.	Dewberry Elementary Student Support Coordinators (2)	\$264,000
5.		

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	\$87,000
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	\$145,000
8.		
9.		
10.		

Supplies and Materials

11.	Supplies and Materials for Student Support Coordinators at 4 Campuses	\$20,000
12.		
13.		

Other Operating Costs

15.	Travel and Reimbursement Expenses for Training Student Support Coordinators	\$5,000
16.	Family Engagement Playbook Implementation, Communication, Meetings, Resources	\$5,000
17.		

Debt Services

18.		
19.		

Capital Outlay

20.		
-----	--	--

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"/>	

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

