



# 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:** PL 117-159 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Title II School Improvement Programs, BSCA

**Grant period:** From 11/15/2023 to 09/30/2025

**Pre-award costs:** ARE NOT permitted for this grant

**Required attachments:** N/A

## 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  ODN  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  DocuSigned by:  Date

Grant Writer Name  Signature  DocuSigned by:  Date

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

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RFA/SAS #

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Amendment # **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
TARGETED ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS	Needs Assessment: Conduct assessment of students' academic needs to identify areas where targeted support is required including At-Risk, Emergent bilingual and SPED.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPEMENT TO INCREASE THE AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO ASSIT WITH MENTAL HEALTH	Work with our District SEL team (SEL director, Social Workers, and Assistant Principals of Culture" to provide trainings and resources to teachers about student mental health including but not limited to creating trauma-informed classrooms, mindfulness in the classroom, recognizing when students need
STUDENT INTEREST-BASED PROGRAMS TO DECREASE STUDENT BEHAVIOR (AMOUNT OF REFERRALS) AS IT CORALATES TO MENTAL HEALTH	Qualitative data from student and parent "voice and choice" surveys regarding program offerings, session evaluations, overall program satisfaction, and pre and post-session program surveys of impact and effectiveness.

**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.

Etoile Academy will use purposeful after-school programming designed and implemented by our SEL Team to improve the mental health of at least 100 students from September through May as evidenced by a pre and post survey on mental health.

**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**

By the end of the first quarter, 25% of participating students will demonstrate an increase in their self-reported social-emotional well-being scores on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

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Amendment # **6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)****Second-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the second quarter, 55% of participating students will demonstrate an increase in their self-reported social-emotional well-being scores on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

**Third-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the Third quarter, 80% of participating students will demonstrate an increase in their self-reported social-emotional well-being scores on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

**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.

Implement a comprehensive evaluation plan that includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This may involve surveys, interviews, observations, and analysis of program metrics. Regularly collect and analyze the evaluation data to assess the program's performance against the established benchmarks and goals. Identify areas of improvement: Review the evaluation data to identify areas where the program is not meeting the desired benchmarks or goals. Look for patterns, trends, and areas of concern that may require modification. Conduct root cause analysis: Dig deeper into the evaluation data to understand the underlying reasons for the lack of progress. Identify the factors contributing to the challenges or gaps in achieving the benchmarks or goals. This may involve analyzing participant feedback, examining program processes, or considering external factors that may be influencing the outcomes. Engage stakeholders: Involve key stakeholders, such as program staff, participants, partners, and funders, in the evaluation process. Seek their input and perspectives on the evaluation findings and potential modifications to the program. This collaborative approach ensures that decisions are informed by diverse viewpoints and increases buy-in for program modifications. Develop modification strategies: Based on the evaluation data and stakeholder input, develop specific strategies to address the identified areas of improvement. These strategies may involve adjusting program activities, revising program materials, enhancing staff training, or strengthening partnerships. Ensure that the modifications align with the program's overall goals and objectives. Implement and monitor modifications: Put the identified modifications into action and closely monitor their implementation. Track the progress and impact of the modifications using ongoing evaluation data. Regularly assess whether the modifications are leading to the desired improvements and adjust as needed. Ensure sustainability: Evaluate the feasibility and scalability of the modifications to ensure that they can be sustained beyond the initial implementation which may involve exploring funding opportunities, building partnerships, or developing strategies for program expand.

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Amendment # **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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Amendment # **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.

Needs assessment: conduct a needs assessment to identify the schools that have the greatest need for the Student Support Program. The needs assessment could include data on student academic performance, attendance rates, disciplinary incidents, and other factors that impact student success.

Demographics: consider the demographics of the schools, including the number of low-income students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Etoile may prioritize schools with higher percentages of these student populations.

Collaboration: consider the willingness of the schools to collaborate and work together to implement the Student Support Program. This could include factors such as the level of support from school administrators, teachers, and parents.

Geographic location: consider the geographic location of the schools and prioritize schools in areas with higher rates of poverty, crime, or other factors that impact student success.

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

Clear communication: Etoile will clearly communicate the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the Student Support Program to campus leaders and staff. This includes providing information on the importance of the program, its potential impact on students, and the resources available to support its implementation.

Engage stakeholders: Involve campus leaders and staff in the decision-making process and seek their input and feedback. This can be done through regular meetings, workshops, or surveys. By involving them in the planning and implementation of the program, their commitment and ownership will be strengthened.

Professional development and training: Provide professional development opportunities and training sessions for campus leaders and staff to enhance their knowledge and skills related to the Student Support Program. This can include workshops on best practices, strategies for supporting student success, and effective use of program resources

Ensure accessibility and inclusivity: Consider the diverse needs and circumstances of parents and families, including those with limited English proficiency, disabilities, or other barriers. Provide accommodations, translation services, and alternative formats of communication to ensure that all parents and families can fully engage with the program

Foster partnerships: Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses, and other stakeholders to enhance parent and family engagement. These partnerships can provide additional resources, expertise, and support for the program.

Recognize and celebrate parent and family involvement: Acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of parents and families who actively participate in the program. This can be done through recognition events, certificates of appreciation, or highlighting success stories in newsletters or on the school's website.

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

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

**Conduct outreach efforts:** Etoile Academy will actively reach out to parents and families through various channels such as school newsletters, Deanlist, websites, social media platforms, and community events. This helps to raise awareness about the program and its benefits.

**Provide clear communication:** Ensure that information about the program is communicated clearly and in a language that parents and families can understand. This may involve translating materials into different languages and using plain language to explain the program's purpose, goals, and how parents can get involved.

**Offer opportunities for meaningful consultation:** Create opportunities for parents and families to provide input and feedback on the program. This can be done through surveys or parent advisory committees. Actively listening to their perspectives and incorporating their ideas can help build trust and ownership in the program.

**Provide resources and training:** Offer resources and training sessions to help parents and families support their children's learning and engagement in the program. This may include workshops on topics such as academic support, technology literacy, and social-emotional well-being.

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

**Assess staffing needs:** Conduct a thorough assessment of the staffing needs required for the successful establishment and implementation of the Student Support Program. This assessment will consider factors such as the number of participating students, the scope of services to be provided, and the specific roles and responsibilities of staff members.

**Allocate resources:** Allocate resources, including funding and personnel, to meet the identified staffing needs. This may involve reallocating existing staff members or hiring additional personnel with the necessary expertise and qualifications to support the program effectively.

**Provide professional development:** Offer professional development opportunities to staff members involved in the Student Support Program. This training will enhance their knowledge and skills in areas such as student support strategies, data analysis, and evidence-based interventions. By investing in professional development, ensures that staff members are equipped to provide high-quality support to students.

**Collaborate with external partners:** Collaborate with external partners, such as community organizations or agencies, to supplement the staffing needs of the Student Support Program. These partnerships can provide additional resources, expertise, and support to enhance the program's effectiveness.

**Establish clear roles and responsibilities:** Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of staff members involved in the Student Support Program. This includes outlining their specific duties, expectations, and reporting structures. Clear communication and coordination among staff members will ensure efficient and effective implementation of the 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.

Establish student support team: Ensure that each campus has a dedicated student support team in place. This team can consist of professionals from various disciplines, such as social workers, administrators, and teachers. The team can collaborate to conduct threat assessments, review cases, and develop appropriate support plans for students

Training and professional development: Provide training sessions on threat assessment to campus leaders, staff, and members of the student support team. This training can cover topics such as identifying behaviors of concern, conducting assessments, and implementing appropriate interventions.

Evaluation and improvement: Establish a process for ongoing evaluation and improvement of the behavioral threat assessment procedures. This can involve collecting feedback from campuses, reviewing assessment outcomes, and making necessary adjustments to enhance the effectiveness of the process

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.

Data analysis: Analyze various data sources, such as academic performance data, attendance records, behavior incidents, IEPs, and social-emotional assessments, to identify students who may require additional support.

Needs assessments: Conduct needs assessments to gather information on student needs. This can involve surveys, focus groups, or interviews with students, parents, and staff to identify areas of concern and support needed.

Collaboration with school staff: Collaborate with school staff, including teachers, social workers, and administrators, to gather insights and observations on student support needs. Regular communication and collaboration can help identify students who may benefit from additional services.

Referral networks: Establish referral networks with external providers to ensure a seamless process for connecting students with the appropriate services. This can involve developing protocols and procedures for referrals and coordination of care.

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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.

Resource sharing and integration: Etoile and Region 4 will work together to integrate and share resources across state and federal programs. This collaboration ensures that we have access to a wide range of guidance, resources, and best practices to support student needs. It also helps reduce redundancy and contradictions across programs.

Collaboration on school safety and violence prevention: Etoile, TXSSC, I Love U guys, and Region 4 will collaborate to implement school safety initiatives, counseling programs, and mental health programs. They may work together to integrate health and safety practices into school or athletic programs, disseminate best practices, and evaluate program outcomes.

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.

Specialize training: The use grant funds to provide specialized training for existing social workers and teachers. This training would qualify them to work at Etoile and understand needs in the particularly area in which they provide services to our students.

Health and safety practices: With the increase of violence in school systems, Etoile can prioritize the use of Title IV, Part A federal grant funds to integrate health and safety practices into school or athletic programs along with help on the TCLAS grant. This includes implementing school safety measures, counseling services, mental health programs, and student interest based programs.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment:

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

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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.	Extra duty pay for the SEL team to plan/review:	\$12,841
2.	Stipends for three Social Worker to participate in after school program daily	\$39,000
3.	Two After School Site Director Salary and Benefits	\$133,680
4.	Salary and Benefits for Mindfulness teacher during after school	\$57,800
5.	Salary and Benefits for four additional after school teachers	\$231,200

**Professional and Contracted Services**

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	\$37,726
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	\$65,627
8.	Additional training for teachers on mental health	\$34,500
9.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
10.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	Supplies for Social Workers	\$5,250
12.	Supplies for Mindfulness Teacher	\$1,200
13.	Supplies for after school program	\$15,800

**Other Operating Costs**

15.	<input type="text"/>	0
16.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
17.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Debt Services**

18.	<input type="text"/>	0
19.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Capital Outlay**

20.	<input type="text"/>	0
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Direct administrative costs:

Indirect administrative costs:

**TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:**

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Amendment #

**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"/>
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