



# 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
Improve attendance	Provide students with additional support in the identified areas by addressing the mental health and social emotional needs of students, in an effort to increase student attendance Providing additional support through partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) to creating goals with the student and establishing an action plan focused
Decrease Behavior Threat Assessments	Provide students with mental health/social emotional support and training to increase the strategies students have to manage stressors and/or trauma Providing Licensed Professional Counselors assigned specifically to each of the three campuses to work directly with the staff and students Partnering with community agencies to provide additional resources to students
Decrease discipline incidents	Provide staff with Capturing Kids Hearts training on building relationships with student, positive behavior management and alternative ways to address discipline resulting from the impact of the pandemic and rapid increase in enrollment and a change in the demographic make-up within the student population.

**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.

Through the implementation Stronger Connections Grant strategies Community ISD will work to decrease the number of Behavior Threat and discipline incidents by at least 5% to 10% on each of the three campuses by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

**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 each campus will have a 1%-2% decrease in Behavior Threat Assessment and discipline incidents as compared to the previous school year.

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

**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the second quarter each campus will have a 2%-4% decrease in Behavior Threat Assessment and discipline incidents as compared to the previous school year.

**Third-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the first quarter each campus will have a 4%-6% decrease in Behavior Threat Assessment and discipline incidents as compared to the previous school year.

**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.

Project evaluation data will be reviewed on a monthly basis to progress monitor the plan and to determine if there needs to be a change in strategies used and professional development provided. The district will use the plan, do, check, act model to monitor progress towards achieving the SMART goal, to evaluate the level of improvement related to attendance, Behavior Threat Assessment, and discipline incidents. Additionally, the progress made towards achieving the goal will also be monitored quarterly at the advisory council meetings. In monitoring progress towards our benchmarks and in an effort work towards continuous improvement, the district will identify success i.e., what are our successes? what's working; explore needs i.e., what are we questioning about our progress, what isn't clear, what tips can be offered, what area(s) can be improved? Based on this evaluation process the district will revise the action plan to move forward, progress monitor the plan, continue evaluation and revision of the plan as we work towards meeting the SMART goal.

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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.

In order to select the campuses to receive serves related to this grant a review of the district and campus attendance, academic, discipline, Behavior Threat assessment was reviewed. The elementary school which has been identified having the lowest academic and attendance rating, the highest Behavior Threat Assessments and discipline incidents will be selected. Community ISD has one middle school and one high school. Therefore, each of them will be selected to participate in the program. The campus data at each of the secondary schools will also be reviewed to assist in focusing the strategies implemented at the campus.

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

The Director of Student Services has obtained agreement with the identified campus leaders to determine their interest in participating in the Student Support Program. The Director of Student Services will meet with the campus leaders to progress monitor the program, review campus data and outcomes for the program, as well as to determine if there is a need to provide additional professional development, resources and supports. In addition, weekly check-ins to address any need and supports for the campus will be conducted. The district will also meet with and survey the staff to determine the interest and needs related to the program and to get their ideas related to the activities of the program to gain their input and buy-in.

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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.

Community ISD will engage families by hosting at least one parent resource nights at each campus per semester related to supporting the outreach and initiative outlined in the grant. Meetings will be held and parents/guardians will be surveyed to determine their interest and needs. The survey data will be used to determine what kind of resources and supports need to be provided for the families. As part of the program, the hired Communities In Schools (CIS) Site Coordinator will maintain regular communication with the families through, emails, phone and home visits. The Director of Student Services will work with the CIS Site Coordinator to plan two family fun nights at each campus (one each semester) focused mental health and well-being. The Licensed Professional Counselors will also keep parent up to date and engaged with the progress their students are making and provide training and support for parents. In addition, students, staff and parents/guardians will be identified to be a part of the advisory council to assisting planning events to engage families. The advisory council will meet at least four times throughout the school year to review data, plan and provide feedback about the 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 Student Support Program will be monitored by the Director of Student Services and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The Director of Student services will meet with each campus leader monthly and attend as least two of the quarterly advisory council meeting for each campus annually. Campus data will be pulled each month to progress monitor the program and to determine if there are additional professional development needs and/or strategies which need to be implemented at the campus. The result of the data will be shared with the advisory council for input as well. The Director of Student Services will meet with and share the district data with the assigned representative from ESC (Region 10 and the Texas Center for School Support) in order to receive feedback, guidance and to determine the need for additional technical support they can provide. The district will also hire 3 Licensed Professional Counselors (one for each campus) to assist at the campuses in supporting student and the Stronger Connections Grant Initiatives. Community ISD will also partner with Communities in School to provide 5 Site Coordinators (1, elementary, 2 middle school and 2 high school) to provide daily prevention and intervention services, support students, empowering them to stay in school and to support parent engagement. Community ISD will implement Capturing Kids Hearts. The Capturing Kids Hearts frameworks provides teacher, staff and administrators with the necessary skills to promote positive relationship building. The district will provide staff with additional training related to Mental Health, Trauma Informed Care, Restorative Practices and Culturally Responsive Practices. The district will also provide student with workshops/education through the Youth Equipped to Succeed program related to bullying and mental health to increase strategies students have to deal with stressors and/or trauma.

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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.

Through this grant each campus would be provided with a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) specifically assigned to work with their campus. The LPC would work with the campus for early identification (not profiling) students who may be at risk and or in need of services and support. Additionally, the LPC would provide professional development for staff, students and families related to mental health, resilience and self-care. The LPC would also work as a lead on the campus Behavior Threat Assessment Team in order to support the team in working to provide a proactive, evidence-based approach for objectively reviewing information which may indicate a person is on the pathway to violence and providing interventions before a violent incident occurs. Using this process early identification could be made in order to provide students needed support prior to making a threat. In the district's current approach, the Behavior Threat Assessment Team meets about students after they have made a threat, which could be an indicator that the student has been having challenges over time and has been in need of support, which may not have been given. In the current process the staff member in lead the team may not have a background as a mental health professional. Providing an LPC to each campus through this funding would afford the campus the opportunity to ensure that a staff member with a mental health background is leading the work. The LPC would also work to ensure procedures and practices are ensuring the emotional well-being of all stakeholders is supported.

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.

Community ISD identify student support needs through referrals from administrators, counselors, teachers, school staff, and parents. In addition, campus administration and counselors review student data to determine if student are in need of support. The district has two Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) who work with staff across the six campuses to identifies student and to provide services with the consent from parents/guardians. The district also works with Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHATT). TCHATT provides direct telepsychiatry or counseling to students at schools, educational and training materials for school staff and a state-wide management system of data as a resource on mental health for school districts. Although there is no formally written agreement, Community ISD also works with other community agencies, such a LifePath Systems, BasePoint Academy, etc., in Collin County to provide mental health resources and services to students.

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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.

Community ISD is currently operating with Region 10 through the following service packages:

Educational Services Package-which include educational supports and professional development for teachers and administrators related to instruction, classroom management, instructional strategies and curriculum to ensure student academic needs are met.

Counseling Initiative and Student Support Package- through this package counselors, teachers, and administrators are able to receive professional development and support related to student mental health and social emotional needs, college and career readiness, identification of student in crisis in order to assist them and their families in locating resources, new initiatives in counseling and legislative updates.

Health Services Package- to ensure that staff are trained in the following areas: Drug Impairment, Unlicensed Diabetes Care Assistants, and Stop the Bleed. Additionally, our partnership with Region 10 allows for continuing education for nurses in the areas of pediatric assessments and skilled health procedures to ensure that students with acute and chronic illnesses are receiving the highest quality care.

Safe and Supportive School, School Safety Package-to support and professional development to district police, school staff, teachers and administration related to keep school and students safe, trauma informed care, and crisis prevent and intervention.

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.

Community Independent School District is a small rural district located in the Nevada, Texas. Currently, Community ISD has 6 schools, 420 staff members and, over 4200 students who achieve through innovation and high expectations. The district poverty rate is 53.39%. The district services students in the cities of Nevada, Copeville, Lavon and Josephine. These cities are still relatively rural, with only one dental office located within the District's boundary line. Together the cities have approximately 14,775 residents and more than 2791 households, of which 29.7% have children under the age of 18, according to US Census data (2022). Community ISD is located in Collin County. Although there are a variety of organizations and professionals within Collin County, those resource are not easily accessible to students and families as transportation is barrier, since these services are not located within or near the cities Community ISD serves. Community ISD hosted a parent resource fair in order to bring community partners to the district to provide parents with information and resources available to them. The closest pediatrician and/or urgent care is approximately 20 minutes away. Additionally, many families within our community are low-income, which creates barriers for our student population to receive necessary healthcare. This year, Community ISD hosted its first health screening event, where students in need received primary healthcare and dental screenings. These students were able to be examined by a licensed nurse practitioner and dentist and were referred for follow-up care as necessary. If Community ISD would participate in this grant program, we could use the money to continue hosting this event in order for students to receive necessary care.

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.	3 Licensed Professional Counselors (one per campus)	399,865.14
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

**Professional and Contracted Services**

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	60,000.00
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	100,000.00
8.	5 Community In Schools Site Coordinators (1, elementary, 2 middle school, and 2 high school)	210,000.00
9.	Capturing Kids Hearts and Youth Equipped to Succeed	113,500.00
10.	Professional Development (Mental Health, Trauma Informed Care, Restorative Practices and C	12,508.06

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	Office Furniture (desk, chair, file cabinet etc.)	4,000.00
12.	Consumables (pens, paper, file folder, etc.)	2,500.00
13.	Technology (laptop/printer)	1,500.00

**Other Operating Costs**

15.	5% Cost Sharing Match	50,000.00
16.		
17.		

**Debt Services**

18.		
19.		

**Capital Outlay**

20.		
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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**

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