



# 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
- 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.

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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
Moran ISD is aware that roughly 60% of our students deal with low self-esteem from lack of support from family, friends, or others in their lives. This leads to our students either being bullied or becoming the bully.	Moran ISD staff, students and parents will receive training on assisting students in this area, along with bringing in counseling help for the students. Our goal for the funds would be for the students within one school year to see support provided to them to assist with self-esteem and develop a positive self-worth.
Moran ISD is aware that at least 95% of our students receive free or reduced lunch due to the poverty levels of the community. The poverty issue in the community translates into self-doubt of the students.	Moran ISD plans to offer services such as presentations on how to overcome setbacks in life such as this. Our goal is within 1 year to see the development of self-worth that doesn't include doubt of their abilities or future. Additionally, staff members will be trained for encouragement and motivation of the students.
Moran ISD is aware we have students dealing with topics like anxiety, stress, bullying, and other issues that encourage thoughts of suicide. Staff members estimate dealing with these topics 3-5 times a week.	Moran ISD plans to solicit aid from vendors to help train staff members as well as give students assistance with this topic. Our plan is to assess students position on the topics that cause suicide feelings. Then, our goal is to reduce those feelings with the aid of a vendor's training for all at Moran ISD.

**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.

Specifically, we plan to address the students self-worth or self-esteem. The plan of action will be to train staff members and students to assist with this issue. We will be able to measure this by seeing the difference in our students self-perceptions due to the training received from the vendors. This will be achievable by providing an assessment before, throughout, and at the end of training to see how the students have grown. This grant money and the time used to accomplish our goal is relevant to our students and the future of this community. There's a mentality of we are small, poor, and not talented inside the community and that is reflected in our students. With the assistance of these funds, our goal is within a year we can change the direction of our students' self-worth.

**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**

During the first quarter, the plan of action would be to identify the current feelings of our student body. With the assistance of a hired vendor, we will give an assessment where students and their parents rank how the student feels about various topics. This benchmark will be used as our baseline results to show growth of each student's worth. Once we have obtained these results, we pass them along to our vendor to assist with training of staff members and students. Presentations will be offered on various dates to students. We will also use positive language from staff members to students as trainings are presented to staff members. At the conclusion of this quarter, we hope to have a baseline of student feelings and some training starting for staff and students.

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## 6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)

### Second-Quarter Benchmark

During the second quarter, we plan to continue training and counseling for students. At some point we plan to do a mid-term assessment of the students and parents to see what growth the program has had or other areas we need to focus on. Our primary goal throughout this term is to raise the self-esteem of our students and reduce the feeling of suicide or bullying issues. With that said, training will be modified throughout the term of the grant to reinforce students ability to see their own self-worth in hopes they develop better feelings about themselves for years to come. We hope to have a licensed counselor available to our students for the one-on-one factor as we are 30 minutes from nearest counseling options. At the conclusion of this time period, we plan to have a mid-term assessment, adjust training, and give the option of one-on-one counseling to our students.

### Third-Quarter Benchmark

As we enter the third quarter, we hope we have students developing positive images of themselves. We are offering counseling services for each student to utilize throughout this time period. The goal of training staff members and parents are to help each student strive to see the part they play in our community. The staff members will have concluded their training by now, and will reinforce the positive message to each student in hopes of reducing bullying and suicide thoughts. As we wrap up the term, we plan to give another assessment (students and parents) that asks questions based on how they once felt vs. how they feel at this point of the project. With this data, we plan to reinforce any areas that are still critical as needed. The goal would show parents how this project has impacted their students and we hope to keep counseling services offered.

## 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.

Moran ISD plans to use project evaluation data in two methods, formal and informal. Formally, we plan to give a pre-assessment, mid-project assessment, and a post assessment. By using these formal methods, we will use that data to drive initial training and target areas needed for staff and parent training. This data will be purpose driven data at the beginning in our pre-assessment. We plan to target the areas (reflection of feelings, emotions, etc. from student and parent perspective) most critically needed and will offer that training to staff members and students with the hopes that it will mean we need to modify at the mid-project assessment. Once we reach roughly mid-project, another formal assessment will be used to determine areas we need to modify or shift the focus to due to adequate growth. Finally, we will issue a post-assessment towards the end of the project and compare those results to the previous two benchmarks to determine the growth and future needs of the project.

Secondly, as we are moving throughout the project, staff members will use informal assessment methods to determine how each kid is receiving the training and their outlook on it. By using the informal method, staff members can see day to day how kids are responding to various methods we plan to use in this project. We hope to have something similar from stakeholders being communicated back to staff as well.

By using both formal and informal, we will see what growth or lack thereof is happening. With these two methods, we should have enough data to show how training for staff and students will need to be modified. Our desire is to see enough growth and to have interest from the students and parents to keep the program running post-project. In the long run, with the aide of this grant, hopefully students in the small community of Moran will develop a great sense of pride inside themselves and that will transform the landscape of the community.

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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.

At Moran ISD, the size of our district gives us easy determination of this area. Moran ISD serves around 120 students in K-12 per year. The smaller size of school doesn't mean the need for funds is any less as we have many issues that distract from healthy mental worthiness of the students. As a matter of fact, the size of the school and community along with nearly all students living in poverty drives the need for these funds more. We plan to offer this program to all students starting with K - 12 grades. Obviously, the training or presentations will be different per age level.

Given the nature of our school and community, most of the parents here do not have the means necessary to get counseling assistance for their children as needed. Whether that is transportation methods or lack of personal funds. As a result of this, the staff members (which aren't highly qualified) end up having to serve in that capacity. With the award of this grant, Moran ISD can employ a staff member that is responsible for the mental well-being of all students giving each the assurance to not worry about bullying, suicidal thoughts, or other related mental health issues that destroy a students' self-esteem.

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

The Moran ISD administration team sees a need for this program to ensure that each student attends classes where they feel mentally safe and worthy. The administration team will receive training along with all staff members employed at the district, no matter position from superintendent to bus driver. If awarded, the funds will be used to train all members of the staff, notice how the term teachers have not been used in this application. Moran ISD is committed to offering this training to all and will encourage the positive development of every student having a healthy mental state. As an extra part of the assurances to the organizing body of this grant, we will have every staff member sign a pledge to ensure the buy in from all members. The same will be used on the student level to show how dedicated the staff at Moran ISD are to each student enrolled here. Without the funds, achieving the goals outlined in this application become more difficult to obtain and may require longer time frames to achieve it. An additional step for measurable outcome would utilize Professional Development days each month on school calendar to meet with staff to discuss any and all aspects of the project. Same will be used to meet with stakeholders of the community as well with planned meetings that happen at least once every two months.

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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.

Essentially we will use similar methods outlined in the previous section. The goal will be to invite the community into the school for a kick-off meeting to this project. We plan to be transparent with the stakeholders of the community and show them what the project will look like over the course of the year. We will not only offer signed pledges to staff members and students, but similarly to the parents as well. The means to the project is to help each student to achieve a healthy state of mind and try to illiminate thoughts of bullying, anxiety, stress, or suicide in every student. Parents, guardians, and families play an important part in this project too. The stakeholders will be offered chances to hear some of the training or presentations to see the committment of Moran ISD staff members to their students. These stakeholders are allowed to see the assessments offered to the students and have access to the trainings presented to the staff to avoid any conflicts. As discussed earlier, stakeholders are the parents, gaurdians or other family members. We plan to offer meetings or trainings at least once per a two month time period.

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

Moran ISD is committeed to offering a position for a staff member to be hired for the sole purpose of the mental well-being of students. This position will be housed on campus, and will be available for walk in or scheduled appointments. Other members will be hired to assist with paperwork related issues so the licensed professional is able to focus on the main goal of this project. The goal of this grant is to give our small community access for improving mental health. With the addition of a staff member and proper training for all remaining staff, the goal is to have 100% of employees able to guide and redirect students as needed when negativity enters their minds. Funding will be requested for the addition of a staff member and proper training for this project. We plan to hire training groups to give presentations at various dates and times. We are looking at a few software options that will give lessons the be taught daily in classes as well as allowing students to reach out individually to our licensed professional. Staff members will also be trained on such software being used.

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

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

Currently, Moran ISD evaluates students based on volunteering information or reaction to cries of help. Some awareness of mental issues surrounding our students is known as of date. The unfortunate issue for staff members at this point in time is lack of time or training to meet the needs of our students. If awarded, the training will offer staff members the ability to assess behavioral threats in a timely manner. Also, the addition of another staff member whose sole priority is the students mental health or behavioral health will greatly impact the students.

If the grant is awarded to Moran ISD, the current system will transform into a newer system where all staff members are trained to assist with positive growth of each students metal state. Including stakeholders, like parents, will help the program be successful. The ulitimate goal of the project will be to ensure all Moran ISD students feel they are loved, cared for, and are afforded a healthy well-being state of mind.

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.

Currently, Moran ISD uses a referral system for students that are in need of mental health related issues. Several of the staff members get to know their students due to a small school setting. Since this is a luxury to know the day-to-day lives of the students here, the staff members can see patterns developing. Occasionally, staff members will ask a few questions to assess where that student is at. At some point the staff member, mainly the teachers, will refer to the principal about an issue dealing with a certain student. At this point, the principal does what she can to address the issue. She will talk with the student at the time of the mental health issue. Occasionally the issue, for example suicide, requires immediate attention from the parents. She provides a list of licensed professionals to the parents in hopes they reach out. Due to the size of school and poverty level, we do have parents that can not afford, uninsured, or have the means to travel 20-30 minutes to the nearest licensed professional.

If the student is labeled special education, due to their IEP, that student does have access to a licensed professional via our Shared Services agreement. This is a limited opportunity at times and does not cover all students at Moran ISD. Unfortunately, the burden to identify and establish partnerships falls on the shoulders of the staff members. Many members are not professionally trained to handle mental health related issues that this grant addresses.

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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.

Currently, the Moran ISD uses ESC Region 14 through a contracted service agreement. Region 14 sends out a lady to meet with our principal to cover things like schedules or other required paperwork. Very few times does this person perform any counseling to the students attending the school. Some training is provided to staff members via Region 14, but not adequate enough to identify all mental health related issues for the students. The person from Region 14 is a good resource for staff members, but her time is very limited and is not regular enough to make a huge impact on the students. As a result, the partnership between Moran ISD and Region 14 is very limited to staff and virtually non-existent to the students or parents of the community.

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.

As stated in boxes 6 and 7, I hope that the committee can see that the current situation at Moran ISD is very bleak when it comes to addressing the mental health issues for our students. As stated several times, we are a small school with a high rate of poverty. If Moran ISD is afforded the opportunity this grant is offering, we would not fall short of giving every success to the students and parents. With the planned addition of a licensed professional being on campus daily, regular training for all staff members, and using data to drive our program: every student will see an improvement in the mental health outlook. This grant will open the door to staff, students, and stakeholders to sign pledges to be 100% committed to this program. Trainings will be offered regularly to staff, students, and stakeholders so that every member of the Moran ISD community understands the importance of helping our students achieve great things. The goal would be to have students daily and regularly attending school saying I can do things, I feel great about myself, and being supportive to others. Using the training and data, this should be a goal that can be accomplished. These funds will be gratefully appreciated and used wisely by the team we would establish to drive the program. My goal is to see every student have a high self-esteem and self-worth for now and in the future.

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" value="120"/>
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	<input type="text" value="0"/>
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	<input type="text" value="120"/>
4. Total current-year grant allocation	<input type="text" value="0"/>
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	<input type="text" value="\$20,000"/>
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	<input type="text" value="\$20,000"/>
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	<input type="text" value="\$166.67"/>
<b>LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)</b>	<input type="text" value="\$333.34"/>

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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.	Professional Licensed Counselor	\$100,000
2.	Program Administrator	\$100,000
3.	Support Personel	\$35,000
4.	Program Team Member Stipends	\$20,000
5.		

**Professional and Contracted Services**

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	\$60,000
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	\$100,000
8.	Professional Development for Staff	\$225,000
9.	Parent Coaching for student engagement	\$225,000
10.		

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	Printing materials, handouts, pamphlets, other necessary items	\$10,000
12.	Media technology for student services	\$50,000
13.	Mental Health training materials	\$10,000

**Other Operating Costs**

15.	Attend Training sessions for staff and parents on leadership team	\$25,000
16.	On-site training sessions for staff, students, and parents	\$20,000
17.	Discretionary services costs	\$20,000

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

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Name of organization

Campus name  CDN  Vendor ID  ESC  UEI

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- 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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