



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.

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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
Southwest ISD daily attendance have not returned to preCOVID rates. The district needs to increase daily attendance from 90% daily attendance that we ended the year to the targeted 94%.	The district plans to create programming, resources and supports to increase the overall engagement of students in an effort to motivate students to be on campus. This work will focus on finding motivational tools that are relevant to the campus community based on data collected from students and professionals.
Based on Panorama data, students continue to articulate concerns with safety and feel less engaged with students and adults within the school community than preCOVID.	The district plans to build on current supports and resources within the district to build a stronger foundation to support students in building connections with peers and adults within their school community. A heavy emphasis will be placed on the social & emotional instruction and generalization across settings.
Based on District data, the district continues to rely on punitive measures to address fighting, bullying and other maladaptive behaviors. The district needs alternative measures to replace punitive means.	The district plans to provide training, resources and supports to assist campuses in utilizing alternatives to punitive measures to address maladaptive behaviors. Efforts will focus on a wider scope of professionals and parents learning methods to teach prosocial behaviors as a response to maladaptive behaviors.

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.

During the duration of the Stronger Connection Grant Year, SWISD will see measurable progress over their baseline gathered during the 2022/2023 school year in the following areas:

1. A reduction of discretionary placements in alternative setting and suspensions over the 22/23 baseline
2. An increase of average attendance over the baseline average attendance over the 22/23.
3. A positive increase in student affirmation of perception of safety and connection to school community over the baseline panorama data from the end of 22/23 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

1. Information for discretionary placement and suspension will be provided by district hearing office and documented suspensions entered in Frontline by each campus. This data will be compared to the baseline of the 2022/2023 school year.
2. Attendance reports for campuses will be provided by the Truancy Prevention Coordinator. This data will be broken into daily, weekly and monthly attendance percentages by campus. This data will be compared to baseline of 2022/2023 school year.
3. Fall Panorama Student surveys will be measured against baseline data using end of year surveys from 22/23.

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6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)

Second-Quarter Benchmark

1. Information for discretionary placement and suspension will be provided by district hearing officer and documented suspensions entered in Frontline by each campus. This data will be compared to 1st quarter data and 22/23 baseline.
2. Attendance reports for campuses will be provided by the Truancy Prevention Coordinator. This data will be broken into daily, weekly and monthly attendance percentages by campus. This data will be compared to 1st quarter data and 22/23 baseline.
3. Mid Year Panorama Student surveys will be measured against Fall surveys and baseline of 22/23 end of year surveys.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

1. Information for discretionary placement and suspension will be provided by district hearing officer and documented suspensions entered in Frontline by each campus. This data will be compared to 1st & 2nd quarter data and 22/23 baseline.
2. Attendance reports for campuses will be provided by the Truancy Prevention Coordinator. This data will be broken into daily, weekly and monthly attendance percentages by campus. This data will be compared to 1st & 2nd quarter data and 22/23 baseline.
3. End of Year Panorama Student surveys will be measured against Fall, Winter and baseline surveys of 22/23 end of year surveys.

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.

1. All data will be reviewed monthly by the SW Leadership Team to look for trends (both positive and negative) in order to pivot efforts at each campus based on the information. The monthly review will involve looking at all data points collected along with conversations with critical partners on the campus supporting the work to look for potential efficacy issues, training concerns, complex cases that need further review and other factors that may require a revision of programming implementation steps/procedures or training.
2. When data driven recommendations are made to consider a revision to support/resources/service/training, decisions will be made through a committee made up of SW Leadership Team and campus teams to ensure that all parties are in agreement with next steps.
3. When revisions are considered based on data, documentation of all efforts must be clearly documented and a new plan of action must be devised to support training and implementation of the new process.
4. When revisions are considered weekly meetings must occur during the first 4-6 weeks to ensure that revisions are clearly understood, implementation is done with efficacy and to allow for a more focused data review.

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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.

1. In order to determine the most appropriate campuses for implementation of the Stronger Connection Grant a triangulation of data will be scored based on a rubric that consists of three types of data (1) Attendance in comparison to the district average attendance rate. (2) Number of discipline referrals in the 22/23 school year resulting in suspension or alternative placement (3) A review of panorama data in regards to student safety and connection to adults and students in their school community and a review of threat assessments documented in Navigate 360. Raters will be looking at trends between Student perception of Safety and Connection and threat assessments conducted on the campus.

2. High Schools will be compared first to determine the feeder pattern that will be considered. Once the high school is determined based on the triangulation of data, middle schools will then be reviewed within the feeder pattern to determine the highest level of concern based on the same triangulation. Subsequently, based on the chosen High School and Middle school, the elementary schools within the feeder pattern will then be rated to determine the targeted elementary school.

3. This process will allow the district to pilot amplifications to our current efforts along the same feeder pattern in order to provide comparative data as well as longitudinal data over the course of time when following specific groups of students.

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

1. Upon completion of the rubric to determine the campuses that are most in need of support, a series of meetings with identified campus administration will allow the SW leadership team who will be supporting the project to begin building the framework of successful implementation of this project. During this series of meetings campus administration will be provided with the scope of the project outlined within the grant. While the scope of the work that is outlined in the grant may be novel, the discussion of the district needs and concerns in this realm will not new to the campus teams. The cohort of administrators for the campuses selected will provide feedback for additional needs and considerations to individualize the project growth per their campus makeup of staff, students, community involvement and their personalized data. This will allow the SW Leadership Team to have a better understanding of how to connect to the project goals and their campus community.

2. SW Leadership Team in conjunction with each campus administrator will host a series of meetings targeted staff, parents and students. These meetings will consist of opportunities to gather some baseline information concerning their overall thoughts and feelings on specific topics related to the project's SMART goals. Based on the information obtained the SW Leadership team in conjunction with the campus administrators will assess the campus readiness of the project and pivot their motivational resources based on campus community responses. Our goal is to ensure that the district has designed motivational techniques that not only fit the scope of the work but are motivating to each community.

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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.

1. A parent advisory council will be made up of parents within all three campuses. Parents placed on the council will be monetarily compensated for their time and work to support building a bridge between parents and the school community.
2. The council will meet on a monthly basis to discuss a variety of topics specific to student engagement, attendance, discipline and social/emotional health. Additionally, the parent advisory council will provide a collaborative parent perspective on trends within the SWISD community across elementary, middle school and high school. Each meeting will have 1-3 district facilitators that will support the grant project and have knowledge and experience specific to the topic of the month.
3. Based in part on recommendations from the Parent Advisory Council, parent training and/or engagement sessions will be provided throughout the school year on a quarterly basis that will be opened up to the school communities that the Parent Advisory Council represents. The topics will be determined by the Parent Advisory Council in conjunction with data/information provided by district facilitators.
4. To support a more universal perspective of parent involvement, the quarterly activities will provide virtual learning opportunities through social media and video recorded sessions in order to give flexibility to parents who may have limited opportunity to attend sessions face to face.

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

1. In order to ensure that each campus has adequate staff to support the Student Support Program, each campus will be assigned one SW Leadership Team Member to meet with the campus upon being awarded to re-evaluate the current make-up of their staff to identify specific staff who will assist with key components of the project goals. Based on the review the district will adjust or add support staff to meet the current needs of the campus. This may include school psychology graduate students through the district's partnership with the psychology department at the University of Texas San Antonio or contracted positions to assist with the work.
2. For each targeted role for the project, the district will have an outline of responsibilities that can be reviewed at the campus to determine who of their could potentially meet those needs. In some instances based on the school community the SW Leadership team may break up specific roles to ensure that all elements of the project are covered with efficacy.
3. This process will be revisited every quarter to determine if all needs are being met or if additional support is needed to reach the next milestone.

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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.

While the district has a vareity of initiative that address the triangulation of data that we have chosen to target within the grant, our hope is that by being awarded we can gain support and resources to find a cohesive way in which all elements can work seamlessly together with efficacy in the student support team structure. While each element listed below adds merit to the district's initiative to address safety, social & emotional wellbeing and student engagement, the collectedive initiatives has not been fully realized. Our hope is that a stronger connection to a team based approach for all initiatives will be realized through the Student Support Team Structure.

1. SW Cares Teams: This multidisciplinary team provides social-emotional support to all students through a team based approach when a referral is made. Ultimately the data is used to develop and monitor intervention plans in Panorama.
2. District Support Team Meetings (Threat Assessment & Debriefing): Campuses utilize Navigate 360 as a means to document support efforts and outcomes.
3. Daily attendance breakdown by campus: Campuses use this information to determine which students campus truancy officers may need to connect with on campus or via the home environment.
4. Panorama SEL Survey Data: Data is used to track interventions and supports that have been tried and to give account to any progress being made based on the intervention implemented.
5. Discipline data documented in Frontline: Data is used to track various information such as trends in specific offenses, recidivism rates of specific students and potential over representation over specific population of students on a campus.

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.

The primary way in which the district identified student support needs is through the SW Cares Teams that each campus maintains with support from the district level SW Cares Team. These teams are multidisciplinary teams established on each campus to provide social-emotional support to all individuals. Campus support teams may meet weekly to identify students needing specialized, intensive services and to obtain and share relevant data (this is based on the individual campus needs). Ultimately, that data is used to develop and monitor intervention plans in Panorama and/or resolve threat assessments that have been initiated for a particular student. SW Cares Campus teams are made up of Campus administrators, counselors, school workers, school psychologists, nurses, campus teachers and other relevant campus staff. When SW Cares teams meet on a specific student where additional services outside the school district may be relevant, the team may consider a referral to Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine as an option.

The Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT) is a partnership SWISD as with UT Health which allows campuses to refer families for immediate mental health and other related services. Students no longer have to wait weeks or months to get mental health support.

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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.

SWISD has a long standing relationship with ESC 20 to support various needs within the district. This includes professional development, training, coaching, monthly directors meetings, program evaluations, technical assistance with various compliance components and access to resources across various departments.

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 previously stated the district has worked to establish a foundation of support and services to address mental health, behavioral and emotional health, physical health and wellness of all students. However, our hope is that by being awarded the grant, our district can gain access to coaching, professional development, resources, program evaluation and other means to support our growth to build more connected school communities. Our goal is to enhance and refine our efforts to ensure support can be maintained and replicated across the district in each of our core areas of support.

- 1. SW Cares Teams & District Support Team Meetings (Threat Assessment): With grant funds our district hopes to gain access to coaching and support to systematize our team approach. This may include assistance in creating training material and ensuring that all district staff understand when to initiate a threat assessment.
- 2. Student Engagement: With grant funds our district hopes to gain access to coaching, training and support in creating unique and actionable ways to increase student attendance and engagement across all three campuses.
- 3. Student Behavior & Disciplinary Action: With grant funds our district hopes to gain access to coaching, training and support in creating viable alternatives to disciplinary action. This includes gaining access to tools to address behavioral needs of students or relevant replacement behaviors that can be taught.
- 4. Data driven decisions for SEL surveys: We hope to gain access to coaching/training and support in utilizing panorama data to support the social and emotional development of all students.

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		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

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

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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.	Staff Advisory Stipends	200000
2.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	69600
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	116000
8.	Mental Health Student Support	125000
9.	Professional Development	125000
10.	Social & Emotional Student Support	125000

Supplies and Materials

11.	Social & Emotional Support Materials	150000
12.	Student Engagement Materials	150000
13.	Behavior Intervention Support Materials	150000

Other Operating Costs

15.	Parent & Student Advisory Council Compensation	50000
16.	Off Site Conference & Training	75000
17.	Parent & Community Engagement Activities/Training Refreshments	10000

Debt Services

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

Capital Outlay

20.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Direct administrative costs: 1345600

Indirect administrative costs: 134560

TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED: 1480160

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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"/>	
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