



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

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

Pre-award costs: ARE NOT permitted for this grant

Required attachments: N/A

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

1. Applicant Information

Name of organization: Texarkana ISD

Campus name: CDN: 019907 Vendor ID: 756002579 ESC: 8 UEI:

Address: 4241 Summerhill Road City: Texarkana ZIP: 75503 Phone: 9037937561

Primary Contact: Holly Tucker Email: holly.tucker@txkisd.net Phone: 9037937561

Secondary Contact: Anita Clay Email: anita.clay@txkisd.net Phone: 9037937561

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: Anita Clay Title: CFO Email: anita.clay@txkisd.net

Phone: 9037937561 Signature: [Signature] Date: 7.18.23

Grant Writer Name: Holly Tucker Signature: Holly Tucker Date: 7.18.23

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
Reduce the number of student behavior disciplinary incidents	Establish a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment by building connections that make students less likely to engage in harmful, threatening, or violent behavior at school, including bullying and harassment, and threatening behavior resulting in reductions in behavioral and disciplinary incidents
Increase campus staff capacity regarding behavior management, social/emotional, and trauma-responsive approaches.	Utilize partnership with the Texas Center for Student Supports and regional ESCs to access coaching, job-embedded professional development, and training to implement a Student Support Program that includes improving school climate, a student support team structure, and behavioral threat assessment implementation
Increase the student attendance rate	Develop a Student Support Program that supports improvements in school climate, identifies students in need of support, establishes a student support structure, incorporates case management to monitor support, and a data collection and reporting system. The outcome would be an increased sense of belonging for students resulting in increased attendance rates.

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.

By June 2025, the Texarkana ISD Student Support Program will be successfully developed and implemented at a Texarkana ISD elementary, middle, and high school campus through collaboration with the Texas Student Support Center and the Region 8 Educational Service Center. Success will be evidenced by a 5% decline in student behavior disciplinary incidents and an 2% increase in student attendance rate utilizing 2022-23 as the baseline.

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

Establish partnerships with Texas Center for Student Supports and Region 8 Educational Service Center. Establish the parent, student, and staff advisory committee to provide input on the establishment of the Student Support Program. Conduct monthly Advisory Committee meetings to engage the team in feedback and planning for program implementation. Attend Texas Center for Student Supports training that will be used by Texarkana ISD to support improvements in school climate, early identification of student needs, systems that support students, implementation tracking, and data collection and reporting

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

Utilize the Family Engagement Playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to build partnerships with parents and families prior to the implementation of the Student Support Program. Incorporate a case management system that aligns with the expectations of the Texas Center for Student Supports. Identify and train individual campus Student Support Team members in advance of the start of the 2024-25 school year. Implement the Student Support Program at all three participating campuses

Third-Quarter Benchmark

Implementation of the data collection and reporting system developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to gather and analyze data to monitor the efficacy of the implementation. Data review for program impact on data related to increases the desired outcome: reduces the number of student behavior discipline incidents, increase in attendance, reduction in removals from class.

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.

The goal of program evaluation data should be to point out needs and necessary changes to modify and adapt the program design. A good evaluation will assess program fidelity by asking "Is it providing what it was intended to?" The evaluation should also identify collaborative goal setting, a timeline, and if continuous quality improvement is happening. Once the evaluation is delivered, any challenges and or key findings will be turned into prioritized needs and written as action steps to improve the program. These changes will be measured over time to ensure needs are being met.

Should the benchmarks and summative goal not show progress, the evaluation data will be analyzed. If progress is not where it needs to be, changes to program processes will be made with the feedback and support of the Texas Center for Student Supports, the Regional Education Service Center, and other district stakeholders. Utilization of the evaluation data to refine and adjust the program with various stakeholder groups will strengthen the effectiveness of the program at the three District campuses creating a sustainable and reproducible Student Support Program.

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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.

Texarkana ISD has two high schools, one middle school, and nine elementary schools. The middle school will participate by default. The following criteria will determine the high school and elementary school that will participate.

Campus Participation Criteria:

serves all grade levels for the type of campus

2022-23 discipline incident count is in the top third of the same campus type

2022-23 student attendance rate is less than the district rate of 92.9%

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

Texarkana ISD will hold Strong Connections: Student Support Program overview sessions with campus leaders and staff to provide the purpose and compelling and clear vision of the program in regards to their campus. As a follow-up to these sessions, volunteers from the campus who connect with the vision will be identified for an active role in the campus Student Support Program. Utilizing these volunteers to collaborate in developing a strategic vision for the program at the individual campus level empowers and creates buy-in for the work. The district will clearly communicate its commitment to removing barriers, providing support, and celebrating success along the way.

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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.

The district will provide information to parents and families early on regarding the implementation of the Student Support Program in other written and in-person overview sessions. Opportunities will be provided to allow parents to participate in the Advisory Committee which will be an integral part of the development of the Student Support Program in Texarkana ISD. The district is engaging in a mentor program at both the middle and high school campus. Depending on the allowable strategies that are recommended through the Texas Center for Student Support, the district looks to continue this program as part of the development of the Student Support Program. The mentor would include community members, parents, and district/campus staff. The district seeks to establish a Parent/Family Resource Center for providing support to parents and families whose child has been identified through the Student Support Team in need of support. The Parent/Family Resource Center looks to provide support in the form of training, additional mental health, and social/emotional support utilizing community health and mental health partners within the community.

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

Texarkana ISD continues to demonstrate our success with internal and external communications and relationships with our staff. The LEA has required all staff members to train in mental health first aid and trauma-based practices. Texarkana ISD is confident that our current staff in these areas, coupled with content and job-specific experts, could provide a critical service throughout the district and community. Leveraging our current structures and personnel, we would quickly become a collaborative partner that demonstrates a willingness to serve, lead, and ignite this work to implement safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments for students in Texas.

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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.

Participating campuses will receive the Texas Center for Student Supports guidance and training that will be used by the district and campus to support improvements in school climate, early identification of student needs, systems that support students, implementation tracking, and data collection and reporting. The campuses will have the autonomy to identify and select resources from the curated suite of supports and programs that are validated to improve climate and support using evidence-based practices based on their campus type with any cost associated with these resources provided through the grant funds.

Currently, campus behavioral threat assessment teams exist at each campus and at the district level. The campus behavioral threat assessment team and the campus student support team align in many ways and depending on the vision of the student support team from the Texas Center for Student Supports, members of the existing threat assessment team could also be part of the campus student support team. The members of the team utilize the threat assessment procedures provided by the Texas School Safety Center in the Behavioral Threat Assessment Training.

The student support team structure will incorporate current systems by aligning the proactive approach to student supports to the behavioral threat assessment process. The goal is to have early identification of students in need of behavior, social/emotional, and mental health supports early on based on student signs of need. Should more aggressive signs arise warranting a behavioral threat assessment there will be a record of strategies and support implemented that documents the effectiveness.

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.

Support needs are currently identified through MTSS, 504 and ARD Committees, as well as, on an individual basis by teachers, counselors, nurses/health professionals and administrators when a need is identified by a parent/caregiver, a student, or observed by a staff member.

TISD has developed a list of internal and external mental health resources that is provided to families when a student exhibits a threat of self-harm or other significant mental health needs. This is a general list that provides information about the services available locally. School counselors regularly communicate with outside providers that are known to see students that are also receiving school services (i.e., Community HealthCore). Previously, district staff were trained in Mental Health First Aid. This upcoming school year TISD will be piloting Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT).

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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.

TISD partners with Region 8 ESC for inservice/training/continuing education for staff and administrators and consults with Region 8 specialists and special services liaisons to assist with program development, fidelity, and progress monitoring, Behavior Screener pilot and selection, behavior intervention support, etc. The district has designated Trainer of Trainers (TOT) for crisis intervention and prevention (Handle with Care) via Region 8 ESC. These TOTs are responsible for training campus core teams annually. In addition to mental health and behavior, the district partners with the service centers by joining educational cooperatives (i.e., Teaching and Learning Cooperative, Outdoor Education, Early Childhood, etc.) that provide all TISD staff with opportunities for professional development. The district consistently utilizes the services of Region 8 for training and consulting within TISD for academics and mental health and wellness.

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.

The following are ways TISD would supplement current work to improve our services and support:

- Extend community-based parent training provided by TISD professionals and staff regarding mental health needs commonly seen in students, nutrition, the importance of well-child visits, various stages of development, sleep schedules, discipline in the home, etc.
- Expand our special education resource fair to include mental and physical health organizations.
- Expanding our Behavior Screener/AIMSWEB (BASC-3 BESS) to include assessment support (i.e, online, evidence-based, classroom intervention resources, individualized student behavior benchmark, and progress monitoring).
- Extend current Trauma-informed support/Effective interventions for Tier 2 & 3 Behaviors professional development to include classroom/support teachers, campus administrators, and classroom paraprofessionals.
- Develop proactive, evidence-based, and restorative system changes to improve student behavior and emotional health within our ISS and DAEP settings.
- Utilize the Texas Center for Student Support team.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment: 6,782

10. Enter the Regional Educational Service Center that serves the LEA: 8

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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	6,782
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	158
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	6,940
4. Total current-year grant allocation	1,000,000
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	0
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	1,000,000
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	144
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	22,752

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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.	Behavior Interventionist	\$181,824
2.	Extra Duty Pay/Stipends for Campus Support Team	\$25,000
3.	Staff for Parent/Family Resource Center	\$150,000
4.	Counselor at Discipline Alternative Education Program	\$75,000
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.	Rent for Parent/Family Resource Center	\$30,000
9.	Professional Development for Trauma and Mental Health	\$40,000
10.		

Supplies and Materials

11.	Materials for case management and data collection and reporting systems	\$30,000
12.	Behavior Screener Assessment Support and Miscellaneous supplies	\$75,000
13.	Miscellaneous Supplied	\$75,000

Other Operating Costs

15.	Stakeholder travel for training and conferences	\$45,000
16.	Miscellaneous other operating costs	\$25,000
17.		

Debt Services

18.		0
19.		0

Capital Outlay

20.	Furnishments for the Parent/Family Resource Center	\$50,000
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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"/>
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