



# 2024-2025 Stronger Connections Grant

Competitive Grant Application: Due 11:59 p.m. CT, July 18, 2023

NOGA ID

Application stamp-In date and time

TEA will only accept grant application documents by **email**, including competitive grant applications and amendments. Submit grant applications and amendments as follows:

Competitive grant applications and amendments to [competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov](mailto:competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov).

The application **MUST** bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement

**Authorizing legislation:** PL 117-169 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	LaPorte Independent School District							
Campus name	<input type="text"/>	CDN	101916	Vendor ID	<input type="text"/>	ESC4	UEI	<input type="text"/>
Address	1002 San Jacinto Street	City	LaPorte	ZIP	77571	Phone	281-604-7010	
Primary Contact	Janci Alfaro	Email	alfaroj@lpsd.org			Phone	281-604-7123	
Secondary Contact	Rebecca Brown	Email	BrownR@lpsd.org			Phone	281-604-7024	

### 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):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant application, guidelines, and instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> Debarment and Suspension Certification      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Provisions and Assurances                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying Certification                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances             | <input type="checkbox"/> 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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**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

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- 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

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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
Increase student utilization of mental health supports by 50% Decrease the # of disciplinary incidents by 30%	Develop a systematic approach through tier I supports to address mental, behavioral, emotional and physical wellness of students. Develop referral pathways that school staff can access to provide supports and interventions for tier II and tier III supports.
Increase the number of parent involvement through education, coaching and resources by 50%	Provide on-demand parent training and coaching for parents. Establish partnerships with parents, families and community organizations to serve as a resources to parents with mental, behavioral, emotional, and health needs.
Improve student attendance by 30% by providing student and staff training on mental health issues and positive behavior supports	Implement a district-wide positive behavior support system which addresses student behavioral issues. Establish a district wide curriculum for Social and Emotional Learning and align with district universal supports for each tier.

**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 the end of the academic year, implement a comprehensive school-wide program that includes enhanced safety protocols, mental health resources, increased parent involvement, and targeted training for teachers and staff, resulting in a measurable increase of student well-being and academic performance, as measured by a 30% decrease in disciplinary incidents and a 50% increase in positive feedback from students, parents, and staff surveys.

**6. Measurable Progress**

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

**First-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the first- quarter, complete the implementation of enhanced safety protocols, mental health resources, increased parent involvement, and targeted training for teachers and staff. This includes conducting safety audits, establishing partnerships with mental health organizations, organizing parent engagement events, and providing training sessions for teachers and staff. Additionally, administer a survey to students, parents, and staff to assess their perception of the implemented changes and gather feedback for further improvements.

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

**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the second-quarter, monitor the implementation of enhanced safety protocols, mental health resources, increased parent involvement, and targeted training for teachers and staff. Start collecting student data on attendance, interventions, referrals, and academics. This includes conducting safety audits, monitor partnerships with mental health organizations, survey parent engagement events, and continue providing training sessions for teachers and staff. Review feedback from survey information sent to students, parents, and staff to assess their perception of the implemented changes and gather feedback for further improvements.

**Third-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the third-quarter, monitor and adjust the safety protocols, mental health resources, and parent involvement activities, and evaluate training for teachers and staff. Pull programmatic data including: student discipline, threat assessments, attendance, and academic data. Gather data from participants who attended parent trainings, resources, and parent coaching. Gather survey data from audits, events, and teacher training. Use this information to track This includes conducting safety audits, establishing partnerships with mental health organizations, organizing parent engagement events, and providing training sessions for teachers and staff. Additionally, administer a survey to students, parents, and staff to assess their perception of the implemented changes and gather feedback for further improvements.

**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.

We will use a systematic process to evaluate data collection and analysis to help us identify areas where the program is not showing the desired progress or outcomes. By analyzing the data, it becomes possible to pinpoint specific areas or aspects of the program that require modification or improvement. Also, we will use stakeholder feedback data, including students, parents, teachers, and staff. Surveys, focus groups, and interviews can provide valuable qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions of the program. This feedback helps identify areas for improvement and potential modifications. The evaluation data will be shared with the student support team, relevant stakeholders, and key decision-makers. Collaborative discussions and consultations will allow for a collective analysis of the data and brainstorming of potential modifications or adjustments to the program. Evaluation data will inform the decision-making process regarding program modifications. The data will be used as evidence to support specific strategies or interventions that have proven to be effective in addressing the identified gaps or challenges. Based on the evaluation data, modifications should be made to the program specifics, implementation strategies, resource allocation, or stakeholder involvement. These modifications will be guided by evidence and aim to address the identified gaps or challenges while aligning with the overall program goals. By identifying patterns and trends in the data, the program can be adapted and refined to ensure continuous improvement and ongoing success beyond the initial implementation phase.

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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.

We will conduct a thorough needs assessment to identify campuses with the highest student mental health needs and academic performance challenges. This assessment will involve analyzing data such as disciplinary incidents, attendance rates, and student referrals to outside agencies. We will use demographic profile of campuses, including factors such as socioeconomic status, diversity, and English language learner populations. In addition, we will evaluate the readiness and capacity of the campuses to implement and sustain the program effectively. Factors such as administrative support, staff commitment, and existing support systems will be considered to ensure that selected campuses can successfully integrate the program into their existing infrastructure. Finally, we will seek input and feedback from campus administration, school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members to provide their perspectives and recommendations in the decision-making proces to ensure that the selected campuses align with the grants purpose.

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

We will implement strategies to ensure that campus leaders and staff are committed to the success of the student support program, which includes: clear communication, leadership support, professional development, collaboration, specific and timely feedback; data results sharing, and a professional learning community structure. The student success team will build clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and the district will provide strong leadership support. We will provide ongoing support to campus leaders and staff throughout the program's implementation. This support can include regular check-ins, feedback sessions, and troubleshooting assistance to address any challenges or concerns. Data will be shared in a timely manner to use to adjust and modify the impact of the grant's impact of the targeted schools. Transparently communicating the program's progress and outcomes allows them to see the positive effects of their commitment and efforts, reinforcing their dedication. We will form professional learning communities (PLCs) or collaborative teams within campuses. These PLCs will provide a platform for campus leaders and staff to share best practices, collaborate, and support each other in implementing the program effectively. Finally, establishing a culture and climate where targeted campuses can provide feedback and suggestions for program enhancements. This ensures that their voices are heard and that adjustments can be made based on their experiences and insights.

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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.

In LaPorte, ISD resources are limited. We do not have many agencies that larger school districts surrounding us have. The school building is the lifeblood of the community. Parents reach out to the schools for all types of information and resources. Opening the lines of communication and establishing beneficial programs where access barriers are eliminated will meet the parent's needs here at the schools. Parents will be informed about the program, and we will solicit parent surveys and feedback to gather input and feedback. These surveys will ensure parents have a voice and are given a partnership in how the services are provided. We will seek culturally responsive practices to engage parents and families from diverse backgrounds. This will include providing materials and resources in multiple languages, respecting and valuing cultural differences, and recognizing each family's unique needs and perspectives. Building trust and rapport through culturally responsive approaches enhances parental support and involvement. In addition to gaining their support, parent education and skill-building workshops support their child's mental health, foster positive communication, and promote academic success. These workshops can provide strategies and resources that parents can utilize at home to reinforce the program's objectives.

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

To ensure adequate staff to support the establishment and implementation of the student support program, we will provide a needs assessment to determine the staffing needs for each campus. This assessment should consider factors such as student population, the intensity of student needs, program goals, and the desired scope of services. Based on the needs assessment, we will develop a staffing plan that outlines the roles, responsibilities, and qualifications for effective program implementation. This plan should consider positions such as program coordinators, social workers, established community partners, and other support staff as needed. Once the staffing need has been established, we will allocate budgetary resources.

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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.

If awarded the grant program, each campus will be supported in conducting behavioral threat assessments and incorporating current systems into the student support team structure through the following steps: assessment of current system, training and building professional development opportunities, establishing a student support team, developing standardized protocols, resource allocation, regular monitoring and support, and evaluation and continuous improvement.

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.

We currently use a tiered system to identify students who need various supports. Data is collected from multiple sources to gather information about the student's behavioral and mental health needs. This data includes academic and attendance records, behavior incidents, disciplinary placement, and referrals from teachers or parents. Once a student is identified, an assessment is conducted to identify targeted areas of need. We collect additional observation data, which we start through the RTI process. As we provide interventions, the level and intensity of the interventions may increase as needed. Students who move up the tiered system are referred to a higher level of intensive interventions. As the student moves through the interventions, we use established partners to work with the students and families. We collaborate with Community Youth Services, Communities in Schools, Clear Hope Counseling Center, and the Cook Center for Human Connection.

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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.

We partner with our regional center to provide training and resources to school staff to identify and address mental health issues, organize workshops for students and parents on mental health awareness, and coordinate with community mental health agencies to ensure access to appropriate services. In addressing behavioral and emotional health, we are working together to develop strategies for promoting positive behavior supports and implementing systems to streamline a district-wide behavior plan. We are utilizing the regional center to help pinpoint areas where we can work with teachers as they are working with students. This is a site-based approach which will train administrators and classroom teachers as they encounter hurdles when working with students. In delivering real-time action based learning we will use evidence-based interventions, such as social-emotional learning programs, behavioral interventions, and other types of resources.

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.

We collaborate with Community Youth Services, Communities in Schools, Clear Hope Counseling Center, and the Cook Center for Human Connection. However, we are looking to expand our partnership to provide wraparound services for our staff, students, and community. We also want to expand our collaboration with Clear Hope Wellness Center. They provide many services to LaPorte ISD, including training counselors on trauma-informed practices, suicide prevention, Mental health community connections, and emotional regulations for classroom teachers. In addition, we use Clear Hope for Tier 3 students' mental health treatment for direct, on-campus mental health services. LaPorte ISD has limited resources for mental health. There are many barriers to families receiving mental health services. The barriers are students who are uninsured, underinsured, families with limited resources, families without access to transportation, and families without the margin of emotional energy and time to overcome access barriers to mental health services for their students and families who are unaware of the steps necessary to secure mental health care. In addition, parents are seeking on-demand help with their students. We want to expand our partnership with the Cook Center for Human Connection to provide all parents with parent coaching for no cost to the families. Also, through the Cook Center, we are looking to implement Parent University training to equip parents to build protective factors for their families. All parent sessions will be in both English and Spanish. This program impacts our area because mental health resources are limited for our families with low socioeconomic status. Children need access to high-quality mental health services in our community. Currently, there is a shortage of mental health professionals willing to provide services for low or no cost to the child and families in LaPorte.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment:

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

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**10. Equitable Access and Participation**

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>

**11. PNP Equitable Services**

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

- Yes  No

*If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.*

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant?

- Yes  No

*If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.*

**Assurances**

- The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

**Equitable Services Calculation**

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

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**12. Request for Grant Funds**

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

**Payroll Costs**

1.	Parent Resource Advocate (Bilingual Preferred)	40,000
2.	Extra Duty Pay for Events on Weekends and After Hours	20,000
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	54,000
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	90,000
8.	Region 4 Service Center - Training and Materials	50,000
9.	Clear Hope Wellness Center - Training and Direct Student Services	300,000
10.	Cook Center for Human Connections - Training and Parent Coaching	140,000

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	Printed Materials and Signs for Events and Trainings	56,000
12.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
13.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Other Operating Costs**

15.	Food for Events and Trainings	50,000
16.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
17.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Debt Services**

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

**Capital Outlay**

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

Indirect administrative costs:  0

**TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:**  900,000

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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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