2024-2025 Stronger Connections Grant
Competitive Grant Application: Due 11:59 p.m. CT, July 18, 2023

TEA
Texas Education Agency ®

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 | Rocketship Public Schools Texas

Campus name | Rocketship Dennis Dunkins | CDN | 220820 | Vendor ID | 1843223079 | ESC | 11 | UEI | TQGKDW1RF

Address | 300 E. Loop 820 | City | Fort Worth | ZIP | 76112 | Phone | (682) 339-1300

Primary Contact | SaJade Miller | Email | Sjmiller@rsed.org | Phone | (682) 339-1300

Secondary Contact | Steve Ulibarri | Email | sulibarri@rsed.org | Phone | (682) 339-1300

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 | SaJade Miller | Title | Superintendent | Email | sjmiller@rsed.org

Phone | (682) 339-1300 | Signature | *SaJade Miller* (DocuSigned by) | Date | 7/18/2023

Grant Writer Name | Rosa Baeza | Signature | *Rosa Baeza* (DocuSigned by) | Date | 7/18/2023

⦿ Grant writer **is** an employee of the applicant organization.   ◯ Grant writer is **not** an employee of the applicant organization.

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CDN 220820 | Vendor ID 1843223079 | Amendment #

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
Increased implementation and quality of trauma informed practices in our classrooms	Select a research based approach/curriculum to embed trauma informed practices within our model.Participate in professional development aligned to trauma informed approach/curriculum.Provide ongoing professional development and coaching to all staff on the implementation and quality of trauma informed practices within our classrooms.
Decrease the number of behavioral incidents on our campuses	Develop and implement a comprehensive system for screening and supporting students and families. Increased capacity to coach general education teachers on how to implement tier 1 strategies that will meet the needs of all of our students within the general education setting.Hire/train additional staff to implement high quality interventions and supports that meet the group and individual

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, 90% of students and families will indicate that students feel safe, supported, and connected on the annual family survey.

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

Using the results of our Social Emotional and Behavioral screener (SEBS) and the Student Wellness Survey, 10% of students will have exited from social emotional and behavioral interventions by the end of the first-quarter benchmark

25 % of the Teachers will receive a 5 or higher on the Tier 1 Culture Walkthrough forms

The number of student behavior referrals decreases by 15% from the beginning of the year to the first quarter benchmark.

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CDN 220820 | Vendor ID 1843223079 | Amendment #

6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)

Second-Quarter Benchmark

Using the results of our Social Emotional and Behavioral screener (SEBS) and the Student Wellness Survey, 15% of students will have exited from social emotional and behavioral interventions by the end of the second-quarter benchmark

50 % of the Teachers will receive a 5 or higher on the Tier 1 Culture Walkthrough forms

The number of student behavior referrals decreases by 15% from the beginning of the first-quarter benchmark to the second quarter benchmark.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

Using the results of our Social Emotional and Behavioral screener (SEBS) and the Student Wellness Survey, 20% of students will have exited from social emotional and behavioral interventions by the end of the third-quarter benchmark

75 % of the Teachers will receive a 5 or higher on the Tier 1 Culture Walkthrough forms

The number of student behavior referrals decreases by 15% from the beginning of the second-quarter benchmark to the third quarter benchmark.

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.

On a quarterly basis, school and district leadership will analyze the Social Emotional Behavioral Screener data, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, as well as the types and frequency of behavior incidents on campus to ensure that students are making progress within their interventions. Additionally, leadership will complete monthly trauma informed walkthroughs (using our Trauma Informed coaching rubric) to monitor the increase in implementation and quality of trauma informed practices.

If a statistically significant number of students (receiving interventions) aren't making progress on the SEBS, at a benchmark period, leadership will conduct a fidelity and quality implementation check to determine if this is due to an issue of implementation or a challenge with the actual interventions. Adjustments in selections of interventions will be made as necessary based on student data. Additionally, leadership staff will review tier 1 behavior referral data to examine if a student is generalizing the skills they are acquiring (within interventions) across settings. Individualized responses will be based on the type of behavior. If there is a particular need that is prevalent in a particular group of students, practice measures will be implemented that directly respond to the identified needs.This same approach will be used to address staff implementation of trauma informed practices. Staff professional development will directly reflect the need that is apparent during Tier 1 Culture Walkthroughs.

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CDN 220820   Vendor ID 1843223079   Amendment #

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.

☒ 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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CDN `220820`   Vendor ID `1843223079`   Amendment # [ ]

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.

Rocketship Dennis Dunkins Elementary and Rocketship Explore Elementary will be the campus participating in the Students Support Program.We will also use the following criteria when deciding upon program implementation moving forward:
-Geographic Proximity. The campuses will be located in close proximity to each other so that students and families can easily access services.
-Similar Student Demographics. The campuses will have similar student demographics, such as the same percentage of students from low-income families or the same percentage of students with disabilities. This will help to ensure that the Student Support Program is effective for all students.
-Shared Goals and Priorities. The campuses will have shared goals and priorities for student success. This will help to ensure that the Student Support Program is aligned with the overall goals of the school districts.
-Existing Partnerships. The campus will have existing partnerships with community organizations that can provide support to students and families. This will help to ensure that the Student Support Program is able to leverage existing resources.
-Leadership Commitment. Each campus should have strong leadership committed to the Student Support Program. This will help to ensure that the program is effectively implemented and sustained.

In addition to these criteria, Rocketship Texas will also consider the following factors when identifying other campuses to participate in the Student Support Program: student/community need; the availability of resources; the willingness of the community to support the program; the potential for the program to make a significant impact on student achievement.

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

Rocketship Texas will implement the following strategies to foster staff commitment:Data Analysis and Reflection: As a part of the start of school professional development and ongoing learning opportunities for staff members, we will highlight data points that drive on student and family well-being. It is important tha entire system model the data and other indicators for trauma; Professional development and training: Provide comprehensive training on related topics to staff members. Offer workshops, seminars, and ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills. This will enable them to better understand and address the needs of students with behavioral and mental health challenges; Clear communication: Establish open lines of communication with staff members about the importance of the program. Clearly articulate the program's goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. Regularly update staff on program developments and provide opportunities for them to ask questions and provide input; Inclusion and collaboration: Involve staff members in the planning and implementation of the mental and behavioral health support program. Encourage their input and ideas, as they have valuable insights based on their experience working directly with students. Create opportunities for collaboration, such as regular team meetings or working groups, to foster a sense of ownership and shared responsibility; Resources and support: Ensure that staff members have access to the necessary resources and support to effectively implement the program. This includes providing adequate staffing, materials, and tools. Additionally, offer ongoing support from mental health professionals or consultants who can provide guidance, consultation, and assistance when needed; Recognition and appreciation: Acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of staff members in promoting mental and behavioral health. Recognize their contributions through verbal praise, written acknowledgments, or staff appreciation events. Celebrate milestones and successes of the program as a team to foster a sense of pride and accomplishment; Professional autonomy: Empower staff members to make decisions and adapt interventions

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RFA/SAS # `701-23-120/634-24`   2024-2025 Stronger Connections Grant   Page 5 of 11

CDN 220820 | Vendor ID 1843223079 | Amendment #

9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

3. Describe how the LEA will engage parents and families to solicit support for the program.

Robust and widespread family engagement is one of our model's founding pillars and a hallmark of our schools. Building a strong partnership between families and schools is essential to ensuring the long-term success of our students. That is why we engage families in our school community from the very founding of each school - parents name our schools, help design our enrichment offerings, and select the school's unique fifth core value. Every fall, our teachers visit the home of every student, changing the dynamic from a parent in a teacher's classroom to a teacher in a student's home. This develops much stronger relationships with our families and a deeper understanding of how to best serve each and every student and family. This year, 85% of Rocketship Dennis Dunkins Elementary families received a home visit.

As a founding pillar of our work, Rocketship families are deeply engaged in their student's academic life and school communities and will be similarly engaged to support this programming. To support this progam, we will collaborate and provide parents and families with the services and support they need to achieve long-term stability by tailoring specific programming to each individual student and the family unit. Additionally, every year, we administer a family survey to collect feedback about overall satisfaction, student learning, and relationships. We will leverage these surveys to use that data collected to inform any changes to our programming throughout the year and be responsive to our family needs.

By deeply engaging our parents in their child's education and our school community, our parents become powerful advocates for their students and their communities.

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

The Leadership team is committed to establishing and implementing a strong Student Support Program. As such, we have the support and commitment from our Superintendent to adequately staff this work.The team will consist of our:
- Director of Schools
- Grant administrator to manage the grant logistics
- Students Services Coordinator

The Director of Schools will work closely with the Student Support Services team and manage our Students Services Coordinator. The Director of School will support and ensure our team has the resources and training to implement a strong progam.

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CDN 220820   Vendor ID 1843223079   Amendment #

9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

5. Describe how each of the three campuses that 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.

Rocketship Texas conducts behavioral threat assessments using a multi-faceted approach.
Formation of a Safety and Security Team: We have begun work on creating a Threat Assessment Team comprised of professionals with expertise in counseling, psychology, social work, administration, and law enforcement. This team will be responsible for conducting threat assessments and developing intervention plans; Establish Assessment Procedures: The Safety and Security Team is developing clear procedures for conducting behavioral threat assessments. These procedures should outline the steps to be followed when a potential threat is identified, ensuring a systematic and consistent approach; Identify Behaviors of Concern: Rocketship Texas is establishing a list of behaviors that are considered potential threats or indicators of possible harm to self or others. These behaviors may include verbal threats, aggressive acts, possession of weapons, or evidence of severe emotional distress; Reporting Mechanisms: We are in the process of establishing a reporting system that allows students, teachers, parents, and staff to report concerns or observations about a student's behavior. This can be done through anonymous reporting forms, designated staff members, or an online reporting system; Initial Assessment: We have conducted two initial assessments using an active shooter drill to gather relevant information about our response to an active threat; Intervention Planning: The School Safety and Security Team will be working to develop an intervention plan tailored to address the specific needs of students and families. The plan may include counseling, mentoring, academic support, referral to external services, or involvement of other support personnel; Documentation and Monitoring: Throughout the assessment process and intervention implementation, our Safety and Security Team will maintain detailed records documenting their actions, observations, and any changes in the student's behavior. Regular monitoring and follow-up assessments should occur to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention plan: We are working to integrate behavioral threat assessments into the student support team

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.

At Rocketship Texas, we use a myriad of indicators to identify student support needs. Relationships are the foundation of our model and allow us to identify when a family is in crisis or in need of additional support. In addition to a culture of family connections, we leverage a systematic approach using a reliable instrument. We hold weekly grade-level meetings to review students on the radar, their needs, and responses to interventions. Additionally, Rocketship uses a Social Emotional Behavioral Screener to understand the behavioral and social emotional needs of students.
The screener consists of 12 items that teachers use to rate their classroom of students.
There are 7 externalizing items and 5 internalizing items.
The results are used to inform decision-making about what interventions should be provided to students.
The MTSS team determines if there are any additional partnerships or interventions that students need.
In addition to school based interventions, resources can include connecting families with community based supports.
Rocketship partners with Texas Christian University and an independent professional counselor to provide mental and behavioral health services.
The screener is administered every six weeks.
The results of the screener are used to create individual student plans.
The MTSS team includes teachers, school counselors, and administrators.

Rocketship's community based partners include mental health clinics, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations.

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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.

Rocketship is excited to continue their partnership with the Regional 11 Education Service Center. We currently attend their Special Education Director Meetings and are participating in the Tarrant County School Mental Health Learning Community for the 23.24 school year. Our Director of Schools regularly participates in curriculum development and assessment training. As our emerging bilingual program is expanding, we have chosen to receive professional development from our ESC to ensure we are following federal and state guidelines as well as implementing best practices. Additionally, our Board Members are participating in the Lone Star Governance provided by our ESC.

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.

With support from this grant, we will be able to fund a Student Support Services Coordinator who will be integral in the implementation of this grant. The Student Support Services Coordinator, in partnership with our behavioral team, will craft a range of learning, behavioral and emotional supports for every Rocketeer in our school. We will also prioritize having a diverse Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) system that consists of a Universal Screener to identify our students' internalizing and externalizing needs and a student survey to ensure that our students feel safe, connected, and supported. We have partnered with TCU to provide two interns per campus to provide academic and behavioral support to each campus.

The Student Support Program team will analyze the Universal Screener and Student Survey data to match students with evidence-based interventions that will help them achieve their social-emotional learning (SEL), behavioral, and academic goals.

Concurrently, the team will support our instructional program to help students effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to build critical life skills. Our staff provides daily community meetings and leverages teachable moments throughout the day by facilitating a conversation, whether class-wide or between two students throughout the day.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment: 800

10. Enter the Regional Educational Service Center that serves the LEA: 11

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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	800
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	0
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	800
4. Total current-year grant allocation	500,000
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	10,000
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	490,000
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	612.50
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	0

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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.	Student Services Coordinators	80,000
2.	Grant Administrator	20,000
3.	Faculty Grant Incentives	40,000
4.	School Grant Liasions	40,000
5.		

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	30,000
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	50,000
8.	Campus Operations Staff Support	40,000
9.		
10.		

Supplies and Materials

11.	Curriculum	20,000
12.	Printing	20,000
13.	Digital Resource Development	50,000
14.		

Other Operating Costs

15.	Family Engagement	40,000
16.	Marketing	30,000
17.	Training & Progressional Development	30,000

Debt Services

18.		
19.		

Direct administrative costs:	10,000
Indirect administrative costs:	
TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:	500,000

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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

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