



College 1st Program Overview

Grant Application Description

Program Overview

The College 1st Program is a research-based, TEKS-aligned college and career readiness initiative that empowers middle and high school students—especially from underserved and historically marginalized communities—through immersive, hands-on learning experiences known as **CAMPs** (Career Awareness and Mentorship Programs).

Since 2013, College 1st has partnered with dozens of federally and state-funded programs—including GEAR UP, TRIO, ACE, Migrant Education, McKinney-Vento, and P-TECH—to help students explore postsecondary pathways, gain career awareness, and develop the 21st-century skills needed for success in college, career, and life.

Each CAMP session combines **project-based learning**, **career simulations**, and **real-world mentorship**—bridging academic concepts with real-life application. Students design Mars colonies, build electric vehicles, simulate mock surgeries, solve forensic cases, and pitch business ideas, all while mentored by college students and industry professionals who reflect the communities they serve.

Program Components

The College 1st Program includes:

- **College & Career Themed CAMPs**

Hands-on enrichment aligned with TEKS and CCRS standards. Career fields include STEM, Health Sciences, Architecture, Forensics, Business, Media Arts, Environmental Engineering, and more.

- **Real-World Mentorship**

Students are mentored by trained college leaders and professionals—many of whom are first-generation graduates and role models.

- **Family Engagement Sessions (Bilingual)**

Virtual or on-site workshops that equip parents with tools to support their children's academic journey (HB5-aligned).

- **Data Collection & Outcome Reporting**

Pre/post surveys and student impact data are collected for each CAMP and provided to partner organizations for grant compliance and impact tracking.

Measurable Program Goals

- Improve student academic achievement
- Increase school attendance and engagement
- Ignite early college and career planning
- Strengthen family-school partnerships
- Promote equity and access to high-growth careers

Alignment & Compliance

The College 1st Program is aligned with:

- **House Bill 5 (83rd Texas Legislature)**
- **Texas College & Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)**
- **Federal and State Program Objectives** (GEAR UP, TRIO, Migrant, McKinney-Vento, etc.)
- **Social-Emotional Learning and 21st-Century Skills Frameworks**

Why Add College 1st to Your Grant Proposal?

Turnkey Implementation – Full planning, facilitation, logistics, and follow-up included

Student-Centered & Data-Driven – Proven strategies with measurable outcomes

High Engagement – Hands-on learning with real-world impact

Bilingual & Culturally Relevant – Serving diverse communities across Texas

Grant-Aligned – Supports goals in academic enrichment, STEM exploration, postsecondary readiness, family engagement, and equity