

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

FY23 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act: Stronger Connections Grant

Request for Application Release Date: May 15, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is soliciting applications for the Stronger Connections Grant (SCG), funded by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. The purpose of this grant is to improve conditions for student learning by encouraging schools to implement a comprehensive plan incorporating evidence-based activities, programs, and practices to create safer and healthier learning environments which promote positive school climates as outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title IV, Part A (ESEA Title IV-A) Section 4108. Stronger Connections Grant funds must be used by LEAs to support schools within the LEA to develop, enhance or expand their School Strengthening Work Plan (Work Plan), submitted to the DC Department of Behavioral Health. LEAs may apply for SCG funds to support school projects that build upon or strengthen their Work Plan to increase the impact of the plan. Project activities must be allowable under ESEA Title IV-A, Section 4108 uses of funds, listed [here](#). SCG funds may not be used for personnel or subcontract expenditures for mental or behavioral health service providers.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria: SCG funds will be awarded to LEAs through a competitive grant process. To be eligible to apply in the competitive grant process an LEA must meet the following definition of a high need LEA:

Any LEA that meets one of the following criteria:

1. Eligible for the Title I-A grant in fiscal year 2023 (FY23)
OR
2. An LEA with at least 30% of students from households living in poverty and at least one school with a rate of chronic absenteeism greater than 10% (either all students or one the specific groups of students identified in the statewide accountability system).

The list of LEAs that meet the definition of high-need LEAs is [here](#).

Eligible applicants must attend one of the mandatory pre-application webinars and submit notice of intent to apply.

Applications will be scored in the following areas: prioritized activities, high-need school, project description, connection to school strengthening work plan, evidence-based, stakeholder engagement, and budget.

Length of Award: The award period for this grant begins on July 1, 2023 and ends on September 30, 2026. Applicants will be required to complete a continuation application each fiscal year.

Available Funding for Award: The total amount of anticipated funding available for this award period is up to \$4,591,374. LEAs may apply for funding up to \$200,000 per school project. The requirements of ESEA Title IV-A apply to these funds, including the supplement, not supplant requirement (ESEA section 4110); the maintenance of effort requirement (ESEA section 8521); and the requirement to provide equitable services to private schools (applies to DCPS only) (ESEA section 8501).

Application Process: A panel or panels of external reviewers will be convened to review, score, and rank each application based on the scoring rubric. The review panel(s) will be composed of neutral, qualified, professional individuals selected for their expertise, knowledge, and/or related experiences. Applications are ranked by reviewer scores and the highest-ranking applications are funded until available funding is exhausted. OSSE will make all final award decisions. The application will require LEAs to upload the School Strengthening Work Plan submitted to the DC Department of Behavioral Health for each school with a project in the application.

- Grant application opens: May 15, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.
- Attend one mandatory pre-application webinar
- Submit a notice of intent to apply
- Application Deadline: June 30, 2023, by 3:00 p.m.
- Grant Recipients Announced and Awarded: July 2023

The mandatory pre-application webinars will be held on the following dates:

- Thursday May 25, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Wednesday May 31, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Webinar registration links will be included in the RFA. Each applicant must have at least one representative attend one of the above webinars to meet the attendance requirements for this grant. Webinar attendance is tracked electronically through registration and online attendance.

The notice of intent to apply will be available in the RFA and must be submitted to Mildred.Washington@dc.gov by May 24, 2023, by 3:00 p.m.

For additional information regarding this competition, please contact Mildred Washington, Grant Specialist, OSSE at Mildred.Washington@dc.gov or 202-724-7870.

The RFA will be released on May 15, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. on the OSSE Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant [website](#) under Application and Funding and on the Serve D.C. website. Applications must be completed and submitted through OSSE's online Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) [here](#) by June 30, 2023, by 3:00 p.m.