



**BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT
STRONGER CONNECTIONS GRANT PROGRAM**

Request for Applications

Intent to Apply Forms Due: April 28th, 2023, by 4pm

Applications Due: May 26th, 2023, by 4pm

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Overview

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) provides funding to support SEAs, LEAs and schools in establishing safe, healthy, and supportive learning opportunities and environments. Funding will be awarded competitively to high-need LEAs in order to establish a safer and healthier learning environment, and to prevent and respond to acts of bullying, violence, and hate that impact school communities. The US Department of Education has designed the BSCA funding opportunity in recognition of the fact that local evidence-based school safety and climate plans, depend on meaningful engagement between school and LEA leaders and students, parents, families, and community members, and strong relationships between students and adults. These connections are vital for ensuring school safety and climate plans are tailored to local conditions, lived experiences, and needs; well-designed; effectively implemented; and clearly communicated, including to families. LEA plans to create safe, healthy, and supportive schools should reflect a comprehensive set of evidence-based components.

Background

This program is authorized under Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to be distributed to eligible LEAs through competitive subgrants. Funds under this program may be used only for activities authorized under section 4108 of the ESEA. The fundamental requirements of Title IV, Part A also apply to these funds, including supplement not supplant (ESEA section 4110); maintenance of effort (ESEA section 8521); and the requirement to provide equitable services to private schools (ESEA section 8501.)

Eligibility

Funding availability is limited to high-need LEAs. For the purpose of this grant program a high-need LEA is identified as:

- An LEA that exceeds the state poverty average of 51%; and
- An LEA that exceeds the state average of 31% for chronic absenteeism

Approved Activities

- Implementing comprehensive, evidence-based strategies that meet each student's social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being needs; create positive, inclusive, and supportive school environments; and increase access to place-based interventions and services.
- Engaging students, families, educators, staff, and community organizations in the selection and implementation of strategies and interventions to create safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments.
- Designing and implementing policies and practices that advance equity and are responsive to underserved students, protect student rights, and demonstrate respect for student dignity and potential.

*Funds may not be used for –

- medical services or drug treatment or rehabilitation.
- for construction, renovation, or repair of any school facility.
- for transportation.
- to develop or distribute materials, or operate programs or courses of instruction directed at youth, that are designed to promote or encourage sexual activity.
- to distribute or to aid in the distribution by any organization of legally obscene materials to minors on school grounds.
- to provide sex education or HIV-prevention education in schools unless that instruction is age appropriate and includes the health benefits of abstinence.

- to operate a program of contraceptive distribution in schools; or
- for the provision to any person of a dangerous weapon, or training in the use of a dangerous weapon.

Grant Awards and Funding Timeline

Eligible LEA's can apply for up to \$ 500,000. Funding will be awarded based upon identified needs and activities outlined in the application narrative and budget. Funding will be awarded in June of 2023 and will run through the FY24, FY25 and FY26 school years with an ending obligation date of 9/30/26. Continuation of funding beyond the initial award will not be available.

Funding Priorities

Eligible LEAs should prioritize the use of funds to increase workforce capacity in the area of student support personnel throughout the application process.

Intent to Apply

Applicants must submit a completed BSCA Intent to Apply Form (see appendix) by April 28th, 2023.

Application

Completed applications must be submitted by 4p.m. on Friday May 26th, 2023. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline. Please plan accordingly and allow for plenty of time for your LEA representatives to review and approve the application to ensure timely submission.

Technical Assistance Workshops

WVDE will hold technical assistance office hours on TEAMS to provide additional support related to the application process. Information on these workshops will be provided with the LEAs contacts listed on the intent to apply forms. Participation in these workshops is recommended but not required for submission of an application.

Submission Procedures

Steps for applying:

1. Submit the Intent to Apply form.
2. Receive access to your LEA application folder in One Drive
3. Participate in technical assistance workshops.
4. Fill out all sections of the grant application.
5. Upload all application documents to your LEA One Drive Folder
6. Email completed application PDF for official submission

Application Components

To be eligible for funding the following components must be submitted:

- Cover Sheet
 - The applicant must provide all contact and descriptive information requested in the cover sheet.
- Program Summary

- Complete a brief summary of the project including the schools being served or whether the proposed project will be district wide. Applicants should also provide a brief description of how they have engaged with families, educators and the community to develop the project.
- Application Narrative
 - Statement of Need
 - Describe the need as demonstrated through a needs assessment from multiple sources.
 - Action Plan
 - Goals – a broad statement of the intended long-range outcomes for the program
 - Objectives – a detailed statement of intended annual outcomes for the program.
 - Strategies – actions needed to meet annual objectives.
 - Outcomes – short-term, specific, attainable, measurable changes that will likely occur as a direct result of listed strategies.
 - Progress Indicators – data sources and methods used to measure short-term outcomes.
 - Evaluation Plan – the evaluation plan should describe the steps to be taken to collect evidence of completing program strategies, objectives and outcomes, the process for reviewing this information, and how such information will drive changes in program decision-making. The plan should also include a timeline that clearly aligns with the action plan.
- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Assurances and Certifications

Application Submission

Save a completed copy of the application including all signatures in PDF and email the application to shoylman@k12.wv.us. Completed applications must be received in their entirety no later than May 26, 2023, at 4pm. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Intent to Apply Form

**Bipartisan Safer Communities Act
Stronger Connections Grant Program
Notification of Intent to Apply
*Due April 28th, 2023***

Name of LEA: _____

Grant Application Contact Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

*LEA Poverty (from SY23) % _____

*LEA Chronic Absenteeism (from SY 22) % _____

*Poverty must be at least 51% and Chronic Absenteeism must be at least 31% to qualify for funding

Completed forms should be emailed to shoylman@k12.wv.us no later than April 28, 2023. Upon submission of the intent to apply form, a One Drive Folder with additional resource documents and fillable application forms will be shared with the primary grant contact listed on the form.

Appendix B: Cover Page

<p>West Virginia Department of Education Office of Federal Programs 1900 Kanawha Blvd E. Building 6 Room 700 Charleston, West Virginia 25305</p>		<p>Place an "X" by the applicable response.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Original</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Amendment: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Amendment # <input type="text"/></p> <p>Date: <input type="text"/></p>
<p>A. COVER PAGE</p> <p><i>BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT</i> STRONGER CONNECTIONS GRANT PROGRAM To be Completed by LEA</p>		
		<p>UEI # <input type="text"/></p> <p>LEA Contact <input type="text"/></p>
Mailing Address (Street, City or Town, Zip Code)		E-mail <input type="text"/>
Phone: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Fax: <input type="text"/>
<p>LEA CERTIFICATION</p> <p>Use of Funds: The applicant designated above applies for an allocation of federal assistance as appropriated under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act</p> <p>Assurances: <u>The LEA assures that the programs identified in the application will be administered and implemented in compliance with all applicable statutes, regulations, policies, and program plans under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Additionally, the LEA agrees by signing below to implement the general and program specific assurances located in the "Application Guidelines, Instructions, and Assurances" document. The assurances and signed cover page are to be retained at the county level.</u></p> <p>Certification: <u>We hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this application is correct. The LEA named above has authorized the applicant to file this application.</u></p> <p>Date of Original Submission <input type="text"/></p> <p>Applicant's Signature <input type="text"/></p> <p>Applicant's Name <input type="text"/></p> <p>Date <input type="text"/></p> <p>An electronic notice of grant award is issued by the West Virginia Department of Education through WVEIS once an application is fully approved and the allocation is available.</p>		

Appendix C: Budget and Budget Narrative

Function	Object	Location Code	Quantity	Cost	Total	Narrative Description

Appendix D: Assurances and Certifications

Each local educational agency plan shall provide assurances that the local educational agency will:

1. Use these funds for activities allowable under section 4108 of the ESEA.
2. Not use funds for the provision of any person of a dangerous weapon or training in the use of a dangerous weapon as prohibited under Section 13401 of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.
3. Provide equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools as required under section 8501 of the ESEA.
4. Follow the supplement not supplant requirements in section 4110 of the ESEA.
5. Track these funds separately from any allocation received under Title IV, Part A of the ESEA.
6. Participate in any Department evaluation of the grant program and will cooperate with any audit, monitoring or examination of records.

Certifying Official

Date