

CCIP Note #515

Re: Stronger Connections Grant (SCG) Application Process and Stakeholder Feedback

Date: November 28, 2022

To: Superintendents, Treasurers, Authorized Representatives, Fiscal Representatives and Consolidated Funding Application Contacts, Nonpublic School Principals

Stronger Connections Grant

The Stronger Connections Grant (SCG) was authorized under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA), Public Law 117-159, passed on June 25, 2022. The Ohio Department of Education (the Department) received an SCG award of \$35,078,494 on September 15, 2022. The SCG is a supplement to the Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program.

The purpose of the SCG is to provide students with safer and healthier learning environments. The SCG must be awarded competitively to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that the State Education Agency (SEA), the Ohio Department of Education, defines as “High-Need” for school health and safety. Additional details on the Stronger Connections Grant can be found [HERE](#).

Proposed Application Process

The Department acknowledges that all LEAs may have a need for school health and safety resources. The Department proposes a tiered competitive application that allows LEAs with the greatest need to receive the most support. Applicants agreeing to the grant terms and assuring they have a high need will receive an initial Stronger Connections Grant award amount based on poverty, chronic absenteeism rates and discipline referrals. LEAs that demonstrate exceptional need and a commitment to evidence-based safety and health approaches in their application will receive an additional Stronger Connections Grant award amount. Please note that equitable services are required under the Stronger Connections Grant. The Department proposes administering equitable services in a similar manner to Title IV, Part A. Additional details on Ohio’s proposed approach can be found [HERE](#).

Stakeholder Feedback

The Department is seeking feedback from stakeholders on the proposed definition of High-Need LEA and Stronger Connections Grant application process.

- The Department will hold a stakeholder meeting on **Thursday, December 8, 2022, from 4:00pm to 5:00pm**. The meeting will occur on the Teams application. The meeting link is [HERE](#).
- The Department also has a comment period **from December 6 to December 13, 2022**. During this comment period, stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments to strongerconnections@education.ohio.gov.
- The Department will continue to engage with a broad range of stakeholder groups to gather feedback on the Stronger Connections Grant application, including state agencies and community-based organizations.

Next Steps

The Department plans to release a Stronger Connections Grant application in early 2023. Additional details are forthcoming.

If you have questions, please contact strongerconnections@education.ohio.gov.