# The Wyoming Department of Education

# Stronger Connections Grant Webinar

November 28, 2023

# Thank you for joining today!

❖ The webinar is being recorded.

❖ Participants are muted upon entering the call.

❖ Please come off of mute during the Q&A time to ask a question <u>or</u> use the chat feature to pose your questions. These will be shared with participants for future reference.

❖ Please type your name, district, and answer to the following question in the chat: **What is your favorite holiday treat?**

# Agenda

- Review purpose of grant and the components of the application.

- Discuss grant timeline

- Answer questions

# Funding Source and Amounts:

- The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) of 2022 provided $1 billion in funding to states to competitively award subgrants to high need school districts.

| Wyoming's Stronger Connections Grant Award | Amount |
|---|---|
| Stronger Connections Grant Total | $4,833,025.00 |
| Allocated to Districts | $4,591,373.75 |
| State Activities (4%) | $    193,321.00 |
| State Administration (1%) | $     48,330.25 |

District Subgrantee award amounts will range from $150,000 to $450,000.

# What is a high-need LEA?

• The majority of schools within the LEA are at or above the 2022-23 state free and reduced lunch average of 34%;

• High student-to-mental health professional ratio;

• High rates of chronic absenteeism;

• High rates of exclusionary discipline;

• High rates of bullying/harassment;

• High rates of community and school violence;

• High rates of students experiencing homelessness.

• Students recently experienced a natural disaster or traumatic event;

• High rates of substance use/abuse;

• Other as determined by the district, please specify.

# Evidence of needs:

Determine your needs and possible solutions to addressing those needs.

- In the chart on Jotform, select the appropriate criteria and provide a brief text description or a link to the data that supports that need.

Example:

|  | Please select if LEA is utilizing this criteria for eligibility to qualify for this grant. | For selected criteria, provide evidence in the form of local data and/or national data to justify the selected criteria. Upload links to data, if applicable. |
|---|---|---|
| The majority of schools within the district are at or above the 22-23 state free and reduced lunch average of 34%. (District data) | ☐ | |
| The district has a high student-to-mental health professional ratio. (District data) | ☐ | |
| The district has high rates of chronic absenteeism. (Chronic absenteeism refers to students who miss 15 days or more in the school year for any reason.) | ● | Attendance rate at both Cowboy Joe High School and Brown and Gold Middle School is below 85%. |

# Engage!

The Stronger Connections Grant requires that districts consult with stakeholders during the planning process and throughout the course of the grant.

- Send surveys.

- Ask principals to share the opportunities to comment with their PTOs.

- **Ask students.**

- Ask your boots on the ground staff.

- More voices will allow you to hear safety concerns you

  may not have previously thought of.

# Equitable Services:

The LEA must continue timely consultation with interested non-public school officials on the specific services the LEA will provide to students and educators, consistent with the LEA's approved application.

- Maintain a record of the process used.

- The LEA could also choose to base the equitable services on a specific need or group of students in alignment with the services being provided to public schools.

- If an LEA is successful in receiving an SCG award, the equitable services amount will be calculated using the Title IV-A formula for equitable services and will be presented in the award packet.

# Uses:

Funds shall be used for activities that are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under section 4108 of the ESEA to provide students with safer and healthier learning environments. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Increase school-based behavioral and health service ratios
- Address student suicidal behavior through prevention programs
- Implement crisis response and behavioral threat assessments
- Evidence based practices to address a specific school safety need
- Implementation of restorative practices
- Improve physical school safety and security measures aligned to local security risk assessment and/or Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- Prevent bullying/harassment
- Substance abuse prevention and or Intervention

# GEPA

- Section 427 of the United States Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requires each applicant for funds to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

- GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

- Based on local circumstances, applicants should determine whether these or other barriers might prevent students, teachers, families etc., from such access or participation in the federally funded project or activity within the Stronger Connections Grant application.

# Evidenced-based Intervention

- LEAs are strongly encouraged to invest Stronger Connections Grant funds on evidence-based interventions (EBIs).
- "Evidence-based" means an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes. ESEA section 8101(21).

| Tier 1: Strong Evidence | Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented randomized control experimental studies. |
| --- | --- |
| Tier 2: Moderate Evidence | Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies. |
| Tier 3: Promising Evidence | Supported by one or more well-designed and well implemented correlational studies (with statistical controls for selection bias). |
| Tier 4: Demonstrates a Rationale | Practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness. |

# Resources:

## Research Clearinghouses and Technical Assistance Center Resources *(To use when building implementation activities)*

- Evidence for ESSA
- National Center on Safe and Supportive  Learning Environments
- Readiness and Emergency Management  for Schools
- SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource  Center
- SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center

- Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions  and Supports
- What Works Clearinghouse
- Best Practices Clearinghouse
- OESE Technical Assistance Centers
- School Safety

# Include evidence of:

1) Implementing comprehensive, evidence-based strategies to address students' needs; create positive, inclusive, and supportive school environments; and increase access to place-based interventions and services.

2) 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.

3) Developing policies and practices to address equity and are responsive to underserved students.

# SMART Goals to measure success:

SMART is a helpful acronym for developing objectives that are *specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound*.

- How are you going to measure the impact that your activities had on student and staff health and safety?

# Budget

- Align budget with activity category for ease of reporting.
- Use template for application.
- Additional information about reporting will be provided in the award packet.

# Sample budget: [Budget link.](#)

| Name of District: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SCG Budget Items: (by series) | Aligned to Priority Project # from Implementation Plan | Budgeted Cost (February 2024- June 2024) | Budgeted Cost (July 2024- June 2025) | Budgeted Cost (July 2025 - June 2026) |
| 100- Salaries | | Calculate total yearly cost for each item by series. | | |
| 1 FTE - Behavior Interventionist Salary @ Cowboy Elementary | 1 | $75,000.00 | $75,000.00 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| 200- Benefits | | | | |
| 1 FTE - Behavior Interventionist Benefits @Cowboy Elementary | 1 | $25,000.00 | $25,000.00 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| 300- Purchased Services (Training/PD, estimate travel, stipends, etc.): | | | | |
| Training onTeens and Trauma for ongoing student health and safety PD and family engagement @ Brown Middle School and Gold High School | 2 | | $11,000.00 | |
| Webinar Training Cybersecurity and Internet Safety for ongoing student health and safety PD and family engagement @ Brown Middle School and Gold High School | 2 | | $6,000.00 | |

| Training onTeens and Trauma for ongoing student health and safety PD and family engagement @ Brown Middle School and Gold High School | 2 | | $11,000.00 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Webinar Training Cybersecurity and Internet Safety for ongoing student health and safety PD and family engagement @ Brown Middle School and Gold High School | 2 | | $6,000.00 | |
| Starting the Year Off Safely community back to school training and event as part of ongoing student health and safety PD | 2, 4 | | | $6,000.00 |
| | | | | |
| 400 - Supplies: | | | | |
| PD and Family engagement books and material quarterly events as part of ongoing student health and safety PD | 2 | | $10,802.84 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| 500- Capital Outlay | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| 600- Indirect Cost - 2.65% | | | | |
| | | | $2,065.72 | $2,065.72 | $2,065.72 |
| TOTAL YEARLY BUDGET | | $102,065.72 | $129,868.56 | $8,065.72 |
| | | | Total Grant Budget Requested | $240,000.00 |

# Reporting

Although official guidance has not yet been provided by USDE, the proposed reporting format will collect information on:

- Use of Funds Activity
- Total Amount Budgeted
- Total Amount Expended
- Amount for Personnel Budgeted
- Amount for Personnel Expended
- Amount for Non-Personnel Budgeted
- Amount for Non-Personnel Expended

**DRAFT - LEA Use of Funds by Dollar Amount and Category**

This is the proposed reporting form to be completed each July by LEAs. At the time of this document, the USED has not released its final form after the public comment period closed on September 11, 2023. Once updated information has been received by the Wyoming Department of Education, this official reporting will be shared with the LEAs that were awarded the Stronger Connections Grant. This draft is for your information and planning purposes.

| Use of Funds Activity | Total Amount Budgeted | Total Amount Expended | Amount for Personnel Budgeted | Amount for Personnel Expended | Amount for Non-Personnel Budgeted | Amount for Non-Personnel Expended |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Drug prevention/reduction programs | | | | | | |
| Strategies to improve school climate, including multi-tiered systems of support and schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports | | | | | | |
| Family engagement strategies | | | | | | |
| Community partnerships, including wraparound supports to address physical and mental health, wellbeing, and basic needs | | | | | | |
| Bullying and harassment prevention, including cyberbullying | | | | | | |
| Mental health education and social and emotional learning interventions | | | | | | |
| Mentoring students | | | | | | |
| School counseling | | | | | | |
| Healthy, active lifestyle programs, including nutritional and physical education | | | | | | |
| School drop-out prevention, including early warning systems | | | | | | |
| School discipline, including behavior coordinators, climate surveys, and training in restorative practices | | | | | | |
| School safety, including the installation of security equipment/devices, safety personnel, and implementation of threat assessment systems, teams, or protocols | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |

The dollar amount associated with a use of funds activity should only be reported in one category.

# Davis-Bacon Act

## This grant is subject to Davis-Bacon Act reporting on all contracted projects over $2,000.

All laborers and mechanics employed by the applicant, subrecipients, contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work on an award or project in excess of $2,000 funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by funds made available under Initial grants shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar projects in the locality, as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code commonly referred to as the "Davis-Bacon Act" (DBA).

# Scoring and Rubric

- All applications with be scored by a review panel.
- The provided rubric will be utilized for scoring.
- **Projects may be partially funded. Be sure to list projects in priority order.**

| Grant Narrative Features | Total Possible Points |
|---|---|
| Demonstration of Need(s) | 25 pts. |
| Implementation Plan | 30 pts. |
| Budget | 20 pts. |
| Evaluation Plan and Sustainability | 25 pts. |
| **Total Points Available** | **100 pts.** |

# Application and Submission Timeline

| | |
|---|---|
| Application Period: | **November 6, 2023 -February 9, 2024** <br> (updated on 11/29/23 in response to additional time requested by LEAs for consultation.) |
| Submit application by: | **5:00 p.m. (MST) on February 9, 2024 via Jotform** (updated on 11/29/23 in response to additional time requested by LEAs for consultation.) |
| Awards announced by WDE: | **March 1st, 2024** <br> (updated on 11/29/23 in response to additional time requested by LEAs for consultation.) |
| Award Period: | One time award to be obligated between March 1st, 2024 and September 30, 2026. |

# What questions can we answer for you?

# Need additional assistance?

- Please send additional questions regarding eligibility, uses of funds, or the application process to mary.bravo@wyo.gov.

- If your LEA would like to apply for the funds but has concerns about your ability or capacity to submit the application, please reach out.