

GAN ASSURANCES – STRONGER CONNECTIONS GRANT

By drawing down funds awarded under this Grant Award Notification, the State educational agency (SEA) assures the following:

1. The SEA will award no less than 95 percent of its SCG grant allocation on a competitive basis to high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) as determined by the State.
2. The SEA will reserve no more than 1% of its SCG grant allocation for administration and will use any remaining funds not awarded to LEAs for State-level activities to support section 4108 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).
3. The SEA will ensure that LEAs use SCG funds for activities allowable under section 4108 of the ESEA.
4. The SEA will ensure that LEAs do not use funds for the provision to any person of a dangerous weapon¹ or training in the use of a dangerous weapon as prohibited under Section 13401 of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which amends section 8526 of the ESEA.
5. The SEA will ensure that LEAs receiving SCG funds provide equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools as required under section 8501 of the ESEA.
 - The SEA will ensure that a public agency maintains control of funds for the services and assistance provided to a non-public school with SCG funds.
 - The SEA will ensure that a public agency has title to materials, equipment, and property purchased with SCG funds.
 - The SEA will ensure that services to a non-public school with SCG funds are provided by a public agency directly, or through contract with, another public or private entity.
 - The SEA will ensure that equitable services provided with SCG funds are secular, neutral, and nonideological.
6. The SEA will ensure that LEAs receiving SCG funds follow the supplement not supplant requirements in section 4110 of the ESEA.
7. The SEA will track the SCG funds separately from its regular allocation under Title IV, Part A of the ESEA and will ensure that its LEAs will also do so.

¹ A “dangerous weapon” is defined in section 930(g)(2) of title 18, United States Code as a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocketknife with a blade of less than 2 1/2 inches in length.

8. The SEA will submit to the Department, no later than 90 days after the SEA receives its award, the following information:
 - The SEA’s definition of “high-need LEA” for purposes of the SCG program. The SEA has the authority to define “high-need LEA” and may define the term, for example, as an LEA with a high rate of poverty and with one or more of the following characteristics: high student-to-mental health professional ratio; high rates of chronic absenteeism, exclusionary discipline, referrals to the juvenile justice system, bullying/harassment, community and school violence, or substance abuse; or has experienced a natural disaster or traumatic event.
 - Whether the SEA provided the public with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment and provide input on its definition of “high-need LEA” and a description of any such notice and opportunity.
 - Whether the SEA prioritized the use of SCG funds by LEAs in the SEA’s competitive subgrant process and a description of any such priorities.
 - Whether the SEA specifically prohibited one or more of the allowable uses of SCG funds by LEAs in the SEA’s competitive subgrant process in addition to any statutory prohibitions and a description of any such prohibitions.
 - Whether the SEA provided the public with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment and provide input on the design of its competitive subgrant process and a description of any such notice and opportunity.
 - Whether the SEA will require LEAs to describe in their application how they have engaged or plan to engage with families, educators, and the local community in determining how these funds will be used.

If the SEA is unable to respond in full to the information requested above by the reporting deadline, the SEA will provide, by that deadline, an update on its status related to these items.

9. The SEA will submit such other information to the Department as the Secretary may later require, such as:
 - The identification of the LEAs awarded SCG funds.
 - How the SEA and its LEAs are using SCG funds.
 - Whether the SEA will evaluate the effectiveness of the SCG program, including the effectiveness of LEA use of SCG funds and, if so, how it will do so.
10. The SEA will ensure that any LEAs that receive SCG funds will participate, as requested, in any Department evaluation of the SCG program and will cooperate with any audit or examination of records with respect to such funds.

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Expiration Date: March 31, 2023

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