



FY24 Stronger Connections Grant

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Federal Programs and Oversight*



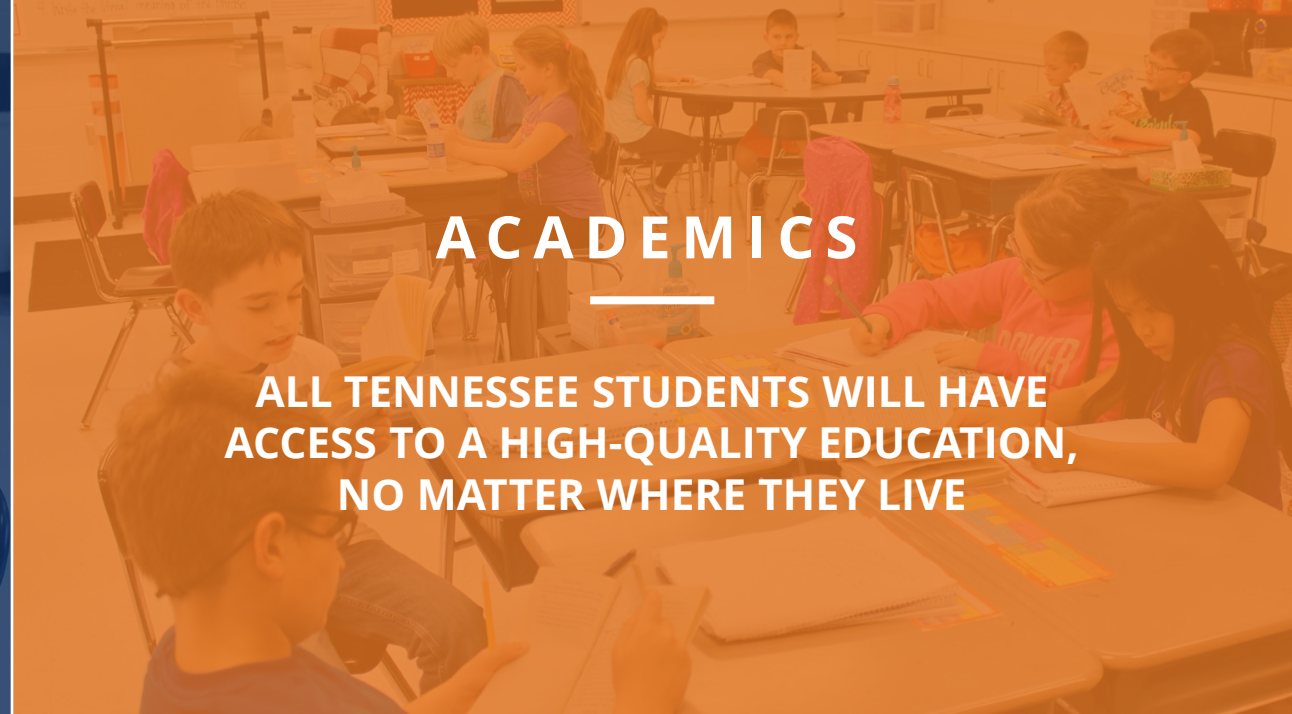
PLEASE NOTE: This presentation was prepared for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or financial advice. Awardees are responsible for compliance and monitoring of the grant award in accordance with the Grant assurances and applicable state and federal law. Please contact your board attorney for specific legal guidance.





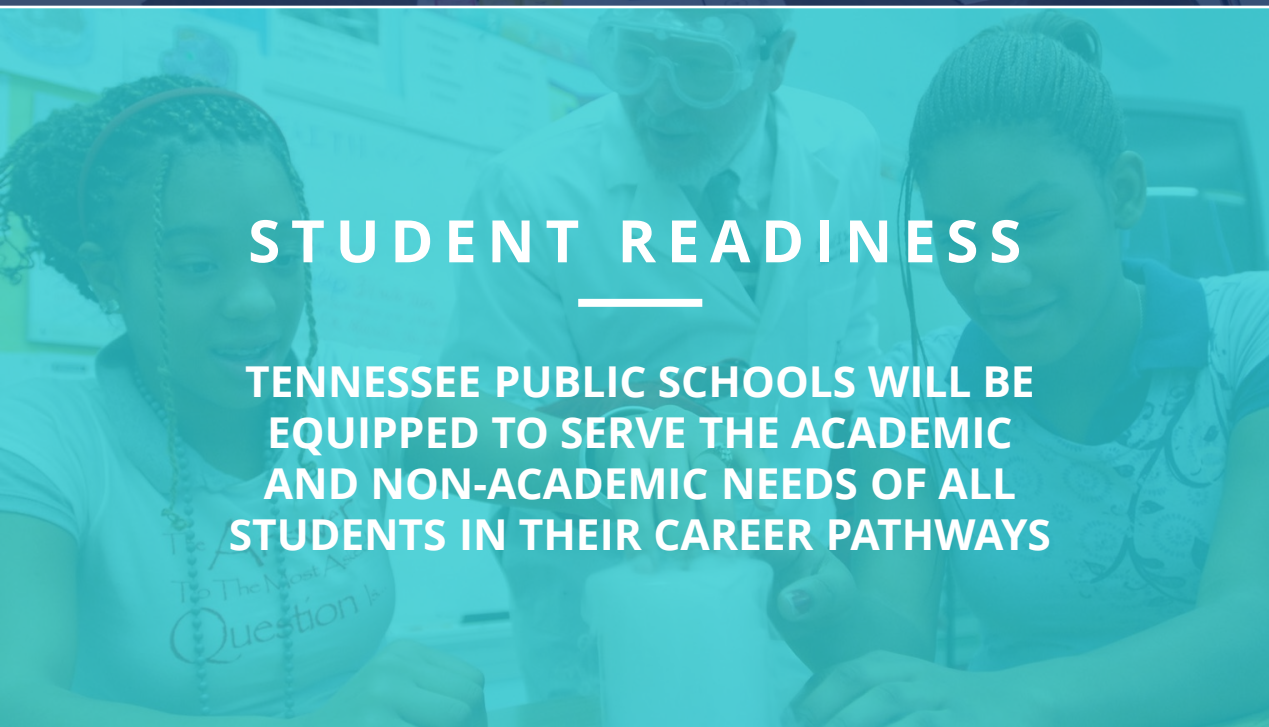
BEST FOR
ALL

We will set all students on a path to success.



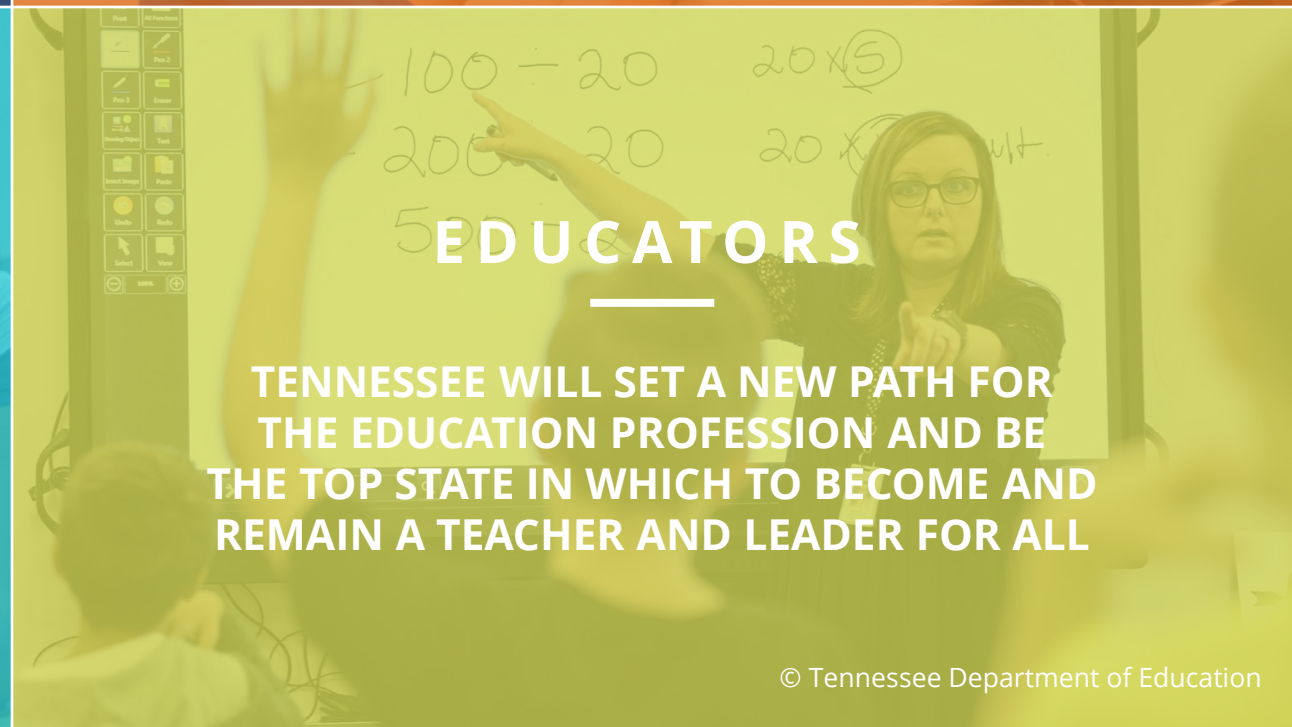
ACADEMICS

**ALL TENNESSEE STUDENTS WILL HAVE
ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION,
NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE**



STUDENT READINESS

**TENNESSEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BE
EQUIPPED TO SERVE THE ACADEMIC
AND NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS OF ALL
STUDENTS IN THEIR CAREER PATHWAYS**



EDUCATORS

**TENNESSEE WILL SET A NEW PATH FOR
THE EDUCATION PROFESSION AND BE
THE TOP STATE IN WHICH TO BECOME AND
REMAIN A TEACHER AND LEADER FOR ALL**



Agenda

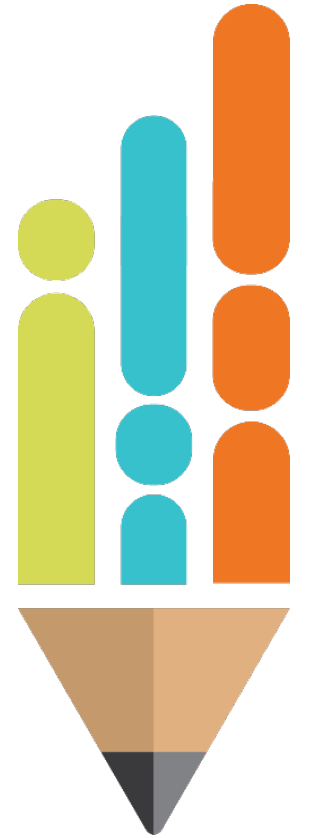
- FY24 Strong Connections Grant Overview
- SCG Reminders
- SCG Revisions
- Equitable Services
- Other Reminders
- Resources
- Closing



FY24 Strong Connections Grant Overview

Background

- On June 25, 2022, President Biden signed into law the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act \(BSCA\)](#), which includes \$1 billion through Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for state educational agencies (SEAs) to competitively award subgrants to high-need local education agencies (LEAs).
- The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has designated this component of the BSCA the Stronger Connections Grant (SCG) program.
- The purpose of the SCG is to establish safer and healthier learning environments, and to prevent and respond to acts of bullying, violence, and hate that impact school communities at individual and systemic levels, among other programs and activities.
- Detailed information regarding the SCG can be found in ED's [Stronger Connections Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions](#).



SCG by the Numbers

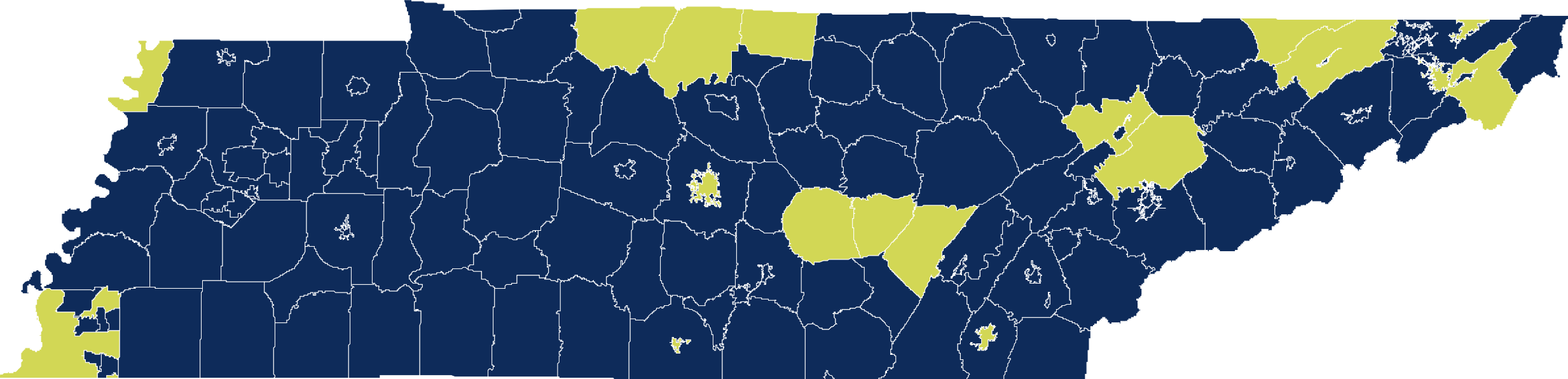


In Tennessee:



SUPPORTING WORK

Stronger Connections Grant- Awarded LEAs



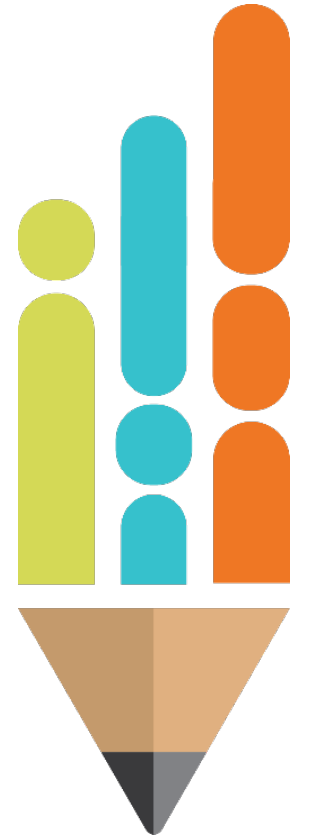
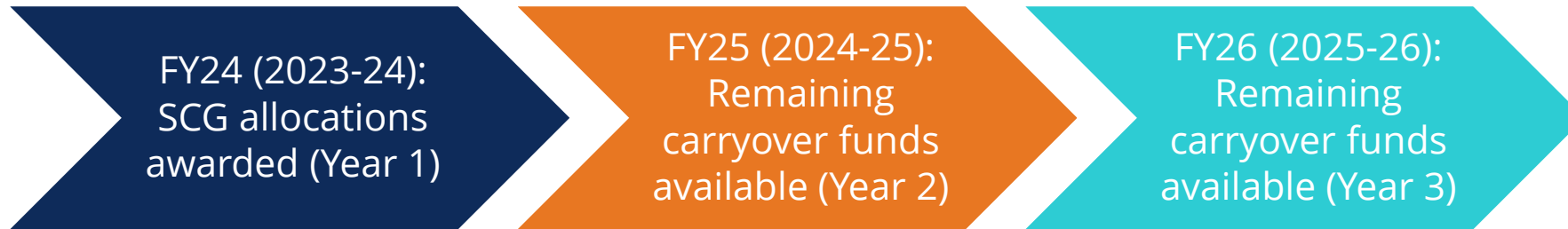
Anderson County Schools	Knox County Schools
Bledsoe County Schools	Lake County Schools
Bristol City Schools	Macon County Schools
Carter County Schools	Memphis-Shelby County Schools
Cleveland City Schools	Murfreesboro City Schools
Fayetteville City Schools	Robertson County Schools
Hancock County Schools	Sumner County Schools
Hawkins County Schools	Van Buren County Schools
Johnson City Schools	Warren County Schools

SCG Reminders



Funding Timeline

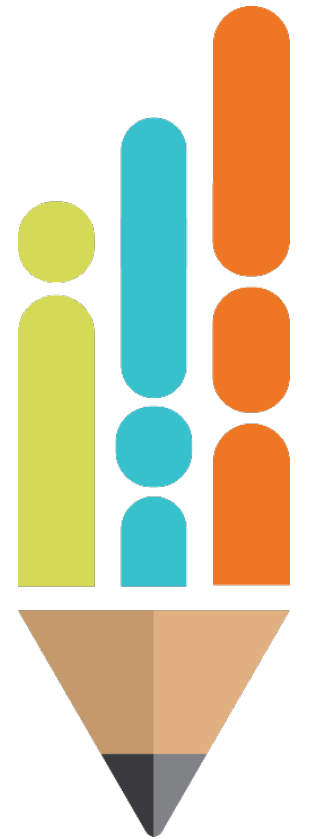
- The SCG is one-time funding: **LEAs will have until Sept. 30, 2026, to obligate all grant funds.**
- LEAs who are granted an award will receive their total SCG allocation in FY24.
- LEAs will be able to submit a multi-year budget and then carry over the remaining funds into the next fiscal year (including funds for equitable services) through the annual completion of the SCG application in ePlan.



Allowable Uses of Funds

In Tennessee, the SCG will be structured around allowable activities in four (4) focus areas:

1. Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Supports for Students
2. Mental Health/SEL Professional Development (PD) for Educators, SROs, Administrators, and Other Staff
3. Parent and Family Engagement (e.g., training and resources for families focused on mental health/SEL)
4. Improving School Climate and Culture





Stakeholder Involvement

- Engaging students, parents, families, and community members is critical to the successful implementation of activities supported by SCG funds.
- LEAs must provide ongoing and meaningful opportunities for educators and staff to be involved in the selection of evidence-based strategies and activities implemented under the SCG.
- Documentation of stakeholder involvement must be collected and maintained throughout the life of the SCG. Examples of documentation may include, but are not limited to:
 - Meeting invitations, agendas, sign-in sheets, minutes, etc.
 - Survey and survey results
 - Printed material or other communications regarding the SCG



SCG Revisions



Revision Timeline

Event	Deadline
FY24 SCG budgets and other revisions due in ePlan	Sept. 1, 2023
FY24 SCG Equitable Services Affirmation and Agreement forms due in ePlan	Sept. 1, 2023
Ongoing revisions after initial approval	Submit as needed

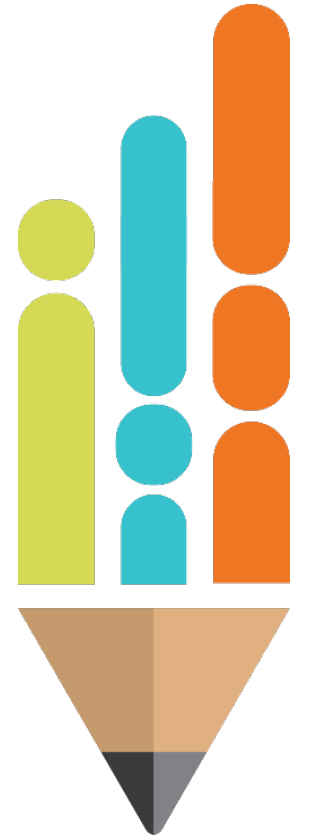


Sections to Revise

All	Messages	Print
History Log		Print
History Log		Print
Create Comment		
Allocations	Messages	Print
Allocations	Messages	Print
Contacts		Print
Contacts		Print
Stronger Connections Grant	Messages	Print
Budget	Messages	Print
Budget Overview		Print
Cover Page		Print
Needs Assessment		Print
LEA Program Administration		Print
Personnel Details (Systemwide)		Print
Personnel Details (Regular School Year- K-12 School- Level)		Print
Personnel Details (Summer School- K-12 School-Level)		Print
Spending Plan with Budget Tag Autofill		Print
Equitable Services		Print
Related Documents		Print
Assurances		Print
Stronger Connections Grant Checklist		Print
Stronger Connections Grant Checklist		Print
New Applicant Summary		Print
New Applicant Summary		Print
All	Messages	Print

Revision Steps

- Based on your allocation amount, build out your final budget.
 - Enter the budget on the *Budget* page of the application.
 - See pp. 16-20 of the [SCG Technical Application Guide](#) for assistance with the *Budget* page.
- Revise the *Spending Plan, Personnel, and LEA Program Administration* pages as needed to align with the final budget.
- If the LEA has participating non-public schools, complete the *Equitable Services* page.
 - See pp. 11-13 and 25-26 of the [SCG Technical Application Guide](#) for assistance with this section of the application.



Budget Page Reminders

- Budget tags are a required step in the SCG application and will populate the amount to be spent in each focus area on the *Spending Plan* page.
- The SCG budget tags are based on the subgrant focus areas:
 - Mental Health/SEL Supports for Students
 - Mental Health/SEL PD for Staff
 - Parent and Family Engagement
 - Improving School Climate and Culture
 - SCG Administration (2% max)

Budget Detail	
Account Number:	72210 - Support Services/Regular Instruction Program ▾
Line Item Number:	189 - Other Salaries & Wages ▾
Use of Funds: (Select at least 1, and up to 1 tag(s))	Select Tag ▾
Optional Program Code:	<input type="text"/>
Location Code:	Achievement School District (985) ▾
Quantity:	<input type="text" value="1.00"/>
Cost:	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>
Budget Detail Total:	<input type="text" value="\$0.00"/>

Budget Page Reminders

In addition to being allowable under ESSA § 4108 and meeting the intent of one or more of the SCG focus areas, activities funded with SCG funds must meet the following fiscal requirements:

1. Be **reasonable and necessary** for the performance of the grant;
2. Be **allocable** to the grant;
3. **Supplement and not supplant** other non-Federal funds (i.e., state and local funds) that would otherwise be used to pay for authorized activities;
4. Not be of the **prohibited activities** in ESEA § 4001(b) or § 8526; and
5. Be consistent with any other applicable **Uniform Guidance provisions** (see [2 C.F.R. 200 et seq.](#), in particular, 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E).

Note: Narrative descriptions within the application and budget pages must contain details making it evident that all purchases and programs meet the above requirements.



Spending Plan Page Reminders

- The amount tagged for each focus area will populate the amount to be spent in that area on the *Spending Plan* page.
- Please remove any unneeded narrative information regarding the proposed amount of funds and update the information to reflect the final budget.

Spending Plan

Select one or more of the Stronger Connections Grant focus areas. For each focus area selected, provide (1) at least one SMART goal, (2) a detailed description of the activity, (3) a description of any external partnerships, (4) a description of how the activity will be evaluated, and (5) a timeline for implementation. LEAs who also provide (6) information and documentation showing that the activities are evidence-based, will receive priority points during the initial grant review. Note: For the initial application, the narrative descriptions provided below should align with the proposed budget that must be uploaded to the Related Documents section

1. Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Supports for Students

\$ Amount

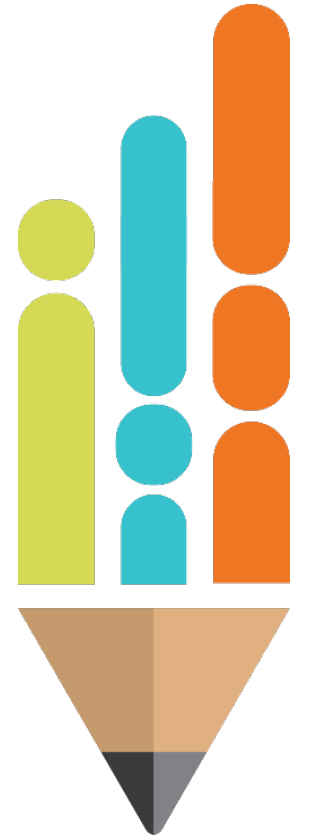
The amount box auto-populates based on inputs from the Budget Page.

Describe the proposed evidence-based activities and use of funds, including (1) at least one SMART goal, (2) a detailed description of the activity, (3) a description of any external partnerships, (4) a description of how the activity will be evaluated, and (5) a timeline for implementation. LEAs who also provide (6) information and documentation showing that the activities are evidence-based, will receive priority points during the initial grant review.

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Revising the Spending Plan and Budget Pages

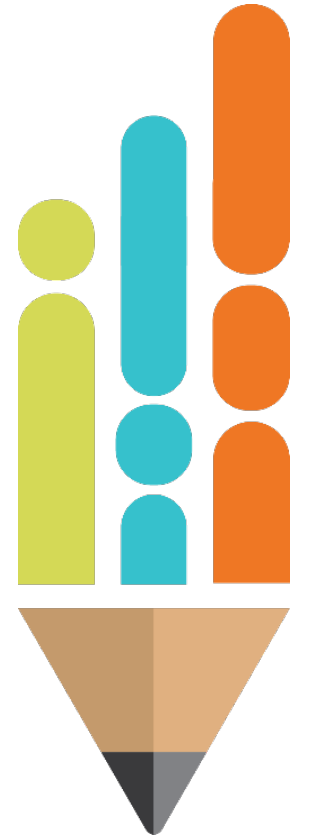
- As you are revising the *Spending Plan* and *Budget* pages, please remember:
 - Each narrative on the *Spending Plan* page must be complete and include all requested information.
 - Be sure all purchases are discussed in full on the *Spending Plan* page.
 - The final *Spending Plan/Budget* pages must address the needs identified in the initial needs assessment.
 - If a project will span multiple years, please provide these details on the *Spending Plan/Budget* pages.



Personnel Page Reminders

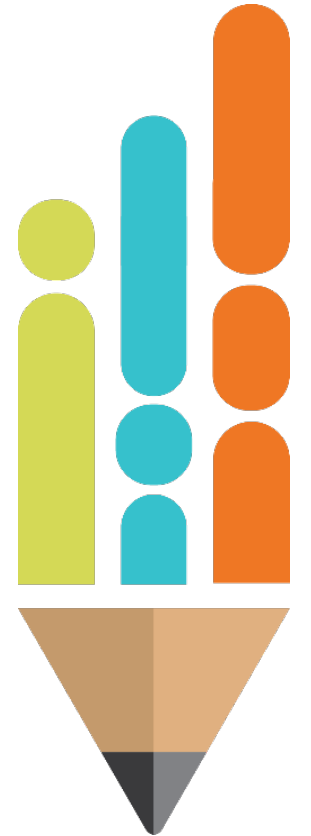
- Revise the *Personnel* pages as needed based on any changes to your budget.
- Enter both a headcount and a full-time equivalent (FTE) for staff supported with SCG funds.
- System-wide staff are employees not assigned to a building and work across the LEA in multiple school sites as necessary, but not as part of a planned assignment.
- Round FTEs to the nearest hundredth as necessary.

Note: *FTEs must match FTEs identified in budget narratives (individually and sum). Titles of staff must match titles identified within the budget narratives and Spending Plan page.*



LEA Program Administration Reminders

- Program Administration: The reasonable and necessary costs to manage the federal grant in a compliant and effective manner.
- Awarded LEAs may charge up to 2% of grant funds as direct administrative costs.
- Indicate whether:
 - The LEA is utilizing grant funds to administer the SCG (maximum of 2%). Complete the table and narrative prompt; or
 - The LEA is not utilizing grant funds to administer the SCG. Provide information on how the grant program will be administered, including the title of the staff responsible for the grant administration, the FTE(s), and the other funding sources that will contribute to administrative staff salaries/benefits.

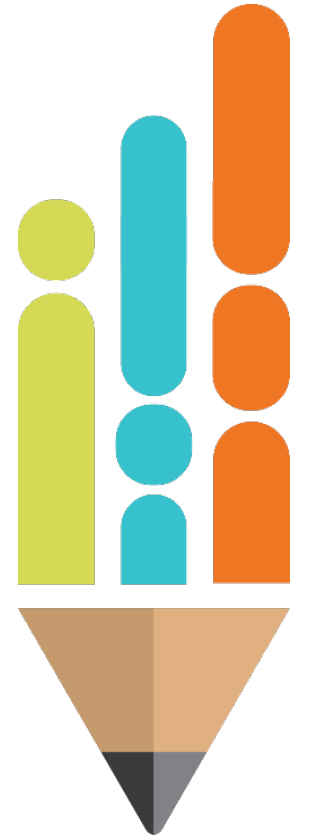


Equitable Services



Equitable Services Overview

- Funding for the SCG program is provided through ESEA Title IV, Part A; therefore, LEAs receiving grant funds must provide equitable services to eligible non-public school students and educators.
- ESEA § 8501(a)(4) requires an LEA to ensure that its expenditures for equitable services for eligible non-public school students and educators under covered ESEA programs are equal on a per-pupil basis to the expenditures for participating public school students and educators, taking into account the number and needs of the eligible non-public school students and educators.
- In other words, the proportionate share for participating non-public schools must be based on the total enrollment of the non-public school—just as it works for equitable services under Title IV, Part A.



Equitable Services

All	Messages	Print
History Log		Print
History Log		Print
Create Comment		
Allocations	Messages	Print
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Stronger Connections Grant Checklist		Print
Stronger Connections Grant Checklist		Print
New Applicant Summary		Print
New Applicant Summary		Print
All	Messages	Print

**Equitable Services
Requirements for
LEAs
Awarded SCG Funds**

Consultation requirements:

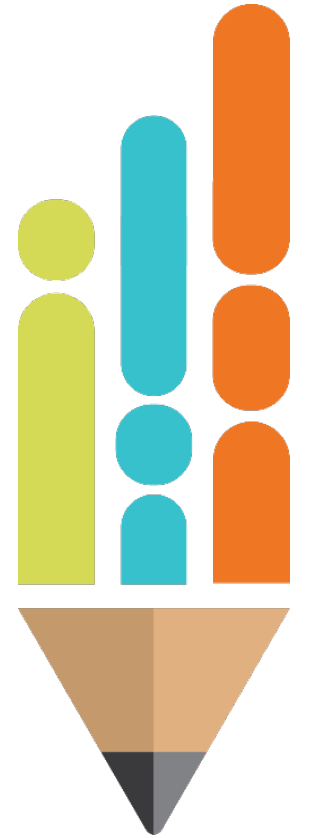
- Continue to engage participating non-public school public officials in ongoing, timely, and meaningful consultation.
- LEAs may choose to utilize the [Stronger Connections Grant Affirmation and Agreement Form](#) to document the consultation process or may design their own method.
- Provide equitable services to eligible non-public school students and educators, ensuring that expenditures for equitable services for eligible non-public school students and educators under the SCG are equal on a per-pupil basis to the expenditures for participating public school students and educators, taking into account the number and needs of the eligible non-public school students and educators.

Within the funded SCG application:

- Provide a list of participating non-public schools and allocation amounts.
- Describe the process and timeline the LEA will utilize to conduct timely and meaningful consultation with non-public school officials.
- Describe the services that will be provided to non-public school students with SCG and:
 - How the activities connect to one or more of the SCG focus areas, and
 - How the activities will be evaluated/assessed.
- Upload documentation of meaningful consultation (e.g., affirmation forms, final agreements, meeting agendas/minutes) to the SCG application in ePlan by **Sept. 1, 2023**.
- Provide a detailed budget for all non-public school purchases.

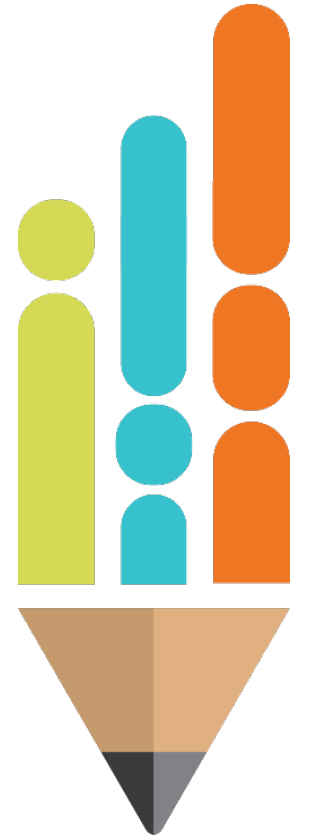
Equitable Services Templates

- Documentation of ongoing and meaningful consultation with non-public school officials will be required throughout the SCG.
- LEAs are encouraged to edit these documents and develop other documents/processes as applicable to ensure the needs of the LEA and non-public school(s) are met and proper documentation is maintained.
 - [Stronger Connections Grant Intent to Participate Form](#)
 - [Stronger Connections Grant Affirmation and Agreement Form](#)



Equitable Services Page

- If there are no participating non-public schools in the LEA, check the box indicating that this page is not applicable. No more information is needed on this page.



Equitable Services Page

Formula to Determine Amount for SCG Equitable Expenditures

N/A (The LEA certifies that no eligible non-public schools are in the district.)

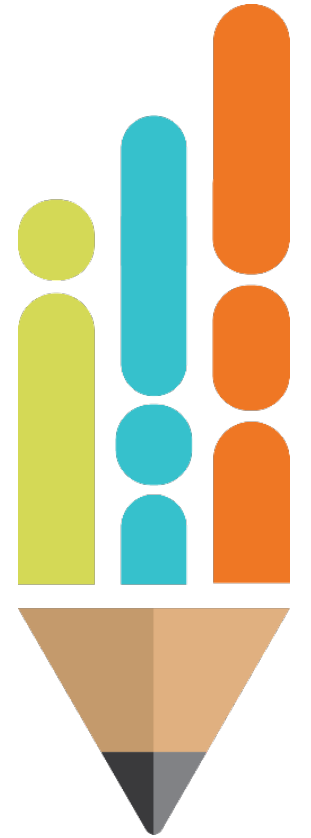
Stronger Connections Grant

Formula to Determine Amount for Stronger Connections Grant Equitable Expenditures

A. Number of Students	
A1: Number of Students (LEAs should enter the same numbers used for the FY24 CFA)	<input type="text"/>
A2: Participating K-12 Private School Enrollment (See completed Stronger Connections Grant Intent to Participate forms)	<input type="text"/>
A3: Total Enrollment (A1 + A2)	<input type="text" value="0"/>
B. Stronger Connections Grant	
B1: District Allocation	<input type="text"/>
B2: Administration Costs (for public and non-public school programs - max. allowed is 2%)	\$ <input type="text"/>
B3: LEA Allocation Minus Admin Costs (B1 - B2)	\$ <input type="text" value="0.00"/>
C. Per Pupil Rate	
C1: B3 divided by A3	\$ <input type="text" value="0.00"/>
D. Equitable Services	
D1: Amount District must reserve for equitable services for participating private schools = (A2 x C1)	\$ <input type="text" value="0.00"/>
E. Non-Public Carryover Amount - No Carryover included in FY24	
F. Total Amount of Non-Public Instructional Funds = (Line D1 + E)	\$ <input type="text" value="0.00"/>

Equitable Services Page


- Describe the consultation process between the LEA and eligible non-public school(s). In the response, include:
 1. Important dates,
 2. Modes of communication, and
 3. The information provided to non-public school representatives. (Upload affirmation of consultation(s) and other documentation in *Related Documents*).
- Describe the process used to evaluate/assess SCG non-public school activities and/or services.




Equitable Services Page

- List the non-public schools participating in the SCG program. Provide each school's allocation amount, a brief description of the activities and services that will be provided to each non-public school, and the applicable SCG focus area(s) for the activities.
- Information provided in this section should align with the information provided on the *Budget* page.



List the non-public schools participating in the SCG program. Provide each school's allocation amount, a brief description of the activities and services that will be provided to each non-public school and the applicable SCG focus area(s) for the activities. Information provided below should align with the information provided on the budget page.

Participating Non-Public School Name	SCG Allocation	SCG Activities/Services Description	SCG Focus Area
 *	* \$	* <input type="button" value="Check Spelling"/> 0 of 8000 characters	* Select all that apply <input type="button" value="Clear"/> Search... Select All / Deselect All <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Supports for Students <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health/SEL Professional Development (PD) for Educators, SROs, Administrators, and Other Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Parent and Family Engagement (e.g., training and resources for families focused on mental health/SEL) <input type="checkbox"/> Improving School Climate and Culture

Related Documents

Go To 

Required Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
(SCG) Budget Template [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	N/A	Upload New

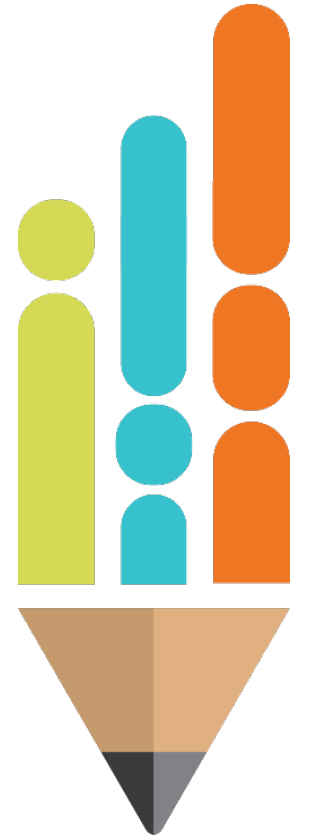
Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
(SCG) ESEA Evidence Documentation	N/A	Upload New
(SCG) Initial Consultation/Intent to Participate	 Stronger Connections Grant Intent to Participate	Upload New
(SCG) Affirmation and Agreement Form	 (SCG) Affirmation and Agreement Form	Upload New

Other Reminders



Other Reminders

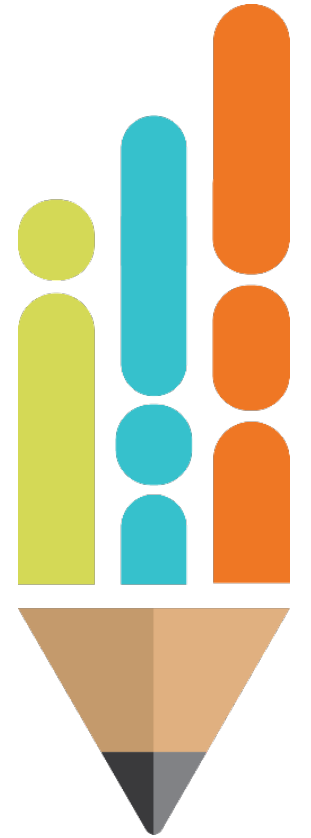
- Grantees are expected to:
 - Keep records, and provide information to the State, as may be reasonably required for fiscal audit, data reporting, and program evaluation.
 - As requested, report data to the State regarding the use of grant funds and progress toward meeting identified goals.
 - As requested by the state, participate in SCG program monitoring.



Resources

Resources

- [ePlan > TDOE Resources](#) > ESSA Information, Guidance, PPTs, & Webinars > Stronger Connections Grant Program:
 - [SCG Technical Application Guide](#)
 - [FY24 Stronger Connection Grant Office Hours](#)
 - [SCG Non-Public School Intent to Participate Form](#)
 - [SCG Equitable Services Affirmation and Agreement Form](#)
 - [Dear Colleague Letter: Stronger Connections Grant Program](#)
 - [Frequently Asked Questions: Stronger Connections Grant Program](#)
 - [Proposed Budget Template for Competitive Funding Applications](#)



Questions



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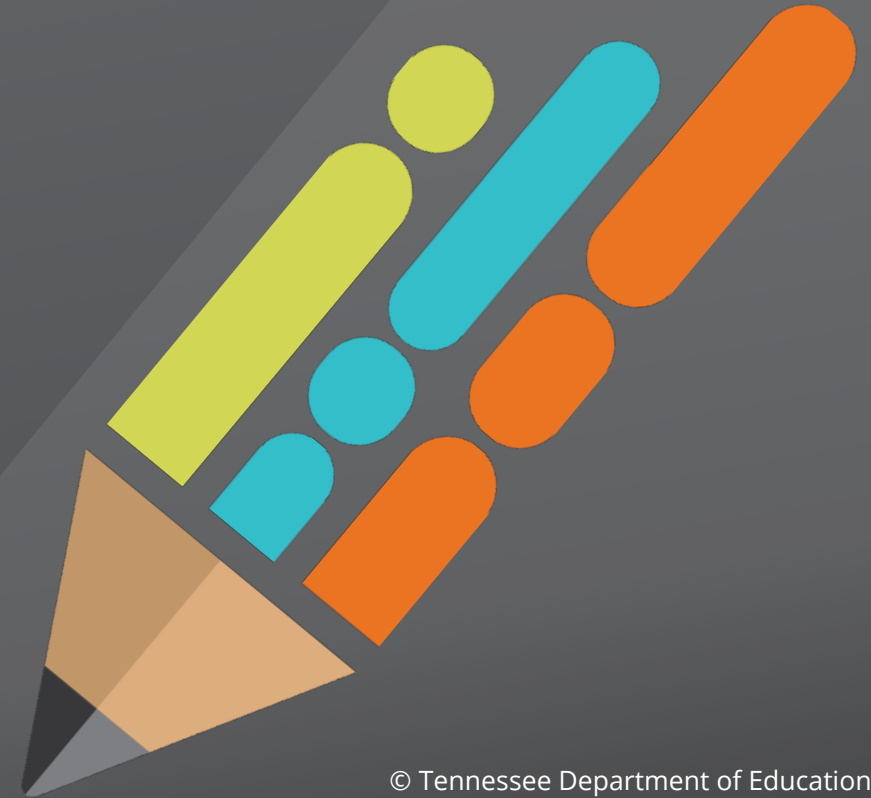
Middle Tennessee: Alisha.Gilmore@tn.gov

20 Most Populous: Heather.Farley@tn.gov



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https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/fpo_professional_development_survey





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Notifications can also be submitted electronically at:

<http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/hotline>