



Public School Security Grant

Application Package – FY 2025-26

Tennessee Department of Education | June 2025



General Information

Overview/Purpose

During the 2025 Legislative Session, Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly included a one-time, non-recurring investment of \$20 million in school safety grant funds in the [Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget](#) and [Budget Amendment Overview](#). This funding is an additional allocation to the Public-School Security Grant that was provided in the budget during the 2023-24 Fiscal Year. This investment is part of Governor Lee's continued commitment to investing in school safety as a [priority](#) to ensure Tennessee students have a safe school environment to learn, grow, and thrive.

"Nothing is more important than Tennessee students and teachers returning home from school safely each day." – **Governor Lee**

Use of Funds

Tennessee Public Schools are allowed to apply for these funds. [State Board of Education rule 0520-01-02.01](#) establishes that *"a public school is the basic administrative unit of a state, county, city, or special district school system, consisting of one (1) or more grade groups, one (1) or more teachers to give instruction, and one (1) principal, which school shall be subject to the statutes of the State of Tennessee and to the rules, regulations, and minimum standards of the State Board of Education (State Board)."*

This one-time, non-recurring \$20 million grant will be used to support Tennessee public school efforts in enhancing school safety for their students and staff. Funds may generally be used to support a wide array of school safety efforts that include, but are not limited to, improved physical school security (e.g. *metal detectors/weapons detection system, perimeter control, access control, window film, vehicle control, visitor management, communications, surveillance, signage, etc.*), School Resource Officer (SRO) or School Security Officer (SSO), panic alert devices, emergency operations planning, violence prevention programs, and safety training for staff members.

[Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4302](#) requires that each Tennessee public school conduct a [school security assessment](#) annually using the assessment tool developed by the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security. Local education agencies (LEAs) should review the priority standards within their school security assessments as a guide for determining how to best utilize grant funding to address deficiencies. An example priority standard is *"all exterior doors self-close, lock properly, and are compliant with applicable codes and standards."* **Applications must demonstrate a clear connection between funding efforts and the vulnerabilities identified in their school security assessments.**

If you are unsure of requests or expenditures in this area, please contact Mark.Bloodworth@tn.gov or Bennett.Wilson@tn.gov before submitting an application.

The intent of these grant funds is to prevent criminal activity that could make schools unsafe or cause harm to students, staff, and the school community as a whole. Furthermore, the intent is to reduce vulnerabilities, as the more vulnerabilities a school has, the greater the potential for threats and the higher the risk. Items not addressed within the physical security assessment, such as K-9 detection, vape detection, ATVs, vehicles, playground equipment, etc., do not fall within the realm of allowable expenditures for this Public-School Security Grant Program. For items that fall outside the realm of eligibility, please consider utilizing other funding sources such as the [Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement \(TISA\) Base Fund](#) or federal school safety grants.

Funding/Match Requirements

Funds are allocated to LEAs based upon their Average Daily Membership (ADM) and are **NOT subject to a local match**.

Grant Administration

The Public School Security Grant is administered via [ePlan](#), the Tennessee Department of Education (department) online grant management system. To complete the application in ePlan, each Tennessee public school will need to ensure that they have the following ePlan user access roles:

- Public School Security Grant Director
- LEA Fiscal Representative
- LEA Authorized Representative

As a reminder, a single user cannot have both Fiscal Representative and Authorized Representative access. Tennessee public schools that do not have all access roles will need to complete an ePlan user access [form](#) and email it to ePlan.Help@tn.gov.

ePlan User Access Forms:

- **LEA** ePlan user access [form](#)
- **Charter School** ePlan user access [form](#)

Grant funds are distributed by submitting a reimbursement request in ePlan. With this being a reimbursement grant, please make sure that you attach proper documentation (*invoices, receipts of*

purchase, etc.) providing proof of payment of allowable expenditures that align with the school's approved submitted budget.

The Public School Security Grant is subject to audit and monitoring. Each LEA should maintain appropriate documentation of expenditures.

Timeline

July 8, 2025	Grant Information Released – The <i>Public School Security Grant</i> application package will be published, and the 2026 LEA Document Library in ePlan will continue to be open to submit required application documents.
July 21, 2025 <i>9:00 a.m. CT</i>	Webinar on Grant Application Requirements & Navigating ePlan – A webinar to guide applicants through the grant application requirements and TDOE's grant management program.
July 25, 2025	Grant Allocations Announced, and Tennessee public schools can begin submitting application requirements in ePlan – Grant allocations will be announced to District School Safety Coordinators via email and uploaded into ePlan. Completed applications that meet all established requirements will begin being reviewed and approved by the department starting July 28, 2025 .
July 30, 2025, and August 6, 2025	Office Hours for Grant Support – Department staff will be available for questions/support on Wednesday, July 30 , and August 6 . <i>LEAs – 9 a.m. CT and Charter Schools – 10 a.m. CT</i>
September 30, 2025	Grant Applications Due No Later Than – Applications will be reviewed by the department upon submittal starting July 28th . All requirements for the <i>Public-School Security Grant</i> package are due no later than September 30, 2025.
July 1, 2026	Final Expenditure Report (FER) Opens – Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-3-316 establishes that “Each LEA shall, on or before October 1 of each year, submit to the commissioner a correct and accurate financial report of the receipts and expenditures for all public school purposes in the LEA during the school year ending on June 30 next preceding the October 1 set forth in this part.”
October 1, 2026	Final Expenditure Reports (FER) Due

Application Instructions

A complete grant application package includes the following items:

1. **School Security Assessments:** [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4302](#) requires that every school in the district, including authorized charter schools, complete a [school security assessment](#) utilizing the updated Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security School Security Tool. *This requirement is due **June 13, 2025**, and should be completed before funding opens in ePlan on July 1, 2025.*
2. **District and School Emergency Operations Plans:** To comply with [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-804](#), all district-wide and school-level Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) are to be submitted to the department by **July 1, 2025**. All EOPs should be uploaded in ePlan into the following 2026 LEA Document Library folders:
 - Upload the district-wide EOP into the *Public School Security Grant District Emergency Operations Plan* folder.
 - Upload each school-level EOP in your district into the *Public School Security Grant School Emergency Operations Plan* folder.
3. **School Drill Logs:** To comply with [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-807](#), 2024-25 school drill logs must be submitted. Please upload 2024-25 drill logs in ePlan into the following 2026 LEA Document Library folder: *Public School Security Grant Drill Logs*.
4. **Safety and Emergency Contacts:** Per [Executive Order 97](#), each LEA must identify its single point of contact for school safety matters (*i.e., the safety coordinator*) and a school safety representative from each school. Please provide the contact's name, email address, daytime phone number, and emergency after-hours phone number. Please upload the emergency contacts document in ePlan in the following 2026 LEA Document Library folders:
 - For Districts: *District and School Level Emergency Coordinators and Contact Information*
 - For Charter Schools: *Charter School Level Emergency Coordinators and Contact Information*
5. **Grant Point of Contact:** Please provide the name, email address, and phone number of the point of contact within the organization that our team should contact for questions regarding the grant application. This will be available for completion in the **Cover Page** section of the ePlan funding application.

6. **Signed Assurances:** Each LEA must submit a signed assurance certifying compliance with all requirements established in safety laws, codified in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-801-820. Please upload the signed assurances in ePlan into the following 2026 LEA Document Library folder: *Public School Security Grant Signed Assurances*.
7. **Security Assessment Narrative:** In the **Program Details** section of the ePlan application, please provide a summary of security assessment findings and describe how the available grant funds will be utilized to address needs identified in the school security assessment(s).

Additionally, provide a budget overview describing how the grant funds will be used. Include a summary of the activities, programs, or improvements that will be implemented at each specified school.

8. **Budget:** As a reminder, the budget period for this grant is from the date the application is approved until **June 30, 2026**. This means that only approved expenditures between the date your application is approved through June 30, 2026, will be reimbursed.

The following items should be provided in the budget area of the ePlan funding application:

- a. Each line item must include a specific application justification (tie your budget line items to your security assessment findings and avoid vague terminology like etc.).
- b. Refer to the revenue and expenditure account codes information provided below to properly code revenues and expenditures.

Revenue Account

Funds received should be coded as 46980 – Other State Grants.

Expenditure Accounts

Funds should be classified according to the County Uniform Chart of Accounts issued by the Comptroller of the Treasury by the function and object codes most consistent with the activity for which the materials or services are acquired. School personnel should evaluate the facts of each situation to determine the proper account classification.

The following are examples of some situations that might be encountered and the related account codes to be used:

Description	Account Code & Line-Item Number
Trainings provided to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students, Teachers, Parents, SROs, Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72130 - 524: Other Student Support – In-Service / Staff Development
Equipment placed in school buildings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72620 - 701: Maintenance of Plant – Administration Equipment • 72620 - 790: Maintenance of Plant – Other Equipment
Personnel hired or contracted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security guard hired as an employee • Behavioral Health Personnel • SRO contracts with the sheriff's department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72130 - 160: Other Student Support – Guards • 72130 - 123: Other Student Support – Guidance Personnel • 72130 - 170: Other Student Support – School Resource Officer