



Competitive Bi-Partisan Safer Community Act (BSCA) Stronger
Connections Grant Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Guide

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As we provide technical assistance to district and organizations regarding the Competitive Bi-Partisan Safer Community Act (BSCA) Stronger Connections Grant Program and more information becomes available, Nevada Department of Education (NDE) staff will add question and answers to this FAQ.

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NOTE: This document will be updated on a regular basis as new questions are received by the entities applying for the BSCA grant. Please ensure that you are consulting the most current version by referencing the date on the front page as well as the header.

Information in here may change based on updated guidance and a pending United States Department of Education updated Bi-Partisan Safer Community Act FAQ that we receive from the federal government or the Governor’s Finance Office

This FAQ and updates will be posted on the NDE website under the “[Grant Information](#)” page.


General Grant Application Answers

#	Question	Answer
1	What is the Bi-Partisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) Stronger Connections Grant Program?	On June 25, 2022, President Biden signed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA), which provides \$1 billion in funding to State educational agencies (SEAs) to be distributed under Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The BSCA specifies that SEAs must make competitive subgrants to high-need local educational agencies (LEAs), as determined by the SEA, for activities to support safe and healthy students under section 4108 of the ESEA. The Department has designated BSCA section 4108 funds as the Stronger Connections grant program to distinguish it from the regular Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants program, which funds a broader range of activities, including activities to support well-rounded educational opportunities and the effective use of educational technology. The Department announced allocations and awarded Stronger Connections funds to SEAs on September 15, 2022.
2	Congress provided BSCA funding under Title IV, Part A (TIVA) of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Are the activities that are eligible in the TIVA program also eligible for the BSCA competitive grant?	BSCA funds may be used for student, staff and community safety and health activities and services authorized under section 4108 of the ESEA.
3	Can an entity apply for funds for already expended funds before the grant is approved?	No. BSCA funding cannot be used for funds already expended as that is not authorized under section 4108 of the ESEA.
4	If an entity has a student safety related capital project already underway that is eligible for BSCA funding, can the entity use BSCA awarded funds before the grant is fully approved?	No. See answer to question 3 above.

<p>5</p>	<p>Are there any specific requirements that must be met for a use of BSCA funds to be “allowable” for an activity?</p>	<p>Yes. When preparing the competitive application, each entity must determine if the activity is allowable for BSCA funding under the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The activity must be authorized under section 4108 of the ESEA. (2) The activity must be reasonable and necessary for the performance of the grant. (3) The activity must be allocable to the BSCA grant. (4) <i>Supplements, and does not supplant other non-federal funds that would otherwise be used to pay for authorized activities.</i> (5) The activity(s) are not one of the prohibited activities in ESEA section 4001(b) or section 8526. (6) The activity is consistent with any other applicable Uniform Guidance provisions (see 2 CFR 200 et seq., in particular 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E).
<p>6</p>	<p>How long do the successful grant awardees have to spend the BSCA funds?</p>	<p>All BSCA funds must be <i>obligated by September 30, 2025</i> and <i>liquidated by September 30, 2026</i>.</p>


<p>7</p>	<p>Would items like replacing or adding new closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV), electronic school visitor management systems and artificial intelligence (AI) systems that can detect weapons be allocable in the grant?</p>	<p>Yes. In determining whether BSCA funds may be used for infrastructure-related security, the LEA must consider whether the items meet the definition of “equipment”: “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.” 2 CFR 200.1. SEAs and LEAs must comply with 2 CFR 200.313 and 200.439 if such items meet the definition of “equipment.”</p> <p>For the cost of installation of security equipment to be considered allowable, the installation must constitute minor remodeling under 34 CFR 77.1 and not require construction, renovation, or repair, which is a prohibited use of BSCA funds. Minor remodeling means minor alterations in a previously completed building and does not include building construction, structural alterations to buildings, building maintenance, or repairs. If an LEA chooses to use a video system, it should have a clearly established policy on the use of video systems on school property. The LEA has a responsibility not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or other protected classes when conducting surveillance and other security or safety activities using video systems. Furthermore, the LEA must comply with all applicable laws related to record maintenance and retention, and with data privacy and limitations on disclosure and use. As a best practice, the LEA should develop the policy surrounding the use of video systems in consultation with students, their families, and educators so that uses of the video systems are widely understood and privacy concerns are more fully considered in the development of the policy. For additional information regarding video and data privacy policies, please see “FAQs on Photos and Videos under FERPA” and “School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)”</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Would school nurses be allocable in the grant?</p>	<p>Yes. This would be an allocable service.</p>

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<p>9</p>	<p>Are there any limits or restrictions on how much funding the entities may apply for in this competitive grant?</p>	<p>No. Although funding is limited, all applicants are encouraged to apply for the amount of funding they believe are reasonable and necessary to improve the safety and health of their students and staff.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Would a threat assessment position (to work with school police and school counselors) be allocable in the grant?</p>	<p>Yes. This would be an allocable activity.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Does the BSCA grant require that all activities be evidence-based strategies?</p>	<p>Although not specifically required by Congress, LEAs and other entities applying for funding are strongly encouraged to use evidence-based interventions that have been shown to significantly improve safety and health as well as student academic outcomes.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Are the grant funds eligible to support preschool students?</p>	<p>Yes. BSCA funds may be used to support preschool aged students who are served by the LEA or LEA sponsored Charter School, through a range of allowable activities that encourage the healthy growth, safety and development of preschool-aged students.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Can BSCA funds be used for safety or health related capital construction projects?</p>	<p>No. BSCA grants are appropriated for carrying out activities under subpart 1 of Part A of Title IV of the ESEA, specifically for activities under ESEA section 4108. ESEA section 8526(1) 32 prohibits using funds under the ESEA “for construction, renovation, or repair of any school facility, except as authorized under [the ESEA],” and there is no specific authorization for construction, renovation, or repair in ESEA Title IV, Part A. Accordingly, BSCA funds may not be used for school construction</p>
<p>14 </p>	<p>One of the allowable areas in BSCA is to improve physical school and safety measures aligned to local security risk assessment. Our risk assessment calls for placing fencing between the buildings at our high school and considers it a very high need. According to the US-ED FAQ, BSCA funds cannot be used for construction. My question is, would security fencing that is aligned with a risk assessment be considered</p>	<p>This question was forwarded to United States Department of Education (US-ED). US-ED responded that “Fencing is not considered construction.” Therefore, this activity would be considered allocable.</p>

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	construction?	
15 ★	I'm looking for guidance on allowability for two projects being included in our BSCA application. Although not a construction project, one does involve electrical work, and the other is for the installation of fragmentation retention film on windows to mitigate injury from blasts and gunfire. Are these two projects eligible?	Please refer to the US-ED Updated FAQ, Page 28, C-22, for guidance on all security equipment and other physical or infrastructure-related equipment or minor remodeling activities. Bi-Partisan Safer Communities Act NOFO (nv.gov)
16 ★	When a Charter school or LEA submits their application, will they need to submit their budget in two separate years (FY24 and FY25).	No. The applicants must list each activity that covers the entire BSCA grant period. However, the applicants are encouraged to clearly define both in the grant answer narrative sections and budget narrative, all activities by year if applying for a multi-year program.
17 ★	If an applicant is planning on including a new Security System or an expansion of their existing system, and is experiencing delays in acquiring permits, can they still include this activity in the application?	Yes. However, this activity and any other related activities that involve physical or infrastructure-related equipment or minor remodeling, must be fully obligated (which would include any necessary permits) by September 30, 2025 and fully liquidated by September 30, 2026.
18 ★	Can a security system be contracted and installed by a qualified local company?	Yes. However, there are certain federal procurement, bidding and contracting requirements that must be followed for most physical or infrastructure-related security equipment installations or minor remodeling activities. These specific federal requirements will be provided after the final grant awards are allocated to the successful applicants.
19 ★	Would the cost of Medicaid billing expansion be allocable?	Yes. Please refer to the BSCA NOFO. There is listing under strategies: Increase capacity for LEAs to bill Medicaid for school health professionals in schools. Consider using non-federal funds for clinicians who can bill for Medicaid.

<p>20</p> 	<p>Is GMU part of the review process before a decision is made on the application or is it only the programmatic side?</p>	<p>GMU is not a part of the actual scoring or grant award decision process. The process involves multiple internal and external programmatic education professionals and is facilitated by the NDE Office of Student and School Supports (OSSS) and Office of for Safe and Respectful Learning Environments (OSRLE), the co-leads for the BSCA grant program.</p>
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Equitable Services Answers

#	Questions	Answers
21	<p>Are the LEAs receiving BSCA funds required to reserve funding per formula for equitable services?</p>	<p>Yes. LEAs must complete a separate timely and meaningful consultation process with the appropriate school officials and provide private school students and educators services and other benefits that are equitable in comparison to the services and other benefits provided with BSCA funds to public school students and educators.</p>
22	<p>If an LEA does not apply for BSCA funding, is equitable services for private schools still a requirement?</p>	<p>No. If an LEA does not apply or receive BSCA funding, there is no equitable service requirement.</p>
23	<p>After the LEA has completed their non-profit private school consultation process with all our private schools, how do the LEA write the private school into the grant?</p>	<p>The BSCA ePAGE application includes an Equitable Services section that is the same as the Title IV, Part A ePAGE application. Thus, the LEAs will use the same process. In addition, like the TIVA application, the total budget and brief budget narrative in the ePAGE budget section describing the non-profit private school activities will be necessary.</p>
24	<p>Should the LEAs follow the same set aside equitable service formula they use for TIVA and include the estimated funding portion based on the total competitive funding the LEA submits for consideration?</p>	<p>Yes. The process is the same as the TIVA equitable service process and the dollar amount or set aside portion for the private schools is based on the total dollar amount the LEA applies for.</p>

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25	Since the BSCA requires equitable services, are the LEAs going to be granted additional time to submit their applications?	Yes. The NDE BSCA team recognized that the separate BSCA equitable service and stakeholder engagement requirements of this funding opportunity warranted a longer application period. The NOFO was released March 1, 2023 with a due date of April 28, 2023.
26	Can an LEA conduct their equitable service consultation process for the BSCA grant and Title IV, Part A (TIVA) grant at the same time?	Yes. This would be an efficient and allowable process as long as the BSCA private school consultation process is conducted <i>completely separate</i> from the TIVA or any other federal titles programs consultation processes.

Charter School Applications Answers

#	Question	Answer
27	Can an LEA sponsored Charter School apply for the BSCA grant on their own?	Yes. Charter Schools sponsored by the Nevada State Public Charter Authority (SPCSA), or a Local Education Agency (LEA) are eligible to apply.
28	Are the LEA Sponsored Charter Schools required to apply <i>within</i> the sponsoring LEA application or would they submit a separate application on their own?	This is at the discretion of the sponsoring LEA. The LEA sponsored Charter Schools may submit a <i>separate</i> application that is not included or a part of the LEA sponsors application. Or, if the sponsoring LEA allows, the Charter School may apply <i>within</i> the LEAs application.
29	Will the potential total competitive funding awards approved by NDE for the Charter Schools be included or added to the sponsoring LEA competitive funding request in their application?	No. Each separate application submitted by either an LEA or sponsored Charter School will be considered and evaluated as individual applications.
30	Will NDE provide additional time for the Charter Schools to complete and submit their Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOI)?	Yes. The NOI deadline was extended for the LEA sponsored Charter Schools to March 31, 2023, 5:00pm PST.

#	Question	Answer
31	Will the Nevada State Public Charter Authority need to create one application on behalf of their Charter Schools that desire to participate in the competitive BSCA grant program?	No. Each of the SPCSA sponsored Charter Schools will submit a separate application. The SPCSA Charter Schools that are awarded will be included and managed in ePAGE by SPCSA.
32	Will the Charter Schools apply for the BSCA grant through ePAGE as the LEAs are required to do or a paper grant?	Public Charter Schools under the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) or the LEA will apply for this funding opportunity through a paper grant submission for NDE review and consideration for funding. The final awards for each charter schools will be consolidated by SPCSA and LEA into one ePAGE award to be managed for the life of the award.
33	Does a Charter School need to follow their sponsoring LEA's High Need indicators or priorities?	No. Charter Schools do not need to use all of the at-risk indicators or High Need priorities set forth by the sponsoring LEA. Each Charter School is encouraged to determine their own High Need priorities and include data and justification for funding activities that support safer and healthier students and staff.
34	Can a Charter School choose to use the sponsoring LEAs established High-Need status, priorities, data, and justifications?	Yes. If a Charter School High-Need status aligns with the at-risk indicators and priorities of the sponsoring LEA, it would be acceptable.
35	Where can the Charter Schools find the Budget Sheet for the Paper grants.	Here is the link to the NDE Grants Information webpage where you may download the Budget Sheet for the Paper grants. Bi-Partisan Safer Communities Act NOFO (nv.gov)
36 ★	Charter schools are required to submit their budgets on a paper Excel template provided by the NDE Grants Management Unit (GMU). Where should these schools identify the appropriate function codes that are not included in the template?	The GMU budget template was created for practical, user-friendly use. Please list the functions codes for each budget line-item in the budget narrative part of the template.

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<p>37 ★</p>	<p>Charter schools are required to identify one of the three meta-tags for each activity submitted for consideration in the application. Where should charter schools identify meta-tags in the paper allocation?</p>	<p>Please refer to page 10 of the BSCA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Charter Schools will use the NDE Budget Summary and Narrative template to identify mega-tags.</p>
<p>38 ★</p>	<p>For Charter Schools that need to submit paper grants, is there a template to answer the narrative questions?</p>	<p>No. While there is a budget narrative section in the budget template, there is not a template to use for the narrative questions. This added feature will be considered by NDE for future paper grant applications.</p>
<p>39 ★</p>	<p>Does a Charter School that does not receive Title IV, Part A (TIVA) funding need to submit a TIVA Comprehensive Needs Assessment to be eligible for funding.</p>	<p>No. The NOFO states and requires that LEAs must submit their most updated TIVA Comprehensive Needs Assessment. Charter Schools may use their ESSER Comprehensive Needs Assessment and/or School Performance Plan.</p>

Contact Information

If you have any questions or need assistance with Competitive Bi-Partisan Safer Community Act Stronger Connections Grant Program, please contact the NDE staff below:

Contact information for Technical Assistance and Support

Name	Email	Role
Maria Sauter	Msauter@doe.nv.gov	Co-Lead – Interim Director of the Office of Student and School Supports
Christy McGill	Cmcgill@doe.nv.gov	Co-Lead – Director of the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment

Technical Assistance and Support from the Title IV, Part A Federal Titles Program

Greg Severance	Gseverance@doe.nv.gov	Title IV, Part A Education Program Professional, Office of Student and School Supports
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Technical Assistance and Support from the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment

Laura Hutchinson	lhutchinson@doe.nv.gov	Education Program Professional, Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
Breana Taylor	taylorb@doe.nv.gov	School Nurse Coordinator – Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment

Grants Technical Assistance from the Office of District Support Services, Grant Management Unit (GMU)

Universal Account	Grantsinfo@doe.nv.gov
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Financial Risk Assessment from the Office of Division Compliance

Universal Compliance Account	Sidcompliance@doe.nv.gov
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