

# North Carolina Stronger Connections Grant (NC SCG)



# Origin

- On June 25, 2022, President Biden signed into law the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA)
  - [Stronger Connections Grant](#)
- For schools, Congress authorized \$1 billion in formula funding under Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to State Educational Agencies (SEAs) to provide students with safer and healthier learning environments.
- North Carolina will appropriate their state allotment of funds under this legislation as the North Carolina Stronger Connections Grant (NC SCG).

# Areas of Support

- Implementing comprehensive, evidence-based strategies that meet each student's social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being needs; create positive, inclusive, and supportive school environments; and increase access to place-based interventions and services.
- 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.
- Designing and implementing policies and practices that advance equity and are responsive to underserved students, protect student rights, and demonstrate respect for student dignity and potential.
- **Outcome: Collectively, addressing these areas would aid in decreasing gun and other types of violence in schools and communities.**



# Department of Education Guidance to States

- The US Department of Education encouraged States to consider a focus on LEAs with high rates of poverty **and** with one or more of the following characteristics:
  - A high student to mental health professional ratio
  - High rates of chronic absenteeism, exclusionary discipline, referrals to the Department of Juvenile Justice, bullying, harassment, community and school violence, or substance abuse
  - Locations where students recently experienced a natural disaster or traumatic event



# NC Criteria

- Title I-Part A public school unit recipients (districts, charters, labs and state operated programs) with physical addresses within the 40 most distressed counties as specified in the North Carolina Department of Commerce's annual tier ranking of the state's 100 counties based on economic well-being (Tier I)
- Mental health professional ratios exceeding:
  - School Counselors = 1:250
  - School Nurses = 1: per school
  - School Social Workers = 1:250
  - School Psychologists = 1:500
- Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) [Assessment](#) data identifies a need for additional resources and programming



# Eligible Counties by Region

West	Northwest	Southwest	Piedmont-Triad	Sandhills	North Central	Northeast	Southeast
Cherokee	Burke	Anson	Caswell	Bladen	Edgecombe	Bertie	Columbus
Graham	Mitchell		Randolph	Cumberland	Nash	Chowan	Duplin
Rutherford	Wilkes		Rockingham	Hoke	Vance	Halifax	Greene
			Surry	Richmond	Warren	Hertford	Hyde
				Robeson	Wilson	Martin	Jones
				Sampson		North Hampton	Lenoir
				Scotland		Pitt	Onslow
						Tyrrell	Wayne
						Washington	



# Sample Program Ideas

- Enhanced implementation of the MTSS model
- Creation and implementation of a course for SEL
- Hire additional staff to reduce ratios
- Professional Development



# Funding Availability

- \$27,899,256.00 for distribution to awarded PSUs
- Grant awardees will receive funds to use in the 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years
- All funds will have an encumbrance date of Sept. 30, 2026
- Each awarded PSU could receive an amount up to \$675,000.00
- Base amount: \$250,000 and \$1500.00 per pupil based on ADM
- **ADM must match the ADM used to complete the Title I Eligible Schools Summary Report (ESSR) in PowerSchool.**





Questions.

## North Carolina Stronger Connections Grant Team

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