

# MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

## Fiscal Year 2022 Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG)

### Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Application Guidance Document

**Online Submission Deadline: September 30, 2021**

#### Funded through: State of Maryland

Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS)  
Care of: Maryland State Department of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
[schoolsafety.maryland.gov](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov)

Larry Hogan, Jr., Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Schools  
Kate Hession, Executive Director, MCSS

**NOTE: MCSS will begin accepting applications for the FY2022 Safe Schools Fund Grant during the first week of June on the MCSS website:**  
[schoolsafety.maryland.gov](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov)

**Applicants are encouraged to follow the instructions outlined on the website when submitting the applications in order to avoid incomplete submissions. Supporting documentation must be attached to all applications.**

**Eligibility:** The Safe Schools Fund Grant is open to all twenty-four (24) local school systems within the State of Maryland.

**Important Notes:** All FY2022 Grants administered by MCSS are State issued Funds. Applicants must provide a copy of their **IRS Form W-9** to MCSS with their application.

**Introduction & Scope:** To enhance the use of the Safe Schools Fund, MCSS is encouraging local school systems to consider partnerships with other local school systems for training and exercise projects. MCSS supports partnerships between local school systems that together determine the greatest need, and therefore, the best utilization of grant funds for their application.

**Application Process:** Applicants are required to apply for grant funding through the [MCSS website](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov).

**To qualify, the online application must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on September 30, 2021.**

For further assistance, please contact:  
Gifty Quarshie, Fiscal and Grants Analyst  
[MCSS.MCSS@maryland.gov](mailto:MCSS.MCSS@maryland.gov)

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## **GRANT OVERVIEW**

The Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018 (Senate Bill 1265, Chapter 30) became law on June 1, 2018. It established the Safe Schools Fund, and ushered in a new approach to school safety and security for Maryland's public schools. The purpose of the Fund is to provide grants to local school systems to enhance school safety. MCSS administers the Fund on behalf of the School Safety Subcabinet, which awards the grants from the Fund. The Safe to Learn Act also established the School Safety Subcabinet Advisory Board, which advises and assists the Subcabinet and agency with fulfilling the statutory duties.

The Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG) is one of three grants being offered by MCSS under the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS FUND GRANT – FY2022**

The Governor has appropriated \$600,000 in FY2022 to the Safe Schools Fund for issuance to local school systems in the areas enumerated at [Md. Code Ann., Education Art. §7-1512](#). The Subcabinet shall review and approve all applications for the Safe Schools Fund Grant prior to issuance. The Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to request additional information from applicants related to project descriptions, use of the funds, and budget submissions. MCSS encourages applicants to include relevant support documentations such as quotes, statements of work, etc. when available; in order to enhance the review process and avoid any delays.

## **PURPOSE OF THE GRANT**

The purpose of this Safe Schools Fund Grant is to provide funding for school safety and security related matters as described under [Md. Code Ann., Educ. Art. §7-1512](#). The grant funds are to be applied toward the cost of school safety-related projects and services outlined below:

### **Planning**

- a. Conducting and training teams to conduct school safety assessments.
- b. Drafting emergency operations plans.
- c. Establishing formal and anonymous mechanisms for reporting safety concerns.
- d. Developing materials and marketing efforts to inform students and parents about what their local school systems are doing to improve school safety.
- e. Printing outreach materials and using technology such as apps and other software to assist in outreach efforts and other services.

### **Organizing**

- a. Developing plans to deliver school-based behavioral health and other wraparound services to students who exhibit behaviors of concern.
- b. Providing outreach to the broader school community to improve school safety, including heightening awareness of existing mental health services.
- c. Providing information to students and parents including data related to bus and pedestrian safety, strategies for ensuring personal safety, and efforts of the local school system to improve safety.

## **Equipping**

Examples include security cameras, emergency communication devices and systems, visitor management systems, and other non-permanent safety and security equipment.

## **Training**

- a. Conducting training on de-escalation and identifying and reporting behaviors of concern. Examples include behavioral threat assessment training, trauma informed care training, and restorative approach/teaching tools.
- b. Conducting training of assessment teams such as administrators, school staff, support staff, and school resource officers; to identify, properly respond to, and report threats or behaviors of concern that may pose a threat to the safety of an individual attending or working in a public school.
- c. Providing reimbursement to local law enforcement agencies for school resource officer training<sup>1</sup> provided by MCSS.
- d. Enrolling school security employees and mental health coordinators in training provided by MCSS.

## **Exercising**

- a. Developing and conducting school emergency drills.
- b. Developing and testing traffic control measures in the immediate vicinity of schools to reduce the potential for pedestrian and vehicle accidents.

*All training and/or services must be provided by trained professionals and/or subject matter experts. Training formats may include in-person training, webinars, seminars, and use of technology-based training.*

## **FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

Funding for Grants offered by MCSS is provided by the State and is based on approval from the State Legislature and the Governor. The performance period for the FY2022 Safe Schools Fund grant is from **July 1, 2021 (start date) to December 30, 2022 (end date)**. Grant funds will be obligated by MCSS once a completed Notice of Grant Award is issued. Funds are paid on a reimbursable basis.

***The Safe Schools Fund grant may supplement existing State and local funds for program activities but not replace those funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose.***

## **ALLOCATION**

The Subcabinet has approved an even distribution among all twenty-four (24) local school systems. Each jurisdiction may apply for up to the **maximum allowable amount of**

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<sup>1</sup> The MCSS SRO grant can be used for the same purpose.

**\$25,000.** In order to be eligible, each local school system must meet the application requirements outlined in this NOFA. The Subcabinet shall review and approve all applications for the Safe Schools Fund grant prior to issuance.

The School Safety Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to partially approve or completely deny grant applications that do not fully meet the application requirements.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Begin Accepting Applications	June 2021
Application Deadline	September 30, 2021
Award Approval/Denial Letters	Up-to 30 Days after Subcabinet Decision <sup>2</sup>
Notification of Grant Award (NOGA) Issuance	Up to 21-days after Award Approval Letter
Award Start Date	July 1, 2021
Award End Date	December 30, 2022
<b>Quarterly Progress Reports:</b> Q1 – July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021 Q2 – October 1, 2021 to December 30, 2021 Q3 – January 1, 2022 to March 31, 2022 Q4 – April 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022 Q5 – July 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022 Q6 – October 1, 2022 to December 30, 2022	<b>Due Dates:</b> October 29, 2021 January 31, 2022 April 29, 2022 July 29, 2022 October 31, 2022 January 31, 2022
Final Project Report	February 14, 2023

**ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

**A. Allowable Expenses**

Local school systems are encouraged to use the guidance provided under the "[purpose of the grant](#)" when coming up with project ideas for this grant. Below is a list of allowable expenses under this grant. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.

- a. Contractual services (e.g., contractual services or personnel, project partners, subject matter experts, etc.)
- b. Materials and supplies<sup>3</sup> (e.g. outreach materials, learning kits, training supplies, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> The School Safety Subcabinet meets on a quarterly basis. Approval/denial notices will be sent within 30-days after the Subcabinet has reviewed the application.

<sup>3</sup> Materials and supplies needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant.

- c. Equipment<sup>4</sup> and associated delivery and installation costs (e.g., radios, security cameras, visitor management systems, etc.)
- d. Training (registration, materials, etc.)
- e. Security related software
- f. Other charges\*

\*Other charges must have direct correlation to the overall project or task being performed and will be considered on a case by case basis.

## **B. Unallowable Expenses**

Below is a list of unallowable expenses under this grant. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.

- a. Out-of-State travel
- b. Door entry/locking upgrades
- c. Structural repairs and fencing/barriers
- d. Vehicles
- e. Capital projects

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

MCSS encourages local school systems to submit applications that include brief details on the following:

- a. Project strategy
- b. Statement of need narrative
- c. Detailed project description
- d. Project Timeline
- e. Budget / Spend plan<sup>5</sup>

## **GRANT MONITORING**

MCSS continually monitors each grant to ensure that State funds are being used as intended and grant awards are compliant. Generally, grant monitoring is performed through the thorough review of quarterly progress reports and reimbursement requests with support documentation. However, MCSS reserves the right to perform on-site visits as part of its grant monitoring activities. Grantees shall be notified at least thirty (30) days in advance prior to a monitoring on-site visit and must ensure that the following conditions are met:

- a. Grantee is responsible for tracking every aspect of their project deliverables.
- b. Prior to an on-site monitoring visit, grantee shall make available to MCSS staff, all necessary documentation needed during such visit.
- c. Grantee shall allow MCSS staff access to all grant related records to verify grant expenditures and activities upon receipt of notification from MCSS.

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<sup>4</sup> Any equipment purchased that costs at least \$5,000 or greater per unit is subject to a three-year retention period.

<sup>5</sup> Use budget/spend plan template available on [MCSS website](#).

## INDIRECT AND FIXED COSTS

### A. Indirect Costs<sup>6</sup>

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services defines Indirect Costs as “overhead expenditures that cannot be directly charged to the program providing services. Indirect costs represent administrative and support services an agency provides (such as budgeting, accounting, and purchasing) to allow the direct delivery of services.” Some additional indirect costs may include depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment as well as the costs of operating and maintaining facilities. ***There are no indirect costs permitted in the Safe Schools Fund.***

### B. Fixed Costs

Fixed costs **are** permitted through the funding provided by this grant. All details for fixed costs related expenses MUST be clearly outlined in the Project Description and must be specifically and easily identified with a particular project as outlined in the Project Description submission. Fixed costs may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Salaries/Wages & Fringe Benefits<sup>7</sup>
- b. Contractual salaries
- c. Materials and Supplies<sup>8</sup>
- d. Equipment<sup>9</sup>

## GRANT REVIEW

MCSS shall review each application submission for sufficiency before submitting to the School Safety Subcabinet. The Subcabinet will discuss and award grants on a quarterly basis. The Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to request additional information as necessary. Local school systems are encouraged to submit applications in a timely manner to allow ample time for review and approval by the Subcabinet.

## REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

**Important:** FY2022 Safe Schools Fund Grant invoices **must** be submitted to MCSS via email: [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov) All invoices and reports submitted to MCSS shall not contain personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive information.

### A. Reporting Requirements

There are three types of reporting that is required under the FY2022 Safe Schools Fund grant: Safe to Learn Act Reporting Mandates, Quarterly Project Reports, and Final Project Report.

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<sup>6</sup> [Indirect Costs](#)

<sup>7</sup> Staff, technicians and other personnel(s) needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant.

<sup>8</sup> Materials and supplies needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant.

<sup>9</sup> Any equipment purchased that costs at least \$5,000 or greater per unit is subject to a three-year retention period.

## Safe to Learn Act Reporting Mandates

- a. Before the beginning of each school year, each local school system shall file a report with MCSS showing each public school assigned SROs or the adequate law enforcement coverage.
- b. On or before **August 1, 2021**, each local school system shall submit to MCSS any updated Public-School Emergency Plans.
- c. On or before **August 1, 2021** and each August 1 thereafter, each local school system shall submit aggregate data about threats made against any school or school system facility. Each local school system shall also submit a report on school hours spent in an emergency or an emergency drill.
- d. On or before **August 31, 2021**, and each August 31 thereafter, each local school system shall complete the [\*Use of Force Report\*<sup>10</sup>](#) and submit to MCSS any use of force incidents between a school security employee and a student while the school security employee is carrying out the employee's duties.

## Quarterly Project Reports

- a. Grantee is required to submit Quarterly Progress Reports (QPR) detailing a summary of work completed including milestones achieved and any obstacles encountered during the previous quarter and every quarter thereafter.
- b. Quarterly Progress Reports are due **30-days** after the end of each quarter. Please refer to the *important dates* section of this NOFA for quarterly report due dates. The form is available on the [MCSS website](#).
- c. Reports\* must be submitted on time. The Grant will be considered not in compliance for missing or late reports.

\*Invoices will not be reimbursed if quarterly and final reports have not been submitted.

## Final Project Report

A Final Project Report (FPR) is due to MCSS no later than 45-days after the end of the grant period. Please refer to the important dates section of this NOFA for the final report due date.

## B. Reimbursement Requirements

- a. All FY2022 Safe Schools Fund grant invoices must be submitted directly to MCSS.
- b. No grant monies will be funded for costs or obligations incurred, or work performed, *prior* to the beginning date of this notice of funding.
- c. Grantee must use the MCSS invoice template when submitting reimbursement requests. The form is available on the [MCSS website](#).
- d. Supporting documentation\* *must* be included with all reimbursement requests. Examples of supporting documentation include but are not limited to, timesheets, copies of proof of payment to vendors or contractors, copies of original invoices, contractual agreements, proof of completion of work such as photos (before and after), etc.
- e. Reimbursement requests shall be submitted on a quarterly basis.

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<sup>10</sup> Local law enforcement agencies will submit reports of use of force between an SRO and student.

- f. Grantee shall submit reimbursement requests via email to [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov).
- g. Final invoice or request for reimbursement related to this grant must be submitted no later than **45-days** after the end of the duration of this grant. MCSS will not process or reimburse any invoices or reimbursement requests submitted beyond this date.

*\*Reimbursement requests with no supporting documentation will not be processed.*

## **RECORD RETENTION**

- a. The Maryland Center for School Safety is a government entity; upon submission, this application is considered public information, except as otherwise provided by law. The Maryland Center for School Safety does not sell collected grant information. Under the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA) (MD State Government Code Ann. Gen. Provisions Art., § 4-101, et seq.), you may request in writing to review grant award documentation. Please send those requests to the Maryland Center for School Safety, c/o Maryland State Department of Education, 200 W. Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 22201. Please visit the Office of the Attorney General [website](#) for additional information.
- b. Grantee shall retain grant documents and equipment purchased using grant funds for the retention period of three (3) years after final invoice submission. MCSS, the Department of Budget and Management, the State Comptroller, the Legislative Auditor, or any combination of the aforementioned State agencies may examine and audit this evidence upon request, at any reasonable time within the retention period.
- c. Grantee shall allow MCSS and its affiliated agencies, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Department of Budget and Management, the State Comptroller, and the Legislative Auditor; to examine and audit this supporting documentation on request and at any reasonable time within the retention period.
- d. Grantee shall retain reports, activity logs, timelines, and any additional related supporting documentation for any other expenses that are covered in whole or in part by any grant funds.

## **GENERAL AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

Grant awards are subject to these General and Special Conditions. The MCSS reserves the right to add Special Conditions, if and when needed, during the life of the award period. These General Conditions outline the post-award policies, procedures, guidelines, and business rules from MCSS for grant funds.

- A.** Any expenditure of Grant funds that is not consistent with the purposes of the grant award, or that violates any requirement, term or condition of the Safe Schools Fund grant or the Notice of Grant Award agreement will be disallowed.
- B.** All grant related activities must be completed no later than **December 30, 2022**.
- C.** Grantee shall ensure that all work performed pursuant to the SSFG and this agreement is completed by contractors and/or staff holding all necessary certifications and licenses.
- D.** Grantee shall ensure that any business or non-profit organization operating in Maryland with which Grantee contracts or partners to carry out the purposes of the Grant is registered and in good standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation.

- E. All work performed pursuant to the Grant shall comply with all applicable State, local, and federal laws and regulations.
- F. Grantee is responsible for ensuring that any equipment acquired using State issued grant funds is protected from theft, loss and damage. MCSS must be notified if any grant funded equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged.
- G. Grantee should establish safety measure protocols for activities taking place on school premises during an emergency, including projects that:
  - a. Maintain open lines of communication between schools and law enforcement agencies; and
  - b. Incorporate active shooter response training.
- H. All projects shall commence within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the approval letter for this grant. If the project will not commence within thirty (30) calendar days of the starting date of the period of award, an explanation of the steps taken to initiate the project, the reason for delay, and the expected commencement date must be explained and justified in a formal written notice to MCSS via email: [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov)
- I. The award may be terminated by one or both parties with written notice. If the award is terminated before the end of the funding period, an accounting of the year-to- date expenses must be provided within thirty (30) calendar days after termination.
- J. Any salaries, positions, personnel expenses, contractual expenses, equipment, travel, and other expenses paid for with Safe School Fund grant must be used to **supplement** your organization's existing budget, and **may not replace** any funds that were already included in your entity's existing or projected budget. **Supplanting** is the use Safe Schools grant fund to replace State, federal or local funds which were previously appropriated / budgeted for, or otherwise would have been spent on, the specific purpose(s) for which this subaward has been awarded.
- K. All grant funds related to the award project must be encumbered, obligated (requisitions, purchase orders, or contracts, which are negotiated purchases), or expended (payment of an invoice) by the end of the award period.
- L. Failure to expend encumbered funds within 45 days following the end date of the grant period may jeopardize reimbursement and/or result in the de-obligation of funds. In that event, remaining obligations will be the sole responsibility of the recipient. Reimbursement **is only** for work completed during the grant period.
- M. Any requests for grant realignment or modifications of any kind to any portion of this award must be submitted in writing prior to occurrence. All realignment requests must be submitted using the MCSS template which can be found on the [MCSS website](#). Realignment requests may include but is not limited to:
  - a. Budget revisions of any type, including proposed expenditures in a budget category that was not previously approved in the application stage.
  - b. Change to staff specified in the personnel category (where applicable).
  - c. Any change that was not approved when the funds were originally awarded.
- N. When issuing public statements, press releases, or other documents relating to this project, or when conferences, seminars, workshops, or forums are held in reference to this project, the grant award recipient agrees that the source of funding of this project and the role of the MCSS must and will be clearly acknowledged. The grant award recipient will ensure that all publications resulting from this project will have the following language on the publication:
 

*"The Maryland Center for School Safety funded this project via a grant award from the Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG). All points of view expressed in this document, publication, or presentation, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the State of Maryland."*
- O. All final financial reports under the grant award must be submitted no later than **forty-five (45) days** after the end date of the award period.

- P.** Grantee affirms that it shall not discriminate in any manner against any employee, applicant for employment, or clients of services, because of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, or limited English proficiency, so as reasonably to preclude the performance of such employment and/or services provided. The grant award recipient agrees to include:
- a. A provision similar to the one contained above for any underlying contract utilized for services under this award, except for those contracts for standard commercial supplies or raw materials; and
  - b. A non-discrimination poster, publicly displayed, acknowledging that the entity does not discriminate and provides an avenue for employees, program beneficiaries, and any relative vendors, to file a discrimination complaint directly with the grantee, the MCSS, and/or directly with the Maryland Commission on Human Relations, 6 St. Paul Street, 9th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201 (410-767-8600), the Baltimore Office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 10 South Howard Street, 3rd Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201 (410-962-3932), or directly with the Office of Civil Rights Office of Justice Programs (OJP), 810 7th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20531.
- Q.** The grant award recipient must promptly report any credible evidence of fraud, waste, abuse and similar misconduct with grant funding to the MCSS.
- R.** All correspondence should be directed to [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov).