

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

Fiscal Year 2024 School Safety Evaluation Grant (SSEG)

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Application Guidance Document

Online Submission Deadline: September 29, 2023

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

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Mr. Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
Kate Bryan, Executive Director, MCSS

NOTE: MCSS will begin accepting applications for the FY2024 School Safety Evaluation Grant starting September 1, 2023.

schoolsafety.maryland.gov

Eligibility: The School Safety Evaluation Grant is open to all twenty-four (24) local school systems within the State of Maryland.

Important Notes: All FY2024 Grants administered by MCSS are State issued Funds. Applicants must provide a copy of their **IRS Form W-9** to MCSS with their application.

Premise: The Maryland Center for School Safety administers the School Schools Fund grants set forth in Md. Code Ann., Education Art. §7-1512 of the Safe to Learn Act of 2018. For FY2024, three million dollars has been appropriated specifically to provide grants to local school systems to complete safety evaluations required under Md. Code Ann., Education Article §7-1510.

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 29, 2023.

For further assistance, please contact:
Gifty Quarshie, Fiscal and Grants Manager
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.

For fiscal year 2024, local education agencies (LEAs) have the opportunity to apply for the School Safety Evaluation Grant which was first made available in fiscal year 2019. Under Md. Code Ann., Education Article §7-1510, LEAs are required to conduct safety evaluations regularly to:

1. Identify, and if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including issues with building security; and
2. Identify and evaluate any patterns of safety concerns on school property or at school-sponsored events.

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

The purpose of the School Safety Evaluation Grant is specifically for local education agencies (LEAs) to conduct school safety evaluations on all the schools within their jurisdiction on a regular basis. The School Safety Evaluation Grant shall be used for the following purposes:

1. Perform facility assessments;
2. Re-evaluate and update existing safety evaluation tool(s), policy and procedures;
3. Train staff on the policy, procedures and use of the safety evaluation tool(s)
4. Acquire software for digital mapping of each school facility;
5. Test out communication and video equipment; and
6. Implement a sustainable school safety evaluation plan and processes.

Grant funds may be used to train school safety evaluation teams regarding the various aspects and use of the school safety evaluation tool, as well as the use of technology, software, and apps to conduct the safety evaluations. In addition, grant funds may be used to employ school safety consultants and/or subject matter experts to conduct the school safety evaluations and/or assess the outcomes of the evaluations. This training may be provided by consultants and/or subject matter experts in various formats to include, but not limited to: in-person training, webinars, seminars, discussion- and operational-based exercises, or use of technology-based training.

ALLOCATION

The total school count based on the 2022-2023 MCSS annual [SRO Adequate Coverage Report](#) was one thousand four hundred (1,400) public schools. Based on the total school count and the FY2024 funding availability, this amounts to approximately \$2,143 per school. However, in order to ensure minimum funding availability for each jurisdiction, each local education agency will receive a **minimum of \$50,000** in grant funding to complete the tasks outlined above. Please refer to [Appendix A](#) in the NOFA for the allocation amount per jurisdiction.

GRANT TIMELINE

The performance period for the FY2024 School Safety Evaluation Grant is from **September 1, 2023 (start date) to September 30, 2024 (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.

Funds from the School Safety Evaluation Grant shall not supplant or replace those funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose. The funds may be used to supplement existing State and local funds for related program.

IMPORTANT DATES

Begin Accepting Applications	September 1, 2023
Application Deadline	September 29, 2023
Award Approval/Denial Notice	Up to 15-Days after Application
Notification of Grant Award (NOGA) Issuance	Up to 21-days after Award Approval Notice
Award Start Date Award End Date	September 1, 2023 September 30, 2024
Final Invoice	October 31, 2024
<u>Evaluation Summary Reports:</u> Progress Report (i.e. status report) Final Report	<u>Due Date:</u> April 1, 2024 September 30, 2024

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The application requirements include the following:

- a. [Online Application Form](#)
- b. Project Request Form – *(required. Template provided)*
- c. Detailed Project Description – *(required)*
- d. Quotes – *(optional)*

APPLICATION REVIEW

Each application will be thoroughly assessed to ensure adherence to every required detail. Incomplete applications will be returned for completion. MCSS will provide guidance on an as needed basis to ensure compliance with the application requirements.

MCSS staff will assess each organization's application based on:

- A. The information contained in the Online Application Form;
- B. The Detailed Project Description; and
- C. The Project Request form.

ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

A. Allowable Expenses

Local school systems should 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: this includes third party vendors contracted to conduct the safety assessments, mapping, and updating the written policy and procedures
- b. Overtime wages: this is only applicable when:
 1. Using school staff to conduct the safety evaluation; or
 2. Training school staff on the policy, procedures and use of the safety evaluation tool(s) and overtime wages are necessary.
- c. Equipment: this includes reasonable requests to purchase specific equipment needed to conduct the safety assessment in an efficient way. Examples include iPads or light meters.
- d. Subscription Services: this is only applicable when subscribing to safety evaluation tools or modules through a third-party vendor. Any subscription costs beyond the grant performance period is the sole responsibility of the local school system.

B. Unallowable Expenses

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

- a. Travel
- b. Hotel accommodations
- c. Vehicles
- d. Capital projects

REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Invoices shall be submitted to MCSS via email: mcss.mcass@maryland.gov All invoices and reports submitted to MCSS shall not contain personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive information.

A. Reporting Requirements

1. Status Report

Grantee shall submit one Progress Report to the Center midway through the performance period; that is, by **April 1, 2024**. This report shall provide a status update on whether the evaluation has been conducted; in process; or yet to begin.

Please note: Extension requests will not be granted for the FY2024 School Safety Evaluation Grant (SSEG). The project shall be completed during the Grant performance period.

2. Final Project Report

A Final Project Report (FPR) is due to MCSS at the end of the performance period, i.e. **September 30, 2024**. Please refer to the [Important Dates](#) section of the NOFA for more information. The Final Project Report shall include information required under Md. Code Ann., Education Article §7-1510 of the Safe to Learn Act:

- i. Identify and, if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including issues with building security; and
- ii. Identify and evaluate any patterns of safety concerns on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Final Project Report shall also include additional detail about:

- a. The overall assessment;
- b. The process used to conduct the assessment;
- c. The personnel or contractor used to conduct the assessment;
- d. The equipment, tools, materials or software used to conduct the assessment;
- e. Recommendations to address the safety concerns identified; and
- f. Other observations not previously covered.

B. Reimbursement Requirements

1. All FY2024 School Safety Evaluation Grant invoices shall be submitted directly to MCSS.
2. No grant monies will be reimbursed for costs or obligations incurred, or work performed, *prior* to the beginning date of this notice of funding.
3. Grantee shall use the MCSS invoice template when submitting reimbursement requests. The form is available on the [MCSS website](#).
4. Support documents¹ shall be included with all reimbursement requests. Examples of support documents include but are not limited to, timesheets, copies of proof of payment to vendors or contractors, copies of original invoices, contractual agreements, payroll report documenting overtime pay, etc.
5. Grantee shall submit reimbursement requests via email to mcss.mcss@maryland.gov.
6. Final invoice or request for reimbursement related to this grant must be submitted no later than **30-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.

RECORD RETENTION

- a. 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.
- b. 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.

¹ Reimbursement requests with no support documents will not be processed.

- c. 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 School Safety Evaluation Grant (SSEG) or the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) agreement will be disallowed.
- B. All grant related activities must be completed no later than **September 30, 2024**.
- C. Grantee shall ensure that all work performed pursuant to the SSEG 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. 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.
- I. Any salaries, positions, personnel expenses, contractual expenses, equipment, travel, and other expenses paid for with School Safety Evaluation 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 of the SSEG funds 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.
- J. All grant funds related to the award project shall 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.
- K. Reimbursement **is only** for work completed during the grant period.
- L. All final financial reports under the grant award shall be submitted no later than **thirty (30) days** after the end date of the award period.
- M. 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.

- N.** Grantee shall promptly report any credible evidence of fraud, waste, abuse and similar misconduct with grant funding to the MCSS.
- O.** All correspondence should be directed to mcss.mcss@maryland.gov.

APPENDIX A

Jurisdiction	No. of Schools*	Allocation per Jurisdiction
Allegany County	23	\$50,000.00
Anne Arundel County	124	\$244,672.00
Baltimore City	155	\$305,841.00
Baltimore County	171	\$337,411.00
Calvert County	25	\$50,000.00
Caroline County	10	\$50,000.00
Carroll County	41	\$80,900.00
Cecil County	30	\$59,195.00
Charles County	37	\$73,007.00
Dorchester County	13	\$50,000.00
Frederick County	70	\$138,122.00
Garrett County	12	\$50,000.00
Harford County	54	\$106,551.00
Howard County	77	\$151,934.00
Kent County	5	\$50,000.00
Montgomery County	211	\$416,338.00
Prince George's County	198	\$390,687.00
Queen Anne's County	15	\$50,000.00
Somerset County	9	\$50,000.00
St. Mary's County	28	\$55,249.00
Talbot County	8	\$50,000.00
Washington County	45	\$88,792.00
Wicomico County	26	\$51,301.00
Worcester County	13	\$50,000.00
Total Public Schools:	1400	\$3,000,000.00

*School count based on the annual [2022 SRO Adequate Coverage Report](#)

APPENDIX B

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) [School Assessment](#) tool
- Office of Justice Programs [School Safety Assessment](#) tool
- Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) [School Security Assessment Tool \(SSAT\)](#)
- National Crime Prevention Council [School Safety and Security Toolkit](#)
- SchoolSafety.gov [Foundational Elements of School Safety](#)
- Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance (REMS TA) [SITE ASSESS Tool](#)
- Texas State School Safety and Security Audit [Toolkit](#)