

# TITLE IV-A STRONGER CONNECTIONS GRANT (SCG)

- ❖ The Title IV Part A SCG focuses on improving conditions for student learning by encouraging schools to implement a comprehensive plan incorporating evidence-based activities, programs, and practices to create safer and healthier learning environment which promotes positive school climates as outlined in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 4108.

# DEFINITION OF HIGH NEEDS

❖ OPI proposes the following criteria for defining “high need” based on ED Guidance:

- LEAs with high rates of poverty (40 % or more) AND
- One or more of the following characteristics:
  - 1) a high student-to-mental health professional ratio;
  - 2) high rates of chronic absenteeism, exclusionary discipline, referrals to the juvenile justice system, bullying/harassment, community and school violence, or substance abuse; or
  - 3) where students recently experienced a natural disaster or traumatic event

# WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

- ❖ SCG must be used to develop, implement, and evaluate programs within “high need” LEAs. These competitive grants will carry the same “supplement, not supplant” and equitable share requirements as the formula Title IV-A grants.
  - There will be a minimum of \$10,000 per LEA but with several factors determining the size of the award.
  - The grant is anticipated to be open in March 2023 with a deadline of May 2023. Funds are anticipated to be available July 2023 and expended by September 30, 2025.

# ELIGIBILITY

- ❖ SCG funds will be awarded to “high needs” LEAs through a competitive grant process.
- ❖ The U.S. Department of Education is encouraging states to prioritize funding for LEA applications that demonstrate strong commitment to:
  - implement comprehensive, evidence-based strategies that meet each student’s social, emotional, physical, and mental well-being needs.
  - engage students, families, educators, staff, and community organizations in the selection and implementation of strategies and interventions to create safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments.
  - design and implement policies and practices that advance equity and are responsive to underserved students, protect student rights, and demonstrate respect for student dignity and potential.

# GRANTEE REPORTING

Recipients will submit annual progress reports to the OPI in Egrants

## ❖ School Year 23/24:

- completion of a School Climate Survey
- end of year program report (assigned in Egrants)
- updated goals and objectives for the 24/25 SY

## ❖ School Year 24/25:

- completion of a School Climate Survey
- end of year program report (assigned in Egrants)
- an explanation of sustainable practices - how partnerships functioned including strengths and challenges, if applicable

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