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| Safe and Supportive Schools Competitive Grant | **Fund Code:** 0335 |

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| **Attachment A: Option One and Option Two Additional Information** |

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| **Priorities:** | The main priorities for this grant are to help ensure that each participating school creates an equitable, safe, positive, healthy, culturally-competent, and inclusive whole-school learning environment for all students, and makes effective use of a system for [integrating services](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/FY2018/2018-01/item10-integrating-services.docx) and aligning initiatives that promote students’ behavioral health and wellness, through one of two grant applicant options:   * **OPTION ONE: Action Planning** These grantees will convene a school team composed of various stakeholders (e.g., including but not limited to teachers, nurses, counselors, family members, etc.) to review and respond to the questions in the [SaSS Tool](http://sassma.org/).   **NOTE:** Applicants are expected to propose to use the[SaSS Tool](http://sassma.org/) during the grant period (after grants are awarded). During the application process (as always), the [SaSS Tool](http://sassma.org/) is available to look through using the tester login:   Username: TOOLu  Password: TOOLp  Grantees will be given school-specific accounts (if they do not already have them), and any school at any time can request this through [achievement@mass.gov](mailto:achievement@mass.gov).***Applicants should not complete the tool prior to applying for the grant.***  Based on the school team’s reflections informed by using the SaSS Tool, the team will identify school and district areas to prioritize for improvements related to creating safer and more supportive learning environments, and will finalize a school plan that is aligned to school and district priorities, and a district plan that supports the schools’ efforts. These action plans are expected to also be informed by already existing school and district plans, such as School and District Improvement Plans, and also help inform subsequently created school and district improvement plans.  The SaSS action plans shall address all six sections (referred to as [Implementation Levers](http://sassma.org/levers.asp)) of the SaSS Tool and reflect the [Essential Elements](http://sassma.org/essentialelements.asp) of Safe and Supportive Schools:   1. Leadership and Culture 2. Family and Community Engagement 3. Professional Learning Opportunities 4. Access to Resources and Services 5. Teaching and Learning that Fosters Safe and Supportive Environments 6. Policies and Procedures   The SaSS Tool includes two self-reflection components: a Preliminary Self-Reflection and a Deeper Dive Self Reflection. During the initial grant year, grantees will complete the entire Preliminary Self-Reflection, teams will identify priority Implementation Levers which the team can then choose to reflect on further in the Deeper Dive Self Reflection. Additional levers can be reflected upon in the Deeper Dive Self Reflection in subsequent years. Action plans created in the first year can address these priority levers directly and will describe how any other Implementation Levers will be reflected upon and addressed further during the next year.  **Note:** Upon award, the Department will provide all Option One, Action Planning grantees with guidelines for convening teams to create action plans that are aligned with other district and school plans and initiatives, including but not limited to district and school improvement plans (where applicable). As noted above, the Department will also provide all Option One, Action Planning grantees with personalized login information for the SaSS Tool as well as additional support for accessing and using the SaSS Tool.  **Professional development prior to completing the self-reflection**: Upon award, Option One grantees will be required to participate in DESE-provided asynchronous learning OR show evidence of completing similar training or PD prior to beginning the self-reflection process. Upon award, selected grantees can either:   1. Select at least two (2) team members from each school-based team to participate in approximately 10 hours of asynchronous professional learning from the DESE-sponsored online course “Hope and Healing for Active Anti-Racism". Details will be provided upon award. 2. Provide evidence of at least 10 hours of previous or planned work by team members related to learning relevant to safe and supportive schools. Topics may include anti-racist practices, trauma informed practices, culturally sustaining education, or others proposed by the grantee.  * **OPTION TWO: Implementation and Support**  a) These grantees will begin or continue to implement school-focused action plans (and associated district-support plans) that were created in prior year(s). The creation of those action plans must have been informed by a local self-reflection process using the [SaSS/BHPS](http://sassma.org/) Framework and Tool (the current version or any prior ones). **Those completed action plans must be submitted with the applications**, and whether action plans are submitted will be considered as part of the competitive review process. *It can be noted on the submitted plans any adaptations that will be needed to best support the current needs of students, staff, and families and/or related to any new equity goals including racial equity.*   b) These grantees will also serve as supports for Option One grantees; other new SaSS Tool users; schools and districts that are new to implementation; as well as the Department, Commission, and others as needed and appropriate. The areas of support may include providing feedback to the Department or the Commission at meetings, presenting at online, regional, and statewide conferences, or providing direct support or guidance to Option One grantees (both virtual and in person activities will likely be planned for the 2025-2026 school year) related to one or more of the following aspects of using the Framework and Tool to inform action plan creation and implementation, or another area agreed to by the applicant and Department:   * School-level or district-level personnel role in supporting the grant efforts, and broader safe and supportive schools related work; * Forming effective school teams that encompass the whole school/district community; * Implementing effective strategies for ways that students' and families' perspectives can inform the reflection and decision-making process * Facilitating school-focused or district teams to utilize the SaSS Tool; * Facilitating District leadership support; * Gathering data to utilize and inform completion of each section of the SaSS Tool; * Creating a realistic and feasible timeline for utilizing the SaSS Tool; * Analyzing results from the Tool to create priority areas for next steps; * Writing an effective and measurable action plan; and * Implementation strategies for becoming safer and more supportive.   Both Options also prioritize elevating the voices of students who are reflective of the school population.  Competitive priority will be given to districts and schools in chronically underperforming status. |
| **Fund Use:** | **Option One: Action Planning** These funds must be used to support the **development of action plans** that incorporate all **six Implementation Levers** of the SaSS Tool. Activities may include, convening the team to engage in relevant learning prior to completing the SaSS Tool, completion of the tool, and time to develop action plans. Funds may also be used to support participation in networking and professional development.  Grant funds may be used for teacher stipends, consultants, substitutes, and materials to be used in the development of district action plans and school action plans for those schools proposed under this option. Applicants should not include in their initial application requests for funds to support activities related to action plan implementation.The Department, though, may consider requests during the spring of 2026 from Option One: Action Planning grantees to amend budgets to support action plan implementation, provided a comprehensive action plan has been created and submitted to DESE for review.  **Option Two: Implementation and Support** These funds must be used to implement action plans that incorporate all **six Implementation Levers** of the SaSS Tool, as submitted with the application. These funds must also support efforts associated with support activities.  Implementation activities may include but are not limited to development of school-based models for coordinated support of students in need, implementation of research-based educational programs that are proven to prevent substance use and misuse, activities that address and reduce substance use related problems, and/or development of information systems to help identify students at risk, track interventions and evaluate progress and outcomes.  Grant funds may be used for a school- and district-level implementation coordinator(s), consultants, substitutes, evidence-based programs/initiatives, and materials to be used in the implementation of district action plans and school action plans for proposed schools.  Funds may also be used to provide stipends for the members of the team that will be responsible for the **support activities**, or for any appropriate costs associated with support.  **All applicants** All applicants may consider partnering with consultants to help facilitate the action planning and/or implementation process.  All applicants may also consider partnering with community-based organizations including early childhood education and afterschool or out of school time providers for alignment and collaboration.  Funds **cannot** be used for electronics (such as iPads, computers, tablets, etc.) or construction. |