



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

To: School and District Leadership

From: The Oklahoma State Department of Education

Date: March 2, 2018

Re: Champions of Excellence Grant: Invitation to Apply to Improve Safe and Healthy Conditions

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) believes all students should be provided equitable access to a school fostering safe, healthy, and supportive environments that lead students to reach their full potential.

The Opportunity:

The new Oklahoma Champions of Excellence Program provides \$1,200,000 of competitive grant funding for the 2018-2019 school year to create a safe and healthy atmosphere for all students through development and implementation of programs and activities both in school and across the community.

Districts can use these funds to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive programs and activities that –

1. are coordinated with other school and community-based services;
2. foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement;
3. promote the involvement of parents in the activity or program;
4. may be conducted in partnership with an institution of higher education, business, nonprofit organization, community-based organization, or other public or private entity with a demonstrated record of success in implementing activities described in this section; and
5. may include programs and activities such as –
 - a. drug and violence prevention activities and programs;
 - b. school-based mental health services;
 - c. safe and healthy practices in school or athletic programs (healthy lifestyle, bullying/harassment prevention, mentoring for at-risk students, dropout prevention programs);
 - d. high-quality training and support related to suicide prevention, crisis management, human trafficking, violence prevention, drug abuse prevention, and bullying/harassment prevention;
 - e. child sexual abuse awareness and prevention;
 - f. reducing exclusionary disciplinary practices;
 - g. implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports;
 - h. designating a site resource coordinator; and
 - i. paying for success initiatives aligned with the purpose of this section.

Invitation to Apply:

The Oklahoma Champions of Excellence Grant prioritizes funding for schools identified as Persistently Dangerous (representing 10 competitive priority points). However, Oklahoma has never had a school designated as such. Still, we know there is much to be done to ensure every child has an opportunity to flourish.

Too many Oklahoma students have no safe haven from challenging, abusive, and harmful environments. Oklahoma ranks 11th in youth with alcohol dependence and illicit drug use. According to Mental Health America (MHA),



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Oklahoma is listed at #45 in Youth Rankings. These rankings indicate that youth have a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. From 2011-2015, Oklahoma ranked 10th highest in the nation for youth suicide rates.

To combat these disheartening statistics, the OSDE has identified the following counties where the violent crime rate is above 2%. If your school district located in part or in whole in one of these counties, your application will receive five competitive priority points.

Oklahoma Counties With Greater the 2% Violent Crime Occurrences <i>(values show crime rate occurrences per 1,000 residents)</i>					
Oklahoma	58.06	Payne	30.23	McClain	24.87
Comanche	54.23	Washington	29.58	Garvin	23.89
Tulsa	50.57	Stephens	29.5	Sequoyah	23.78
Carter	46.62	Canadian	28.55	Creek	23.47
Pottawatomie	43.47	Jackson	28.51	McIntosh	23.4
Muskogee	37.66	Grady	28.36	Nowata	22.35
Cleveland	36.78	Pontotoc	28.11	Custer	22.26
Garfield	35.26	Okmulgee	28.03	Pushmataha	21.89
Kay	34.64	McCurtain	27.07	Beckham	21.78
Woodward	34.1	Choctaw	26.79	Le Flore	21.12
Seminole	34.05	Tillman	26	Major	20.9
Pittsburg	33.62	Wagoner	25.88	Mayes	20.84
Harmon	33.19	Ottawa	25.23	Adair	20.41
Bryan	32.94	Okfuskee	25.08	Murray	20.2

Conclusion:

The Intent to Apply is required for any district applying for this grant and is due by **March 15, 2018**. Submit your notice of intent at <http://bit.ly/OK4A-2018-ITA>.

We look forward to your application for this grant, **due May 6, 2018**. Please review all available resources, including the Request for Proposals, at <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/TitleIVA>.