PLUS PROGRAM · ALIGNMENT GUIDE · SCHOOL SAFETY

PLUS ALIGNMENT GUIDE

BJA STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND OFFICERS PREVENTING (STOP) SCHOOL VIOLENCE PROGRAM

SIDE-BY-SIDE LANGUAGE FOR GRANT WRITERS. ADAPT EVERY BRACKET TO YOUR SCHOOL.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The STOP School Violence Program is a competitive federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). It is authorized by the STOP School Violence Act of 2018, and every funded project must stay inside that law's allowable uses. BJA funds training for school personnel and education for students to prevent violence, behavioral threat assessment and intervention teams, and technology such as anonymous reporting systems. This is a different program from the COPS Office School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP), which pays for physical security. The FY 2026 round (O-BJA-2026-172709) was posted in September 2026 and listed awards of up to $2,000,000. Step 1 on Grants.gov closed October 30, 2026, and the full application in JustGrants was due November 6, 2026, so the round is closed to new applicants. This guide is written for the next round.

The guide follows BJA's own framework in two parts. The first part covers the deliverable areas, so you can see where PLUS belongs and where it does not. The second part follows the review criteria BJA uses to score the narrative, in BJA's order and with BJA's weights from the FY 2025 solicitation. Each table shows what BJA asks for, where PLUS fits, and sample language you can adapt. The sample language uses brackets for the details only your district can supply. Replace every bracket with your own data, teams and partners, and rewrite the language in your district's voice. Confirm the section names, weights, categories and ceilings when BJA posts the new solicitation.

> **Writer's note.** Use the rows that fit your project. A strong STOP application places PLUS in one deliverable area and shows how it connects to your threat assessment team and school safety plan. Reviewers notice when a prevention program is stretched to cover areas it does not serve.

DELIVERABLE AREAS

In FY 2025, BJA allowed applicants to propose any combination of three deliverable areas: technology solutions, behavioral threat assessment and intervention teams, and training. PLUS belongs in the training area. That area also names suicide prevention training and specialized training on responding to mental health crises. PLUS does not deliver that part, so name the partner who does.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Training school personnel and educating students on preventing school violence, including anti-bullying and suicide prevention training	This is the PLUS deliverable area. The PLUS staff team trains together at the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training, and the Advisor attends the PLUS Advisor Institute. Students learn to gather campus data, facilitate Forums and lead a schoolwide response to bullying, harassment, exclusion and fights.	*"[District] applies under the deliverable area for training school personnel and educating students on preventing school violence. The project will train a PLUS staff team at each of [number] schools and give students a defined role in finding and responding to patterns of conflict between students each month."*
The suicide prevention and mental health crisis training named in the training area	PLUS does not fit here. It is not a suicide prevention, crisis or mental health program. Name the partner or district staff who deliver this training, such as [county behavioral health] or your counseling department.	*"Suicide prevention and mental health crisis training will be delivered by [partner], separate from the PLUS component of this project."*
Multidisciplinary behavioral threat assessment and/or intervention teams	PLUS is not a threat assessment tool. Direction is anonymous and cannot identify an individual student. The connection is at the level of patterns: the threat assessment team receives cycle reports and campus trends.	*"PLUS will not be used to assess or refer individual students. The district's behavioral threat assessment team will receive each school's cycle report and review district Direction trends [quarterly] to see where patterns of conflict are rising."*
Technology solutions, such as anonymous reporting systems	PLUS does not fit here. Direction is an anonymous school climate survey of a representative sample. It is not a reporting system and does not take tips about individuals.	*Leave PLUS out of this area. If your district funds a reporting system, describe it separately and explain how it complements your existing system.*
Priority consideration for school-based behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) teams	In FY 2025, BJA gave priority to applicants with established BTAM teams or plans to create them. PLUS strengthens the prevention side of that work by giving the team monthly data from students.	*"[District] has an established BTAM team at each school. PLUS cycle reports will give each team current, campus-level data on bullying, harassment and conflict between students."*

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM (20 PERCENT)

BJA scores the critical issue the project will address. The FY 2025 narrative section was titled Description of the Need.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Local, specific and current data on violence and its precursors in the schools to be served	Direction gives a monthly read of campus experiences, such as being bullied or seeing a fight in the last 30 days. A question asked across schools to more than 250 students sets a norm. A school above the norm gets a warning indicator.	*"In a [spring 2027] Direction pilot, [11] percent of sampled students at [School] reported being bullied on campus in the last 30 days. That is above the [6] percent norm for grades 9 to 12. Direction flagged the school with a warning indicator."*
The gap the project will close	Most districts respond well once a concern reaches an adult. Many have no schoolwide way to find patterns of conflict early, and no structure that gives students a role in changing them.	*"Our [BTAM case review] found that [56] percent of cases involved peer conflict or bullying that had been building for weeks. The district lacks monthly, campus-level information from students and a student-led response that runs every month."*

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (10 PERCENT)

BJA scores how the project addresses the need and the purpose of the program.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Goals tied to the identified need and to violence prevention	PLUS goals focus on interactions between students on campus: bullying, harassment, exclusion and fights.	*"Goal 1: Reduce violence between students at [number] schools by finding patterns of bullying, harassment and conflict early and acting on them each month."*
Measurable objectives with baselines and targets	Direction and cycle reports supply monthly figures. Discipline data and the California Healthy Kids Survey supply annual and biennial measures. Do not use academic or reading outcomes.	*"Objective 1a: Reduce the share of sampled students reporting being bullied on campus in the last 30 days from [10] percent to at or below the [6] percent norm by [Year 3]. Objective 1b: Reduce suspensions for violent incidents from [4.8] to [3.6] per 100 students."*

PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION (20 PERCENT)

BJA scores the soundness of the design and how well the activities match the goals. In FY 2025, BJA also asked applicants to build in a three-month planning period and a phased approach.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
A sound design aligned to the goals	PLUS is an evidence-based school climate system that uses youth participatory action research. A PLUS Team of 25 to 30 students meets in a dedicated class section and runs the 30-day cycle nine times a year: protective factors, data integration, action planning and engagement.	*"Each school will run nine 30-day cycles a year. Direction will survey a new representative sample of less than 10 percent of the campus each cycle. A student-facilitated Forum will gather input from [40 to 50] students, a new group each month, and name the top four critical issues."*
How activities prevent violence	Forums focus on bullying, harassment, exclusion, isolation and the conflicts that lead to fights. The response is schoolwide. Students do not counsel or mediate their peers.	*"When the data shows a rise in exclusion or threats of fights, the PLUS Team and staff team will plan a schoolwide response in the next cycle. Concerns about an individual student will follow the district's existing BTAM and reporting protocols."*
Coordination with law enforcement, safety teams and the school safety plan	The PLUS Advisor brings each cycle report to the site safety committee and the PBIS and MTSS teams. Information moves up to the district office and school board, and decisions come back down.	*"The PLUS Advisor will present each cycle report to [School]'s safety committee, which includes [the school resource officer and BTAM lead]. Patterns in the data will inform supervision, supports and the annual update of the comprehensive school safety plan."*
A three-month planning period and phased timeline	The PLUS rollout fits a phased plan: staff team training, data implementation, master schedule, Advisor Institute in June, August pre-cycle and nine cycles a year.	*"Months 1 to 3 are the planning period. Staff teams train in months [3 to 4]. PLUS Teams are selected in spring, Advisors attend the June Institute, and the August pre-cycle begins in [August 2028]. Cycle 1 follows in September."*

CAPABILITIES AND COMPETENCIES (20 PERCENT)

BJA scores the applicant's administrative and technical capacity to complete the project.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Qualified staff and clear roles	Each site has a PLUS staff team: an administrator, a counselor or PBIS lead, and the Advisor. A district project director oversees the work.	*"The [Director of Student Services] will serve as project director. Each school's PLUS staff team includes [an assistant principal, the PBIS lead and the PLUS Advisor]."*

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
A proven program and provider	PLUS has been used in California schools for about 25 years. Districts include Stockton Unified (since 2012), Hemet Unified (since 2010), Lake Elsinore Unified, Kern High School District, Patterson Unified and Compton Unified. More than 80 percent of PLUS schools renew each year.	*"PLUS meets the ESSA standard for moderate evidence (Tier 2) for improving attendance. Separately, a 2022 study in the Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion examined how integrating youth participatory action research into schoolwide PBIS can prevent bullying and improve school climate."*
Capacity to manage federal funds	This row belongs to the district. Describe your fiscal office and prior grants.	*"[District]'s Fiscal Services department has managed [state and federal grants] and will handle financial reporting and drawdowns."*

PLAN FOR COLLECTING THE DATA REQUIRED FOR THIS NOFO'S PERFORMANCE MEASURES (5 PERCENT)

BJA scores the applicant's understanding of performance reporting and its plan to collect the data.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Who collects the data and who is responsible	Training sign-in records, cycle reports and Direction supply most of the project data. Direction offers raw data download and participation tracking.	*"The project director is responsible for performance data. A [district research analyst] will compile training records, cycle reports and Direction results each month and enter required data in JustGrants on BJA's schedule."*
How data will guide the project	Direction district alerts show when a school rises above a norm.	*"If a school stays above a Direction norm for two cycles, the project director will meet with that school's staff team to adjust its plan."*

> **Writer's note.** Use the performance measures BJA publishes for the new round. Do not invent BJA measures in your narrative.

PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY (10 PERCENT)

BJA scores how the work continues after the award ends. The plan should not assume another STOP award.

BJA ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Named non-federal sources for continuing costs	Training and Institute costs are one-time. The ongoing cost is the annual subscription. Each year's subscription includes a 2-Day training registration for one new staff member, so turnover does not require new grant funds.	*"By [Year 3], the district will fund PLUS subscriptions through its LCAP school climate goal. The district already funds each Advisor's time from [LCFF]."*

BUDGET LANGUAGE

BJA scores the budget at 15 percent for completeness and cost effectiveness. Every line must show its calculation and tie to an activity.

LINE	SAMPLE BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
PLUS Advisor, 0.1 to 0.2 FTE	"[District] will fund [0.2] FTE of a certificated teacher at each school to serve as PLUS Advisor. 0.1 FTE can get the job done. 0.2 FTE is recommended because the extra 0.1 FTE lets the Advisor collaborate on the PBIS, MTSS and school safety teams and bring each cycle's data to them."
PLUS Program, first year ($3,495 per site)	"Funds the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training for a staff team of up to four, the online subscription with unlimited Direction and the activity resource database, the PLUS curriculum and one conference registration."
PLUS Program, each year after ($1,495 per site with a three-year agreement)	"Continues the subscription, one conference registration and one 2-Day training registration for a new staff member each year."
PLUS Districtwide, five or more sites ($1,495 per site per year plus $2,995 per year for the district subscription; on-site training $3,500 per day plus travel and lodging)	"Gives the district office results across all sites, trends by grade level and student group, district alerts, raw data download and a board report, which support the BTAM team's quarterly review."
PLUS Advisor Institute ($1,495 registration plus lodging and travel)	"Prepares each Advisor to teach the PLUS class and lead its activities through the year. The Institute is held each June in Temecula."
Federal meeting travel	"Funds the trip BJA requires for a meeting with federal officials, at current federal per diem rates."

Writer's note. STOP required no cost share in FY 2025. Many districts show the Advisor's time as a district contribution in the narrative rather than as a federal cost. A teacher's class section is a regular assignment the district would staff anyway, and charging it to a federal grant invites a supplanting question. Under federal cost principles, cost share entered in the budget becomes a binding commitment you must track, so decide with your fiscal office. BJA does not allow trinkets as giveaways, and food requires justification and prior approval. Never request the same items from BJA STOP and COPS SVPP.

Writer's note. The full sample application for a fictional district, Mesa Arroyo Joint Union High School District, on the Funding PLUS page shows these pieces assembled into one proposal. Confirm prices at plusprogram.org/costs before you finalize the budget.

SOURCES

- BJA FY 2025 STOP School Violence Program solicitation, O-BJA-2025-172466 (OJP)
- BJA FY 2025 STOP School Violence Program overview
- BJA FY 2025 STOP School Violence Program solicitation, O-BJA-2025-172340, earlier January 2025 version (BJA)
- Funding Landscape listing: BJA FY 2026 STOP School Violence Program (O-BJA-2026-172709)
- USGrants listing: BJA FY 2026 STOP School Violence Program
- University of South Carolina limited submission notice: BJA FY 2026 STOP School Violence Program
- PLUS Program Costs