

Steve's Secure Our Schools Program

About the Program

In 2000, as a member of the House Judiciary Committee, Congressman Rothman created the Secure Our Schools (SOS) program, which is a matching federal grant program administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing (COPS), in the Department of Justice. The first SOS grants were available in Fiscal Year 2002.

One of the best aspects of the Secure Our Schools program is the flexibility it offers by allowing each grant recipient—a law enforcement agency partnered with a school district—to decide for itself whether to participate in the program. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies and school districts design their own security measures based on the unique needs of their students.

SOS grants can help cover the cost of security measures such as metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures; security assessments; training for students, teachers, and administrators; coordination with local law enforcement; and other actions that could significantly improve school safety. SOS addresses a variety of existing and emerging problems relating to school security through responses that range from traditional to innovative and rely on both new technology and the experience of school administrators and law enforcement professionals.

Secure Our Schools Funding History

Fiscal
Year
Amount

NJ Recipients

NJ
\$ Total

2002

\$5
million
6
\$615,000

2003

\$5
million

9
\$531,000

2004

\$10
million
18

\$993,406

2005

\$15
million
26
\$2,545,998

2006

\$15
million
20
\$1,467,114

2007

\$15
million
7
\$554,194

TOTAL:
\$65
million
86
\$6,706,712

Since 2002, SOS grants have been awarded to a total of 756 law enforcement agencies that have partnered with more than an estimated 2,400 schools nationwide to help ensure our children's safety. In New Jersey, over 80 Secure Our Schools grants have been awarded to our law enforcement agencies and school districts. Those grants were worth over \$6.5 million and helped secure more than 160 schools.

How
to Apply

Law

enforcement agencies, partnered with local school districts, must submit a grant application and supporting materials to the COPS office within the Department of Justice by mid to late June of each year. Congressman Rothman encourages all New Jersey school districts interested in applying for SOS safety grants to partner with their local law enforcement agencies and contact his office for more information or assistance in applying at: 25 Main Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601; phone: (201) 646-0808; fax: (201) 646-1944.

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