

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3439

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to create a demonstration project to fund additional secondary school counselors in troubled title I schools to reduce the dropout rate.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 3, 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself, Ms. BORDALLO, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to create a demonstration project to fund additional secondary school counselors in troubled title I schools to reduce the dropout rate.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Put School Counselors
5 Where They’re Needed Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR ADDITIONAL SEC-**
2 **ONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS.**

3 Part H (20 U.S.C. 6551 et seq.) of title I of the Ele-
4 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is amend-
5 ed by adding at the end the following:

6 **“Subpart 3—Demonstration Project for Additional**
7 **Secondary School Counselors**

8 **“SEC. 1841. FINDINGS.**

9 “Congress finds the following:

10 “(1) Nationally, only 70 percent of students
11 graduate from high school with a regular high school
12 diploma.

13 “(2) Every school day, 7,000 American high
14 school students become dropouts.

15 “(3) High school students living in low-income
16 families drop out of school at six times the rate of
17 their peers from high-income families.

18 “(4) Only about 55 percent of African Amer-
19 ican students and 52 percent of Hispanic students
20 graduate on time from high school with a regular di-
21 ploma, compared to 78 percent of white students.

22 “(5) The dropout rate for students with disabil-
23 ities is approximately twice that of general education
24 students.

25 “(6) High school is the final transition into
26 adulthood and the world of work as students begin

1 separating from parents and exploring and defining
2 their independence. Students who are deciding who
3 they are and what they will do when they graduate
4 face many pressures, including high-stakes testing,
5 the challenges of college admissions, the scholarship
6 and financial aid application process, and entrance
7 into a competitive job market. They need guidance
8 in these complex decisions, which have serious and
9 life changing consequences.

10 “(7) School counseling programs are essential
11 for students to achieve optimal personal growth, ac-
12 quire positive social skills and values, set appropriate
13 career goals, and realize full academic potential to
14 become productive, contributing members of the
15 world community.

16 “(8) Professional secondary school counselors
17 are highly qualified educators with a mental health
18 perspective who understand and respond to the chal-
19 lenges presented by today’s diverse student popu-
20 lation.

21 “(9) The professional secondary school coun-
22 selor holds a master’s degree or higher in school
23 counseling (or the substantial equivalent), and is
24 certified or licensed by the State in which the coun-
25 selor works.

1 “(10) Professional secondary school counselors
2 are integral to the total educational program. They
3 provide proactive leadership that engages all stake-
4 holders in the delivery of programs and services to
5 help the student achieve success in school. Profes-
6 sional secondary school counselors align and work
7 with the school’s mission to support the academic
8 achievement of all students as they prepare for the
9 ever-changing world of the 21st Century.

10 “(11) Professional secondary school counselors’
11 opportunities to assist students are often hindered
12 by extraordinarily high student-to-counselor ratios.
13 Currently, the average student-to-counselor ratio in
14 America’s public schools is 479 to 1. The American
15 School Counselor Association, the American Coun-
16 seling Association, and the National Association for
17 College Admissions Counseling all recommend a
18 ratio of one school counselor to 250 students and a
19 lower ratio for counselors working primarily with
20 students at risk.

21 **“SEC. 1842. DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**

22 “(a) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available to
23 carry out this subpart, the Secretary shall carry out a
24 demonstration project under which the Secretary makes
25 grants on a competitive basis to secondary schools that

1 receive funds under this title and have a four-year ad-
2 justed cohort graduation rate of 60 percent or lower.

3 “(b) GRANTS.—A grant under this subpart shall be
4 for a period of 4 years and may be used—

5 “(1) to provide additional school counselors
6 during that period; and

7 “(2) to provide additional resources (such as
8 professional development expenses or travel expenses
9 for home visits, and any services and materials re-
10 ferred to in subsection (d)) and to pay overhead ex-
11 penses.

12 “(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
13 gress that a participating school should aim to provide,
14 under subsection (b)(1), one additional counselor per 250
15 students at risk.

16 “(d) SCOPE OF COUNSELING.—The additional school
17 counselors shall identify students who are at risk of not
18 graduating in 4 years and shall provide counseling pri-
19 marily to those students. The counselors may identify such
20 students at any time, but shall strive to identify them be-
21 fore they enter grade 9. Services shall be provided as long
22 as necessary, including to the extent allowable and appro-
23 priate, after the student’s cohort graduation date. The
24 counseling provided—

1 “(1) may include a full panoply of services, in-
2 cluding an individual graduation plan and other re-
3 sources, such as appropriate course placement and
4 supplemental services (to include not only supple-
5 mental educational services tutoring if available at
6 the school site, but also other tutoring as necessary,
7 along with supplemental books and materials); and

8 “(2) shall include meetings with each student so
9 identified and with the teachers, tutors, supple-
10 mental educational services providers, and parents of
11 the student, and may also include meetings with
12 other relevant individuals, such as a probation offi-
13 cer, mentor, coach, or employer of the student.

14 “(e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds under
15 this subpart shall be used to supplement, not supplant,
16 funds from non-Federal sources. The additional school
17 counselors provided through funds under this subpart
18 must be in addition to any employees who work in the
19 secondary school guidance or counseling office, such as
20 counselors, college admissions specialists, career develop-
21 ment specialists, guidance information specialists, or any
22 other professional or paraprofessional.

23 “(f) ADDITIONAL GRANT PERIODS.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A school that receives a
25 grant under this subpart and demonstrates adequate

1 improvement over the period of the grant is eligible
2 to receive a second grant for a second period. If the
3 school again demonstrates adequate improvement
4 over that second period, the school is eligible to re-
5 ceive a third grant for a third period. The third
6 grant shall provide amounts that decrease for each
7 year of the third period and require the school to
8 provide corresponding increases in non-Federal
9 funds.

10 “(2) ADEQUATE IMPROVEMENT.—For purposes
11 of paragraph (1), a school demonstrates adequate
12 improvement over a grant period if the four-year ad-
13 justed cohort graduation rate increases (or is pro-
14 jected to increase) by 10 percent or more over that
15 period.

16 “(g) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall carry out the
17 demonstration project in at least 10 schools. The first five
18 schools selected to participate shall each be from a dif-
19 ferent State.

20 **“SEC. 1843. DEFINITIONS.**

21 “For purposes of this subpart:

22 “(1) FOUR-YEAR ADJUSTED COHORT GRADUA-
23 TION RATE.—The term ‘four-year adjusted cohort
24 graduation rate’ means the number of students who
25 earned a regular high school diploma at the conclu-

1 sion of their fourth year, before their fourth year, or
2 during a summer session immediately following their
3 fourth year, divided by the number of students who
4 formed the adjusted cohort for that graduating
5 class.

6 “(2) ADJUSTED COHORT.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the other
8 subparagraphs of this paragraph, the term ‘ad-
9 justed cohort’ means the students who entered
10 grade 9 together, and any students that trans-
11 ferred into the cohort in grade 9 through 12
12 minus any students removed from the cohort.

13 “(B) TRANSFERS IN.—The term ‘transfers
14 in’ means the students who enroll or re-enroll
15 after the beginning of the entering cohort’s first
16 year in high school, up to and including in
17 grade 12.

18 “(C) COHORT REMOVAL.—To remove stu-
19 dents from the cohort, the school or local edu-
20 cational agency must confirm that the stu-
21 dent—

22 “(i) has transferred out;

23 “(ii) is in the custody of the juvenile
24 justice system; or

25 “(iii) is deceased.

1 “(D) TRANSFERS OUT.—The term ‘trans-
2 fers out’ means the students the school or local
3 educational agency has confirmed have trans-
4 ferred to another school, local educational agen-
5 cy, or other educational program for which they
6 are expected to receive a regular high school di-
7 ploma. Confirmation of a student’s transfer to
8 another school, local educational agency, or pro-
9 gram requires formal documentation that the
10 student enrolled in the receiving school. Stu-
11 dents enrolled in a GED or other alternative
12 educational program that does not issue or pro-
13 vide credits toward the issuance of a regular
14 high school diploma are not considered trans-
15 fers out. Students who were enrolled, but for
16 whom there is no confirmation of transfer or
17 completion, may not be labeled transfers or er-
18 rors, but must remain in the cohort as non-
19 graduates for reporting and accountability pur-
20 poses.

21 “(E) TREATMENT OF OTHER LEAVERS
22 AND WITHDRAWALS.—Students who were re-
23 tained in grade, enrolled in a GED program, or
24 left school for any other reason may not be
25 counted as transfers out for the purpose of cal-

1 culating graduation rates and must remain in
2 the adjusted cohort.

3 “(F) SPECIAL RULE.—For those high
4 schools that start after ninth grade, the cohort
5 shall be calculated based on the earliest high
6 school grade.

7 “(3) REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘regular
9 high school diploma’ means the standard high
10 school diploma awarded to the preponderance of
11 students in the State that is fully aligned with
12 State standards, or a higher diploma, and does
13 not include GEDs, certificates of attendance, or
14 any lesser diploma award.

15 “(B) SPECIAL RULE.—For those students
16 who have significant cognitive disabilities and
17 are assessed using an alternate assessment
18 aligned to alternate achievement standards, re-
19 ceipt of a regular high school diploma or State-
20 defined alternate diploma aligned with comple-
21 tion of their entitlement under the Individuals
22 with Disabilities Education Act shall be counted
23 as graduates with a regular high school diploma
24 for the purposes of this Act. No more than one
25 percent of students can be counted as graduates

1 with a regular high school diploma under this
2 subparagraph.

3 **“SEC. 1844. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 “‘There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
5 this subpart \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008
6 through 2011.’”.

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