

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2022

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

APRIL 23, 2015

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. BASS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary
4 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6551 et seq.) 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 “The 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 three times the rate
17 of 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 defining their independence and forging their own
2 pathways. As our next generation of leaders, our
3 youth, are deciding their futures, they are faced with
4 many challenges, including peer pressure and bul-
5 lying, high-stakes testing, the challenges of college
6 admissions, the scholarship and financial aid appli-
7 cation process, and entrance into an ever more com-
8 petitive job market. Students need guidance and
9 skills to help them navigate these complex decisions,
10 which have serious and life changing consequences.

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

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

22 “(9) The professional secondary school coun-
23 selor holds a master’s degree or higher in school
24 counseling (or the substantial equivalent), and is

1 certified or licensed by the State in which the coun-
2 selor works.

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

12 “(11) Professional secondary school counselors’
13 opportunities to assist students are often hindered
14 by extraordinarily high student-to-counselor ratios.
15 Currently, the average student-to-counselor ratio in
16 America’s public schools is 471 to 1. The American
17 School Counselor Association, the American Coun-
18 seling Association, and the National Association for
19 College Admissions Counseling all recommend a
20 ratio of one school counselor to 250 students and a
21 lower ratio for counselors working primarily with
22 students at risk.

23 **“SEC. 1842. DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available to
25 carry out this subpart, the Secretary shall carry out a

1 demonstration project under which the Secretary makes
2 grants on a competitive basis to secondary schools that
3 receive funds under this title and have a four-year ad-
4 justed cohort graduation rate of 60 percent or lower.

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

7 “(1) to provide additional school counselors
8 during that period; and

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

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

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

1 priate, after the student’s cohort graduation date. The
2 counseling provided—

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

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

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

25 “(f) ADDITIONAL GRANT PERIODS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A school that receives a
 2 grant under this subpart and demonstrates adequate
 3 improvement over the period of the grant is eligible
 4 to receive a second grant for a second period. If the
 5 school again demonstrates adequate improvement
 6 over that second period, the school is eligible to re-
 7 ceive a third grant for a third period. The third
 8 grant shall provide amounts that decrease for each
 9 year of the third period and require the school to
 10 provide corresponding increases in non-Federal
 11 funds.

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

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

22 **“SEC. 1843. DEFINITIONS.**

23 “For purposes of this subpart:

24 “(1) FOUR-YEAR ADJUSTED COHORT GRADUA-
 25 TION RATE.—The term ‘four-year adjusted cohort

1 graduation rate’ means the number of students who
2 earned a regular high school diploma at the conclu-
3 sion of their fourth year, before their fourth year, or
4 during a summer session immediately following their
5 fourth year, divided by the number of students who
6 formed the adjusted cohort for that graduating
7 class.

8 “(2) ADJUSTED COHORT.—

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

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

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

24 “(i) has transferred out;

1 “(ii) is in the custody of the juvenile
2 justice system; or

3 “(iii) is deceased.

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

24 “(E) TREATMENT OF OTHER LEAVERS
25 AND WITHDRAWALS.—Students who were re-

1 tained in grade, enrolled in a GED program, or
2 left school for any other reason may not be
3 counted as transfers out for the purpose of cal-
4 culating graduation rates and must remain in
5 the adjusted cohort.

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

10 “(3) REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.—

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

18 “(B) SPECIAL RULE.—For those students
19 who have significant cognitive disabilities and
20 are assessed using an alternate assessment
21 aligned to alternate achievement standards, re-
22 ceipt of a regular high school diploma or State-
23 defined alternate diploma aligned with comple-
24 tion of their entitlement under the Individuals
25 with Disabilities Education Act shall be counted

1 as graduates with a regular high school diploma
 2 for the purposes of this Act. No more than one
 3 percent of students can be counted as graduates
 4 with a regular high school diploma under this
 5 subparagraph.

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

7 “There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
 8 this subpart \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016
 9 through 2019.”.

10 **SEC. 3. TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

11 The table of contents in section 2 of the Elementary
 12 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is amended by in-
 13 serting after the item relating to section 1830 the fol-
 14 lowing:

“Subpart 3—Demonstration Project for Additional Secondary School
 Counselors

“Sec. 1841. Findings.

“Sec. 1842. Demonstration project.

“Sec. 1843. Definitions.

“Sec. 1844. Authorization of appropriations.”.

