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118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8236

To direct the Secretary of Education to award grants to State educational agencies to facilitate the provision of pre-kindergarten programs that reduce the cost of education services and result in positive educational outcomes, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 2, 2024

Mr. NUNN of Iowa (for himself, Ms. PEREZ, and Mrs. HINSON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Education to award grants to State educational agencies to facilitate the provision of pre-kindergarten programs that reduce the cost of education services and result in positive educational outcomes, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Pre-K for Kids Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award, on a competitive basis, grants to State educational agencies to facilitate, through subgrants to local educational agencies, the provision of pre-kindergarten programs that—

(1) reduce the cost of education services, including with respect to at-risk children;

(2) result in positive educational and developmental outcomes;

(3) are likely to have a positive fiscal impact on local governmental entities; and

(4) are based on a model pre-kindergarten program.

(b) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State educational agency seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form, at such time, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority to State educational agencies who serve a majority of families in the State whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the Federal poverty line, as defined by the most recently revised poverty

income guidelines published by the Department of Health and Human Services.

(c) GRANT USES.—A State educational agency that receives a grant under this section shall use such grant funds to award subgrants to local educational agencies in accordance with subsection (d).

(d) SUBGRANTS.—

(1) APPLICATION.—A local educational agency seeking a subgrant under this subsection shall submit to the State educational agency an application in such form, at such time, and containing such information as the State educational agency may require, including the program proposal described in paragraph (2).

(2) PROGRAM PROPOSAL.—The program proposal shall include the following:

(A) A description of how the local educational agency will carry out the innovative financing partnership described in subsection (e).

(B) A description of the pre-kindergarten services that will be provided by a service provider described in paragraph (2)(A) of such subsection pursuant to such partnership.

(C) An assurance that the local educational agency will agree to an evaluation by an independent evaluator described in paragraph (2)(C) of such subsection pursuant to such partnership of the pre-kindergarten programs provided under this subsection.

(D) A description of the ways in which the program will be carried out in order to have a positive fiscal impact on the local government.

(3) EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.—

(A) CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION.—In evaluating an application submitted by a local educational agency under paragraph (1), the State educational agency shall consider the following:

(i) Whether the program proposal submitted by the local educational agency includes all required information.

(ii) Whether the program described by such proposal—

(I) will achieve the objectives described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a) and result in significant performance improvements; and

(II) is likely to have a positive fiscal impact on the local government.

(B) PRIORITY.—In evaluating an application submitted by a local educational agency under paragraph (1), the State educational agency may give priority to a local educational agency that—

(i) demonstrates intent to partner with a service provider that demonstrates a strong commitment to ongoing professional development for employees;

(ii) demonstrates intent to partner with public and private service providers;

(iii) demonstrates intent to use new and enhanced services for children;

(iv) serves a majority of families whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the Federal poverty line, as defined by the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the Department of Health and Human Services;

(v) serves a majority of immigrant and refugee families;

(vi) serves areas with waiting lists for high-quality pre-kindergarten programs;

(vii) serves a rural community;

(viii) includes a plan to utilize private funds in addition to funds provided by the local educational agency (other than subgrant funds received under this subsection) to provide pre-kindergarten services to—

(I) students in rural areas; and

(II) students who belong to a family described in clause (iv);

(ix) demonstrates strategies to improve early mathematic skills and early literacy skills, including the literacy skills of children who have been identified as English learners;

(x) demonstrates strategies to increase family engagement and connect families to community resources;

(xi) provides a comprehensive child development program;

(xii) establishes a student-to-teacher ratio of not more than 10 students to every 1 teacher;

(xiii) demonstrates substantial parental involvement;

(xiv) demonstrates community support;

(xv) utilizes services provided by service providers described in subsection (e)(2)(A); or

(xvi) includes a plan for program evaluation that includes the measurement of student outcomes in addition to the outcomes measured under subsection (e)(2)(C).

(4) SUBGRANT USES.—A local educational agency receiving a subgrant under this subsection shall use such subgrant funds to provide pre-kindergarten programs described in subsection (a) through the innovative financing partnership described in subsection (e).

(e) INNOVATIVE FINANCING PARTNERSHIP.—

(1) PARTNERSHIP DESCRIBED.—A local educational agency receiving a subgrant under subsection (d) shall enter into a partnership that includes each of the parties described in paragraph (2).

(2) PARTIES.—The parties to a partnership described in paragraph (1) are as follows:

(A) One or more service providers who provide, as part of a pre-kindergarten program provided by a local educational agency pursuant to subsection (d), pre-kindergarten services to 3-year-old and 4-year-old children from families whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the Federal poverty line, as defined by the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the Department of Health and Human Services.

(B) One or more investors who provide, in accordance with paragraph (4), the capital for pre-kindergarten services under the partnership, including philanthropic investors seeking a full or partial return of principal.

(C) An independent evaluator to determine whether the pre-kindergarten programs provided pursuant to subsection (d) achieve the objectives described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a).

(D) One or more outcomes payers described in paragraph (3).

(3) OUTCOMES PAYER.—An outcomes payer includes any governmental entity, including the child development coordinating council of the State, or any private entity that agrees to commit to pay to an investor described in paragraph (2)(B) the principal invested by, and the interest owed to, such in-

vestor if the independent evaluator described in subparagraph (C) of such paragraph makes the determination described in such subparagraph.

(4) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The non-Federal share of the costs of an activity carried out with a grant awarded under this section shall be—

(A) not less than 40 percent of such costs; and

(B) provided by an investor described in paragraph (2)(B).

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) SERVICE PROVIDER REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the formation of the innovative financing partnership under subsection (e), and every 6 months thereafter, a service provider that is a party to an innovative financing partnership under subsection (e) shall submit to the State educational agency a report on the progress of the pre-kindergarten services provided by such service provider as part of a pre-kindergarten program provided by a local educational agency pursuant to subsection (d).

(2) INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the first day of operation of a pre-kindergarten program provided

by a local educational agency pursuant to subsection (d), and every 12 months thereafter, an independent evaluator who is a party to an innovative financing partnership under subsection (e) shall submit to the State educational agency a report on the progress of such pre-kindergarten program.

(3) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after receiving each independent evaluator report described in paragraph (2), the State educational agency shall submit to Congress a report on the outcomes of the programs carried out by local educational agencies that received a subgrant under subsection (d) and that are served by such State educational agency.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms ‘‘local educational agency’’, ‘‘Secretary’’, and ‘‘State educational agency’’ have the meanings given such terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(2) MODEL PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM.—The term ‘‘model pre-kindergarten program’’ means a pre-kindergarten program with existing data which demonstrates that the program, or substantially

similar programs, had a positive fiscal impact on governmental entities.

(3) POSITIVE FISCAL IMPACT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''positive fiscal impact'' means, when used with respect to a local government, an increase in tax revenue, decrease in expenditures, or a combination of the two, that a local educational agency receiving a subgrant under this section estimates will, at the conclusion of the covered period, result in an amount of revenue that is greater than the amount of the subgrant received pursuant to this section.

(B) COVERED PERIOD.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ''covered period'' means the period—

(i) beginning on the date on which an innovative financing partnership is formed; and

(ii) ending on the date that is 10 years after such date.

(4) RURAL COMMUNITY.—The term ''rural community'' means a community with a population of not more than 50,000 people.

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