

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 375

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to award grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk middle school students with the transition from middle school to high school.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2025

Mr. BOOKER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to award grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk middle school students with the transition from middle school to high school.

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 “Transition-to-Success
5 Mentoring Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TRANSITION-TO-SUCCESS MENTORING PROGRAM.**

2 (a) TRANSITION-TO-SUCCESS MENTORING PRO-
 3 GRAM.—Part D of title I of the Elementary and Secondary
 4 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6421 et seq.) is amend-
 5 ed by adding at the end the following:

6 **“Subpart 4—Transition-to-Success Mentoring**
 7 **Program**

8 **“SEC. 1441. TRANSITION-TO-SUCCESS MENTORING PRO-**
 9 **GRAM.**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
 11 grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support
 12 school-based mentoring programs to assist eligible stu-
 13 dents with the transition from middle school to high
 14 school.

15 “(b) APPLICATION.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under
 17 this section, an eligible entity shall submit an appli-
 18 cation to the Secretary at such time, in such man-
 19 ner, and containing such information as the Sec-
 20 retary may require.

21 “(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting grant recipients,
 22 the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities
 23 that—

24 “(A) serve children and youth with the
 25 greatest need living in high-poverty, high-crime

1 areas, or rural areas, or who attend schools
 2 with high rates of community violence;

3 “(B) provide eligible students with oppor-
 4 tunities for postsecondary education prepara-
 5 tion and career development, including—

6 “(i) job training, professional develop-
 7 ment, work shadowing, internships, net-
 8 working, résumé writing and review, inter-
 9 view preparation, transition services for
 10 students with disabilities, application as-
 11 sistance and visits to institutions of higher
 12 education, and leadership development
 13 through community service; and

14 “(ii) partnerships with the private sec-
 15 tor and local businesses to provide intern-
 16 ship and career exploration activities and
 17 resources;

18 “(C) seek to provide match lengths be-
 19 tween eligible students and success coaches for
 20 at least 1 academic year; and

21 “(D) indicate how, and the degree to
 22 which, children were consulted and engaged in
 23 the development, design, and implementation of
 24 the school-based mentoring program.

25 “(c) USES OF FUNDS.—

1 “(1) REQUIRED USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible
2 entity that receives a grant under this section shall
3 use the grant funds to establish a school-based men-
4 toring program, or to expand or provide technical
5 support to an existing school-based mentoring pro-
6 gram, in all middle schools served by the entity,
7 under which each eligible student is assigned to a
8 success coach who—

9 “(A) creates a plan for success for the stu-
10 dent that—

11 “(i) is created with the student, men-
12 tor, relevant school staff (such as a teacher
13 or school counselor), and parents of the
14 student;

15 “(ii) includes, for each academic year,
16 the student’s academic, personal, college,
17 and career exploration goals, and a strat-
18 egy on how to accomplish such goals;

19 “(iii) identifies the student’s
20 strengths, areas for improvement, and aca-
21 demic progress; and

22 “(iv) includes a plan to educate and
23 support the student’s college or career ex-
24 ploration goals;

1 “(B) enters into a signed, written agree-
2 ment with the parents of the student that de-
3 scribes how the parents should assist the stu-
4 dent in carrying out the plan for success;

5 “(C) meets with the student at least once
6 per month to—

7 “(i) assist the student in achieving the
8 goals under the plan for success;

9 “(ii) identify the student’s academic
10 areas for improvement;

11 “(iii) connect the student with the
12 tools and resources necessary to help im-
13 prove the student’s potential for academic
14 success;

15 “(iv) ensure the student’s successful
16 transition from middle school to high
17 school by identifying opportunities to help
18 the student develop a positive attitude to-
19 ward school, improve classroom behavior,
20 complete coursework, and socialize with
21 peers; and

22 “(v) in the case of a student with be-
23 havioral issues, assist the student in behav-
24 ior management techniques;

1 “(D) at least quarterly, meets with the stu-
 2 dent and the parents, teachers, or counselors of
 3 the student to—

4 “(i) evaluate the student’s progress in
 5 achieving the goals under the plan for the
 6 current academic year; and

7 “(ii) revise or establish new goals for
 8 the next academic year; and

9 “(E) assists the student in exploring high-
 10 er education and career exposure opportunities.

11 “(2) AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS.—An eligi-
 12 ble entity that receives a grant under this section
 13 may use such funds to—

14 “(A) develop and carry out regular train-
 15 ing for success coaches, including on—

16 “(i) the impact of adverse childhood
 17 experiences;

18 “(ii) trauma-informed practices and
 19 interventions;

20 “(iii) supporting homeless children
 21 and youths;

22 “(iv) supporting children and youth in
 23 foster care;

24 “(v) cultural competency;

1 “(vi) meeting all appropriate privacy
 2 and confidentiality requirements for stu-
 3 dents, including students in foster care;

4 “(vii) working in coordination with a
 5 public school system;

6 “(viii) positive youth development and
 7 engagement practices; and

8 “(ix) disability inclusion practices to
 9 ensure access and participation by students
 10 with disabilities;

11 “(B) recruit, screen, match, compensate,
 12 and train success coaches, and pay for costs re-
 13 lated to success coach and mentee participation
 14 in the program;

15 “(C) hire staff to perform or support the
 16 objectives of the school-based mentoring pro-
 17 gram;

18 “(D) provide inclusive and accessible youth
 19 engagement activities, such as—

20 “(i) enrichment field trips to cultural
 21 destinations;

22 “(ii) career awareness activities, in-
 23 cluding job site visits, informational inter-
 24 views, résumé writing, interview prepara-
 25 tion, and networking; and

1 “(iii) academic or postsecondary edu-
 2 cation preparation activities, including
 3 trade or vocational school visits, visits to
 4 institutions of higher education, and assist-
 5 ance in applying to institutions of higher
 6 education;

7 “(E) provide activities or programming
 8 with the purpose of engaging and connecting
 9 the student to the school community; and

10 “(F) conduct program evaluation, includ-
 11 ing by acquiring and analyzing the data de-
 12 scribed under subsection (e).

13 “(d) GRANT DURATION.—A grant under this section
 14 shall be awarded for a period of not more than 5 years.

15 “(e) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

16 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—An eligible entity
 17 receiving a grant under this section shall submit to
 18 the Secretary, at the end of each academic year dur-
 19 ing the grant period, a report that includes—

20 “(A) the number of students who partici-
 21 pated in the school-based mentoring program
 22 that was funded in whole or in part with the
 23 grant funds under this section;

24 “(B) demographic data on such students;

1 “(C) data on the academic achievement,
 2 dropout rates, truancy, absenteeism, outcomes
 3 of arrests for violent crime, summer employ-
 4 ment, and postsecondary education enrollment
 5 of such students;

6 “(D) the number of contact hours between
 7 such students and their success coaches;

8 “(E) the number of students with disabil-
 9 ities connected to transition services;

10 “(F) data on social-emotional development
 11 of students as assessed with a validated social-
 12 emotional assessment tool; and

13 “(G) any other information that the Sec-
 14 retary may require to evaluate the success of
 15 the school-based mentoring program.

16 “(2) SECRETARY.—

17 “(A) INTERIM REPORT.—At the end of the
 18 third fiscal year for which funds are made
 19 available to carry out this section, the Secretary
 20 shall submit to Congress an interim report on
 21 the success of the school-based mentoring pro-
 22 grams funded under this section that includes
 23 the information received under paragraph (1).

24 “(B) FINAL REPORT.—At the end of the
 25 fifth fiscal year for which funds are made avail-

1 able to carry out this section, the Secretary
 2 shall submit to Congress a final report on the
 3 success of the school-based mentoring programs
 4 funded under this section that includes the in-
 5 formation received under paragraph (1).

6 “(f) MENTORING RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY
 7 SERVICE COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall work with
 8 the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
 9 to—

10 “(1) refer grantees under this section to the
 11 National Mentoring Resource Center to obtain re-
 12 sources on best practices and research related to
 13 mentoring and to request no-cost training and tech-
 14 nical assistance; and

15 “(2) provide grantees under this section with
 16 information regarding transitional services for eligi-
 17 ble students returning from correctional facilities
 18 and transition services for students with disabilities.

19 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 “(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
 21 tity’ means—

22 “(A) a local educational agency that—

23 “(i) receives, or is eligible to receive,
 24 funds under part A of this title; or

1 “(ii) is a high-need local educational
2 agency; or

3 “(B) a partnership between a local edu-
4 cational agency described in subparagraph (A)
5 and a nonprofit, community-based organization.

6 “(2) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term ‘eligible
7 student’ means a student who—

8 “(A) is enrolled in a middle school served
9 by an eligible entity; and

10 “(B) is an at-risk student.

11 “(3) HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
12 CY.—The term ‘high-need local educational agency’
13 means a local educational agency that serves at least
14 one high-need school.

15 “(4) HIGH-NEED SCHOOL.—The term ‘high-
16 need school’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
17 tion 2211(b)(2).

18 “(5) MIDDLE SCHOOL.—The term ‘middle
19 school’ means a nonprofit institutional day or resi-
20 dential school, including a public charter school, that
21 provides middle school education, as determined
22 under State law, except that the term does not in-
23 clude any education below grade 6 or beyond grade
24 9.

1 “(6) SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING.—The term
2 ‘school-based mentoring’ means mentoring activities
3 that—

4 “(A) are closely coordinated with a school
5 by involving teachers, counselors, and other
6 school staff who may identify and refer stu-
7 dents for mentoring services; and

8 “(B) assist at-risk students in improving
9 academic achievement and attitudes toward
10 school and reducing disciplinary referrals.

11 “(7) SUCCESS COACH.—The term ‘success
12 coach’ means an individual who—

13 “(A) is—

14 “(i) an employee or volunteer of a
15 local educational agency in which a men-
16 toring program receiving support under
17 this section is being carried out; or

18 “(ii) a volunteer or employee from a
19 nonprofit, community-based organization
20 that provides volunteers for mentoring pro-
21 grams in secondary schools; and

22 “(B) prior to becoming a success coach—

23 “(i) received training from an eligible
24 entity, which, at a minimum, was 2 hours

1 in length and covered the roles and respon-
 2 sibilities of a success coach; and

3 “(ii) underwent a screening by an eli-
 4 gible entity that included—

5 “(I) appropriate job reference
 6 checks;

7 “(II) child and domestic abuse
 8 record checks; and

9 “(III) criminal background
 10 checks.”.

11 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in
 12 section 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
 13 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) is amended by inserting
 14 after the item relating to section 1432 the following:

“SUBPART 4—TRANSITION-TO-SUCCESS MENTORING PROGRAM

“Sec. 1441. Transition-to-success mentoring program.”.

