

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2198

To amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to give the Department of Education the authority to award competitive grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk students in middle school and high school in developing cognitive and social-emotional skills to prepare them for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 23, 2021

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Mentoring to Succeed
3 Act of 2021”.

4 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

5 The purpose of this Act is to make assistance avail-
6 able for school-based mentoring programs for at-risk stu-
7 dents in order to—

8 (1) establish, expand, or support school-based
9 mentoring programs;

10 (2) assist at-risk students in middle school and
11 high school in developing cognitive and social-emo-
12 tional skills; and

13 (3) prepare such at-risk students for success in
14 high school, postsecondary education, and the work-
15 force.

16 **SEC. 3. SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAM.**

17 Part C of title I of the Carl D. Perkins Career and
18 Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2351 et seq.)
19 is amended by adding at the end the following:

20 **“SEC. 136. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR SCHOOL-BASED**
21 **MENTORING PROGRAMS.**

22 “(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

23 “(1) **AT-RISK STUDENT.**—The term ‘at-risk stu-
24 dent’ means a student who—

25 “(A) is failing academically or at risk of
26 dropping out of school;

1 “(B) is pregnant or a parent;

2 “(C) is a gang member;

3 “(D) is a child or youth in foster care or
4 a youth who has been emancipated from foster
5 care, but is still enrolled in high school;

6 “(E) is or has recently been a homeless
7 child or youth;

8 “(F) is chronically absent;

9 “(G) has changed schools 3 or more times
10 in the past 6 months;

11 “(H) has come in contact with the juvenile
12 justice system in the past;

13 “(I) has a history of multiple suspensions
14 or disciplinary actions;

15 “(J) is an English learner;

16 “(K) has one or both parents incarcerated;

17 “(L) has experienced one or more adverse
18 childhood experiences, traumatic events, or
19 toxic stressors, as assessed through an evi-
20 dence-based screening;

21 “(M) lives in a high-poverty area with a
22 high rate of community violence;

23 “(N) has a disability; or

1 “(O) shows signs of alcohol or drug misuse
 2 or abuse or has a parent or guardian who is
 3 struggling with substance abuse.

4 “(2) DISABILITY.—The term ‘disability’ has the
 5 meaning given the term for purposes of section
 6 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education
 7 Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(3)).

8 “(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
 9 tity’—

10 “(A) means a high-need local educational
 11 agency, high-need school, or local government
 12 entity; and

13 “(B) may include a partnership between
 14 an entity described in subparagraph (A) and a
 15 nonprofit, community-based, or faith-based or-
 16 ganization, or institution of higher education.

17 “(4) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term ‘English
 18 learner’ has the meaning given the term in section
 19 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
 20 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

21 “(5) FOSTER CARE.—The term ‘foster care’ has
 22 the meaning given the term in section 1355.20 of
 23 title 45, Code of Federal Regulations.

24 “(6) HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
 25 CY.—The term ‘high-need local educational agency’

1 means a local educational agency that serves at least
2 one high-need school.

3 “(7) HIGH-NEED SCHOOL.—The term ‘high-
4 need school’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
5 tion 2211(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
6 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6631(b)).

7 “(8) HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS.—The
8 term ‘homeless children and youths’ has the mean-
9 ing given the term in section 725 of the McKinney-
10 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

11 “(9) SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING.—The term
12 ‘school-based mentoring’ means a structured, man-
13 aged, evidenced-based program conducted in part-
14 nership with teachers, administrators, school psy-
15 chologists, school social workers or counselors, and
16 other school staff, in which at-risk students are ap-
17 propriately matched with screened and trained pro-
18 fessional or volunteer mentors who provide guidance,
19 support, and encouragement, involving meetings,
20 group-based sessions, and educational and work-
21 force-related activities on a regular basis to prepare
22 at-risk students for success in high school, postsec-
23 ondary education, and the workforce.

24 “(b) SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING COMPETITIVE
25 GRANT PROGRAM.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
2 grants on a competitive basis to eligible entities to
3 establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring
4 programs that—

5 “(A) are designed to assist at-risk students
6 in high-need schools in developing cognitive
7 skills and promoting social-emotional learning
8 to prepare them for success in high school,
9 postsecondary education, and the workforce by
10 linking them with mentors who—

11 “(i) have received mentor training, in-
12 cluding on trauma-informed practices,
13 youth engagement, cultural competency,
14 and social-emotional learning; and

15 “(ii) have been screened using appro-
16 priate reference checks and criminal back-
17 ground checks;

18 “(B) provide coaching and technical assist-
19 ance to mentors in each such mentoring pro-
20 gram;

21 “(C) seek to—

22 “(i) improve the academic achieve-
23 ment of at-risk students;

1 “(ii) reduce dropout rates and absen-
 2 teeism and improve school engagement of
 3 at-risk students and their families;

4 “(iii) reduce juvenile justice involve-
 5 ment of at-risk students;

6 “(iv) foster positive relationships be-
 7 tween at-risk students and their peers,
 8 teachers, other adults, and family mem-
 9 bers;

10 “(v) develop the workforce readiness
 11 skills of at-risk students by exploring paths
 12 to employment, including encouraging stu-
 13 dents with disabilities to explore transition
 14 services; and

15 “(vi) increase the participation of at-
 16 risk students in community service activi-
 17 ties; and

18 “(D) encourage at-risk students to set
 19 goals and plan for their futures, including mak-
 20 ing plans and identifying goals for postsec-
 21 ondary education and the workforce.

22 “(2) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award
 23 grants under this section for a period not to exceed
 24 5 years.

1 “(3) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under
2 this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the
3 Secretary an application that includes—

4 “(A) a needs assessment that includes
5 baseline data on the measures described in
6 paragraph (6)(A)(ii); and

7 “(B) a plan to meet the requirements of
8 paragraph (1).

9 “(4) PRIORITY.—In selecting grant recipients,
10 the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that—

11 “(A) serve children and youth with the
12 greatest need living in high-poverty, high-crime
13 areas, or rural areas, or who attend schools
14 with high rates of community violence;

15 “(B) provide at-risk students with opportu-
16 nities for postsecondary education preparation
17 and career development, including—

18 “(i) job training, professional develop-
19 ment, work shadowing, internships, net-
20 working, resume writing and review, inter-
21 view preparation, transition services for
22 students with disabilities, application as-
23 sistance and visits to institutions of higher
24 education, and leadership development
25 through community service; and

1 “(ii) partnerships with the private sec-
 2 tor and local businesses to provide intern-
 3 ship and career exploration activities and
 4 resources; and

5 “(C) seek to provide match lengths be-
 6 tween at-risk students and mentors for at least
 7 1 academic year.

8 “(5) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that
 9 receives a grant under this section may use such
 10 funds to—

11 “(A) develop and carry out regular train-
 12 ing for mentors, including on—

13 “(i) the impact of adverse childhood
 14 experiences;

15 “(ii) trauma-informed practices and
 16 interventions;

17 “(iii) supporting homeless children
 18 and youths;

19 “(iv) supporting children and youth in
 20 foster care or youth who have been emanci-
 21 pated from foster care, but are still en-
 22 rolled in high school;

23 “(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, and train
 12 mentors;

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

16 “(D) provide inclusive and accessible youth
 17 engagement activities, such as—

18 “(i) enrichment field trips to cultural
 19 destinations;

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

24 “(iii) academic or postsecondary edu-
 25 cation preparation activities, including

1 trade or vocational school visits, visits to
2 institutions of higher education, and assist-
3 ance in applying to institutions of higher
4 education; and

5 “(E) conduct program evaluation, includ-
6 ing by acquiring and analyzing the data de-
7 scribed under paragraph (6).

8 “(6) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6
10 months after the end of each academic year
11 during the grant period, an eligible entity re-
12 ceiving a grant under this section shall submit
13 to the Secretary a report that includes—

14 “(i) the number of students who par-
15 ticipated in the school-based mentoring
16 program that was funded in whole or in
17 part with the grant funds;

18 “(ii) data on the academic achieve-
19 ment, dropout rates, truancy, absenteeism,
20 outcomes of arrests for violent crime, sum-
21 mer employment, and postsecondary edu-
22 cation enrollment of students in the pro-
23 gram;

24 “(iii) the number of group sessions
25 and number of one-to-one contacts between

1 students in the program and their men-
2 tors;

3 “(iv) the average attendance of stu-
4 dents enrolled in the program;

5 “(v) the number of students with dis-
6 abilities connected to transition services;

7 “(vi) data on social-emotional develop-
8 ment of students as assessed with a vali-
9 dated social-emotional assessment tool; and

10 “(vii) any other information that the
11 Secretary may require to evaluate the suc-
12 cess of the school-based mentoring pro-
13 gram.

14 “(B) STUDENT PRIVACY.—An eligible enti-
15 ty shall ensure that the report submitted under
16 subparagraph (A) is prepared in a manner that
17 protects the privacy rights of each student in
18 accordance with section 444 of the General
19 Education Provisions Act (commonly referred
20 to as the ‘Family Educational Rights and Pri-
21 vacy Act of 1974’) (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

22 “(7) MENTORING RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY
23 SERVICE COORDINATION.—

1 “(A) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Sec-
 2 retary shall work with the Office of Juvenile
 3 Justice and Delinquency Prevention to—

4 “(i) refer grantees under this section
 5 to the National Mentoring Resource Center
 6 to obtain resources on best practices and
 7 research related to mentoring and to re-
 8 quest no-cost training and technical assist-
 9 ance; and

10 “(ii) provide grantees under this sec-
 11 tion with information regarding transi-
 12 tional services for at-risk students return-
 13 ing from correctional facilities and transi-
 14 tion services for students with disabilities.

15 “(B) COORDINATION.—The Secretary
 16 shall, to the extent possible, coordinate with the
 17 Corporation for National and Community Serv-
 18 ice, including through entering into an inter-
 19 agency agreement or a memorandum of under-
 20 standing, to support mentoring and community
 21 service-related activities for at-risk students.

22 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS.—There are author-
 23 ized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums
 24 as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2022 through
 25 2027.”.

1 **SEC. 4. INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES STUDY ON**
2 **SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education, act-
4 ing through the Director of the Institute of Education
5 Sciences, shall conduct a study to—

6 (1) identify successful school-based mentoring
7 programs and effective strategies for administering
8 and monitoring such programs;

9 (2) evaluate the role of mentors in promoting
10 cognitive development and social-emotional learning
11 to enhance academic achievement and to improve
12 workforce readiness; and

13 (3) evaluate the effectiveness of the grant pro-
14 gram under section 136 of the Carl D. Perkins Ca-
15 reer and Technical Education Act of 2006, as added
16 by section 3, on student academic outcomes and
17 youth career development.

18 (b) TIMING.—Not later than 3 years after the date
19 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education, act-
20 ing through the Director of the Institute of Education
21 Sciences, shall submit the results of the study to the ap-
22 propriate congressional committees.

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