

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 744

To address behavioral health and well-being among education professionals
and other school staff.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Ms. WILD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To address behavioral health and well-being among education
professionals and other school staff.

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 “Supporting the Mental
5 Health of Educators and Staff Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICES.**

7 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
8 of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services

1 (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”), in consulta-
2 tion with the Secretary of Education, shall identify and
3 disseminate evidence-based or evidence-informed best
4 practices for—

5 (1) preventing suicide and improving mental
6 health and resiliency among education professionals
7 and other school staff; and

8 (2) training education professionals and other
9 school staff in appropriate strategies to support,
10 maintain, and promote their mental health.

11 **SEC. 3. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS INITIATIVE ENCOUR-**
12 **AGING USE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUB-**
13 **STANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES BY EDU-**
14 **CATION PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER**
15 **SCHOOL STAFF.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation
17 with relevant stakeholders, including medical professional
18 associations, shall establish a national evidence-based or
19 evidence-informed education and awareness initiative—

20 (1) to encourage education professionals and
21 other school staff to seek support and care for their
22 mental health or substance use concerns, to help
23 such professionals and staff identify factors associ-
24 ated with risks for suicide and mental health condi-
25 tions, and to help such professionals and staff learn

1 **“SEC. 764B. PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH**
2 **AMONG THE EDUCATION WORKFORCE.**

3 “(a) PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH
4 AMONG EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER
5 SCHOOL STAFF.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
7 grants or contracts to eligible entities to establish or
8 enhance evidence-based or evidence-informed pro-
9 grams dedicated to improving mental health and re-
10 siliency for education professionals and other school
11 staff.

12 “(2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a
13 grant or contract under this subsection, an entity
14 shall be a State educational agency, a local edu-
15 cational agency, an institution of higher education,
16 or a consortia thereof.

17 “(3) USE OF FUNDS.—An recipient of a grant
18 or contract under this subsection shall use funds re-
19 ceived through the grant or contract to implement a
20 new program or enhance an existing program to pro-
21 mote mental health among education professionals
22 and other school staff, which may include—

23 “(A) improving awareness among edu-
24 cation professionals and other school staff
25 about risk factors for, and signs of, suicide and
26 mental health or substance use disorders, in ac-

1 cordance with evidence-based or evidence-in-
2 formed practices;

3 “(B) establishing new, or enhancing exist-
4 ing, evidence-based or evidence-informed pro-
5 grams for preventing suicide and improving
6 mental health and resiliency among education
7 professionals and other school staff;

8 “(C) establishing new, or enhancing exist-
9 ing, peer-support programs among education
10 professionals and other school staff; or

11 “(D) providing mental health care, follow-
12 up services and care by a licensed or certified
13 mental health professional (including by means
14 of telehealth), or a referral for such care or
15 services by a licensed or certified mental health
16 professional, as appropriate.

17 “(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants and con-
18 tracts under this subsection, the Secretary shall give
19 priority to eligible entities in areas with a high per-
20 centage of schools receiving financial assistance
21 under part A of title I of the Elementary and Sec-
22 ondary Education Act of 1965.

23 “(b) TRAINING GRANTS.—The Secretary may estab-
24 lish a program to award grants to institutions of higher
25 education, State educational agencies, local educational

1 agencies, State or local governments, Indian Tribes or
2 Tribal organizations, or other appropriate public or pri-
3 vate nonprofit entities (or consortia of entities, including
4 entities promoting multidisciplinary approaches) to sup-
5 port the inclusion in educator preparation programs (in-
6 cluding administrator preparation programs), and in
7 training, continuing education, or professional develop-
8 ment programs for education professionals and other
9 school staff, of evidence-based or evidence-informed strate-
10 gies—

11 “(1) to address mental and substance use dis-
12 orders; and

13 “(2) to improve mental health and resiliency
14 among education professionals and other school
15 staff.

16 “(c) GRANT TERMS.—A grant or contract awarded
17 under subsection (a) or (b) shall be for a period of 3 years.

18 “(d) APPLICATION SUBMISSION.—An entity seeking
19 a grant or contract under subsection (a) or (b) shall sub-
20 mit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such
21 manner, and accompanied by such information as the Sec-
22 retary may require.

23 “(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—An entity awarded a grant
24 or contract under subsection (a) or (b) shall submit to the

1 Secretary an annual report evaluating the activities sup-
2 ported by the grant or contract.

3 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) The term ‘institution of higher education’
5 has the meaning given to such term in section 101
6 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

7 “(2) The terms ‘local educational agency’ and
8 ‘State educational agency’ have the meanings given
9 to such terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and
10 Secondary Education Act of 1965.

11 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
12 carry out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
13 priated \$35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through
14 2026.”.

15 **SEC. 5. REVIEW WITH RESPECT TO EDUCATION WORK-**
16 **FORCE MENTAL HEALTH AND RESILIENCY.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consulta-
19 tion with relevant stakeholders, shall—

20 (1) conduct a review on improving—

21 (A) the mental health of education profes-
22 sionals and other school staff; and

23 (B) the outcomes of programs authorized
24 under this Act; and

1 (2) submit a report to the Congress on the re-
2 sults of such review.

3 (b) CONSIDERATIONS.—The review under subsection
4 (a) may include—

5 (1) assessing the prevalence and severity of
6 mental health conditions among education profes-
7 sionals and other school staff, and determining the
8 factors that contribute to those mental health condi-
9 tions;

10 (2) assessing barriers to seeking and accessing
11 mental health care for education professionals and
12 other school staff, and actions taken by State edu-
13 cational agencies and local educational agencies, or
14 other organizations, as appropriate, to address such
15 barriers;

16 (3) determining the effects of the COVID–19
17 public health emergency on the mental health of
18 education professionals and other school staff and
19 lessons learned for future public health emergencies;

20 (4) assessing programs and policies that pro-
21 mote mental health and resiliency among education
22 professionals and other school staff, including pro-
23 grams and policies to strengthen mental health and
24 resiliency among education professionals and other
25 school staff; and

1 (5) assessing the efficacy of training programs
2 for education professionals and other school staff
3 that promote resiliency and improve mental health.

4 (c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The review under sub-
5 section (a), as appropriate, shall identify best practices re-
6 lated to, and make recommendations to address—

7 (1) improving mental health and resiliency
8 among education professionals and other school
9 staff;

10 (2) removing barriers to mental health care for
11 education professionals and other school staff; and

12 (3) strategies to promote resiliency among edu-
13 cation professionals and other school staff in health
14 care settings.

15 **SEC. 6. GAO REPORT.**

16 Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment
17 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
18 shall submit to the Congress a report on the extent to
19 which Federal substance use disorder and mental health
20 grant programs address the prevalence and severity of
21 mental health conditions and substance use disorders
22 among education professionals and other school staff.
23 Such report shall—

24 (1) include an analysis of available evidence and
25 data related to such conditions and programs; and

- 1 (2) assess whether there are duplicative goals
- 2 and objectives among such grant programs.

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