

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4397

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide criteria for use of Federal funds to support trauma-informed practices in schools, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2024

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

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## A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide criteria for use of Federal funds to support trauma-informed practices in schools, and for other purposes.

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 “Trauma-Informed  
5 Schools Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES.**

2 (a) DEFINITION.—Section 8101 of the Elementary  
3 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)  
4 is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (51) and (52)  
6 as paragraphs (52) and (53), respectively; and

7 (2) by inserting after paragraph (50) the fol-  
8 lowing:

9 “(51) TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES.—The  
10 term ‘trauma-informed practices’ means—

11 “(A) evidence-based professional develop-  
12 ment that promotes a shared understanding  
13 among teachers, teachers assistants, school  
14 leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instruc-  
15 tional support personnel, and other staff that—

16 “(i) adverse and potentially traumatic  
17 experiences are common among students;

18 “(ii) trauma can impact student  
19 learning, behavior, and relationships in  
20 school;

21 “(iii) adverse and potentially trau-  
22 matic experiences do not inherently under-  
23 mine the capabilities of students to reach  
24 high expectations in academics and life;

25 “(iv) school-wide learning environ-  
26 ments where all students and adults feel

1 safe, welcomed, and supported can enable  
2 students to succeed despite adverse and  
3 potentially traumatic experiences; and

4 “(v) services, supports, and programs  
5 provided to meet individual student needs  
6 should be trauma informed, where appro-  
7 priate, and increase student connection to  
8 the school-wide learning environment;

9 “(B) adoption of disciplinary procedures  
10 and practices that—

11 “(i) accompany disciplinary actions  
12 with holistic assessments and positive be-  
13 havioral interventions and supports to ad-  
14 dress the underlying causes of student be-  
15 havior, including trauma;

16 “(ii) avoid harsh, punitive, or exclu-  
17 sionary disciplinary practices;

18 “(iii) utilize evidence-based restorative  
19 practices that build a culture of trust; and

20 “(iv) do not discriminate on the basis  
21 of race, color, national origin, sex (includ-  
22 ing sexual orientation or gender identity),  
23 disability, English proficiency status, mi-  
24 grant status, or age consistent with the  
25 Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42

1 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.), title VI of the Civil  
2 Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et  
3 seq.), title IX of the Education Amend-  
4 ments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.),  
5 section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of  
6 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), the Americans with  
7 Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101  
8 et seq.), and the Individuals with Disabil-  
9 ities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et  
10 seq.); and

11 “(C) activities that engage teachers, teach-  
12 ers assistants, school leaders, paraprofessionals,  
13 specialized instructional support personnel,  
14 other staff, and families in a process of school-  
15 based planning to—

16 “(i) promote a school-wide culture of  
17 acceptance;

18 “(ii) help all students feel safe and  
19 connected to the school community;

20 “(iii) support all students to form  
21 positive relationships with adults and  
22 peers, understand and manage emotions,  
23 achieve success academically and in extra-  
24 curricular areas, and experience physical  
25 and psychological health and well-being;

1 “(iv) promote teamwork and effective  
2 communication among all staff and shared  
3 responsibility for every student;

4 “(v) integrate evidence-based practices  
5 that build social-emotional skills into rig-  
6 orous academic instruction; and

7 “(vi) recognize and prevent adult im-  
8 plicit bias.”.

9 (b) STATE PLAN.—Section 1111(g)(1)(C) of the Ele-  
10 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
11 6311(g)(1)(C)) is amended—

12 (1) by striking “reducing”;

13 (2) in clause (i), by inserting “reducing” before  
14 “incidences”;

15 (3) in clause (ii)—

16 (A) by inserting “reducing” before “the  
17 overuse”; and

18 (B) by striking “and”;

19 (4) in clause (iii)—

20 (A) by inserting “reducing” before “the  
21 use”; and

22 (B) by inserting “and” after “safety;”; and

23 (5) by adding at the end the following:

24 “(iv) increasing the prevalence of  
25 trauma-informed practices;”.

1 (c) PLAN PROVISIONS.—Section 1112(b) of such Act  
2 (20 U.S.C. 6312(b)) is amended—

3 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (12) and (13)  
4 as paragraphs (13) and (14), respectively; and

5 (2) by inserting after paragraph (11) the fol-  
6 lowing:

7 “(12) how the local educational agency will sup-  
8 port efforts to increase the prevalence of trauma-in-  
9 formed practices;”.

10 (d) SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAM.—Section  
11 1114(b)(7)(A)(iii) of such Act (20 U.S.C.  
12 6314(b)(7)(A)(iii)) is amended—

13 (1) in subclause (IV), by striking at the end  
14 “and”; and

15 (2) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(VI) the implementation of  
17 trauma-informed practices; and”.

18 (e) TRAINING.—Section 2101 of such Act (20 U.S.C.  
19 6611) is amended—

20 (1) in subsection (c)(4)(B)—

21 (A) by redesignating clauses (xv) through  
22 (xxi) as clauses (xvi) through (xxii), respec-  
23 tively; and

24 (B) by inserting after clause (xiv) the fol-  
25 lowing:

1                   “(xv) Providing training for all teach-  
 2                   ers, school leaders, paraprofessionals, and  
 3                   specialized instructional support personnel  
 4                   on trauma-informed practices.”; and

5                   (2) in subsection (d)(2)—

6                   (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (K)  
 7                   through (M) as subparagraphs (L) through (N)  
 8                   respectively; and

9                   (B) by inserting after subparagraph (J)  
 10                  the following:

11                  “(K) A description of how the State edu-  
 12                  cational agency will use funds under this part  
 13                  to increase the prevalence of trauma-informed  
 14                  practices.”.

15                  (f) LOCAL USE OF FUNDS.—Section 2103(b)(3)(I) of  
 16                  such Act (20 U.S.C. 6613(b)(3)(I)) is amended—

17                  (1) by redesignating clauses (i) through (iv) as  
 18                  clauses (ii) through (v), respectively; and

19                  (2) by inserting before clause (ii), as redesi-  
 20                  gnated, the following:

21                  “(i) trauma-informed practices;”.

22                  (g) STATE ACTIVITIES.—Section 4104(b)(3)(B)(ii) of  
 23                  such Act (20 U.S.C. 7114(b)(3)(B)(ii)) is amended—

24                  (1) in subclause (I), by striking at the end  
 25                  “or”;

1           (2) in subclause (II), by inserting “or” at the  
2           end; and

3           (3) by inserting at the end the following:

4                               “(III) increase the prevalence of  
5                               trauma-informed practices;”.

6           (h) STATE APPLICATION.—Section 4203(a)(6) of  
7           such Act (20 U.S.C. 7173(a)(6)) is amended by striking  
8           “development;” and inserting “development, which may  
9           include professional development on trauma-informed  
10          practices;”.

11          (i) DESCRIPTION OF PLAN.—Section  
12          4303(f)(1)(A)(viii) of such Act (20 U.S.C.  
13          7221b(f)(1)(A)(viii)) is amended—

14               (1) in subclause (I), by striking at the end  
15               “and”;

16               (2) in subclause (II), by inserting “and” at the  
17               end; and

18               (3) by inserting at the end the following:

19                               “(III) adopting trauma-informed  
20                               practices;”.

21          (j) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section  
22          4305(b)(3)(B)(ii) of such Act (20 U.S.C.  
23          7221d(b)(3)(B)(ii)) is amended—

24               (1) in subclause (II), by striking “and”;



1           (2) in subclause (III), by inserting “and” at the  
2           end; and

3           (3) by inserting at the end the following:

4                           “(IV) the discipline practices that  
5                           will be used, including a description of  
6                           whether such practices are consistent  
7                           with trauma-informed practices;”.

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