

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2708

To provide for character development.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 5, 1995

Mr. RIGGS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on Economic and Educational Opportunities

A BILL

To provide for character development.

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 AND PURPOSES.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Character Development Act”.

6 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

7 (1) to reduce the school dropout rate for at-risk
8 youth;

9 (2) to improve the academic performance of at-
10 risk youth; and

11 (3) to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang
12 participation.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 For the purposes of this Act—

3 (1) the term “at-risk youth” means a youth at
4 risk of—

5 (A) educational failure;

6 (B) dropping out of school; or

7 (C) involvement in delinquent activities;

8 (2) the term “eligible local educational agency”
9 means a local educational agency that has entered
10 into a partnership, with a community-based organi-
11 zation that provides one-to-one mentoring services,
12 to carry out the authorized activities described in
13 section 5 in accordance with this Act;

14 (3) the terms “elementary school”, “local edu-
15 cational agency”, and “secondary school”, have the
16 meanings given such terms in section 14101 of the
17 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
18 (20 U.S.C. 8801);

19 (4) the term “mentor” means a person who
20 works with an at-risk youth on a one-to-one basis,
21 to establish a supportive relationship with the youth
22 and to provide the youth with academic assistance
23 and exposure to new experiences that enhance the
24 youth’s ability to become a better student and a re-
25 sponsible citizen; and

1 (5) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
2 of Education.

3 **SEC. 3. MENTORING PROGRAMS.**

4 (a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is author-
5 ized to award grants to eligible local educational agencies
6 to enable such agencies to establish mentoring programs
7 that—

8 (1) are designed to link—

9 (A) individual at-risk youth; with

10 (B) responsible, individual adults who
11 serve as mentors; and

12 (2) are intended to—

13 (A) increase at-risk youth participation in,
14 and enhance the ability of such youth to benefit
15 from, elementary and secondary education;

16 (B) discourage at-risk youth from—

17 (i) using illegal drugs;

18 (ii) violence;

19 (iii) using dangerous weapons;

20 (iv) criminal activity not described in
21 clauses (i), (ii), and (iii); and

22 (v) involvement in gangs;

23 (C) promote personal and social respon-
24 sibility among at-risk youth;

1 (D) encourage at-risk youth participation
2 in community service and community activities;
3 or

4 (E) provide general guidance to at-risk
5 youth.

6 (b) AMOUNT AND DURATION.—Each grant under
7 this section shall be awarded in an amount not to exceed
8 a total of \$200,000 over a period of not more than three
9 years.

10 (c) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority to
11 awarding a grant under this section to an application sub-
12 mitted under section 7 that—

13 (1) describes a mentoring program in which 60
14 percent or more of the at-risk youth to be served are
15 eligible for assistance under part A of title I of the
16 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
17 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq.);

18 (2) describes a mentoring program that serves
19 at-risk youth who are—

20 (A) at risk of dropping out of school; or

21 (B) involved in delinquent activities; and

22 (3) demonstrates the ability of the eligible local
23 educational agency to continue the mentoring pro-
24 gram after the termination of the Federal funds pro-
25 vided under this section.

1 (d) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants
2 under this section, the Secretary shall give consideration
3 to—

4 (1) providing an equitable geographic distribu-
5 tion of such grants, including awarding such grants
6 for mentoring programs in both rural and urban
7 areas;

8 (2) the quality of the mentoring program de-
9 scribed in the application submitted under section 7,
10 including—

11 (A) the resources, if any, that will be dedi-
12 cated to providing participating at-risk youth
13 with opportunities for job training or post-
14 secondary education; and

15 (B) the degree to which parents, teachers,
16 community-based organizations, and the local
17 community participate in the design and imple-
18 mentation of the mentoring program; and

19 (3) the capability of the eligible local edu-
20 cational agency to effectively implement the
21 mentoring program.

22 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION GRANTS.**

23 The Secretary is authorized to award grants to na-
24 tional organizations or agencies serving youth to enable
25 such organizations or agencies—

1 (1) to conduct a multisite demonstration
2 project, involving 5 to 10 project sites, that—

3 (A) provides an opportunity to compare
4 various one-to-one mentoring models for the
5 purpose of evaluating the effectiveness and effi-
6 ciency of such models;

7 (B) allows for innovative programs de-
8 signed under the oversight of a national organi-
9 zation or agency serving youth, which programs
10 may include—

11 (i) technical assistance;

12 (ii) training; and

13 (iii) research and evaluation; and

14 (C) disseminates the results of such dem-
15 onstration project to allow for the determina-
16 tion of the best practices for various mentoring
17 programs;

18 (2) to develop and evaluate screening standards
19 for school-linked mentoring programs; and

20 (3) to develop and evaluate volunteer recruit-
21 ment activities for school-linked mentoring pro-
22 grams.

1 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.**

2 (a) PERMITTED USES.—Grant funds awarded under
3 this Act (other than grant funds awarded under section
4 4) shall be used for—

5 (1) hiring of mentoring coordinators and sup-
6 port staff;

7 (2) recruitment, screening and training of adult
8 mentors;

9 (3) reimbursement of mentors for reasonable
10 incidental expenditures, such as transportation, that
11 are directly associated with mentoring, except that
12 such expenditures shall not exceed \$500 per mentor
13 per calendar year; or

14 (4) such other purposes as the Secretary deter-
15 mines may be reasonable.

16 (b) PROHIBITED USES.—Grant funds awarded under
17 this Act shall not be used—

18 (1) to directly compensate a mentor, except as
19 provided under subsection (a)(3);

20 (2) to obtain educational or other materials or
21 equipment that would otherwise be used in the ordi-
22 nary course of the grant recipient's operations;

23 (3) to support litigation; or

24 (4) for any other purposes that the Secretary
25 determines are prohibited.

1 **SEC. 6. REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES.**

2 (a) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary, after consulta-
3 tion with the Secretary of Health and Human Services,
4 the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Labor, shall
5 provide for the promulgation of regulations to implement
6 this Act.

7 (b) GUIDELINES.—The Secretary shall develop and
8 distribute to eligible local educational agencies receiving
9 a grant under section 3 specific model guidelines for the
10 screening of mentors.

11 **SEC. 7. APPLICATIONS.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Each entity desiring a grant
13 under this Act shall submit an application to the Secretary
14 at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such
15 information as the Secretary may reasonably require.

16 (b) MENTORING PROGRAMS.—Each application sub-
17 mitted under subsection (a) for a grant under section 3
18 shall contain—

19 (1) information on the at-risk youth expected to
20 be served;

21 (2) a provision describing the mechanism for
22 matching at-risk youth with mentors based on the
23 needs of the at-risk youth;

24 (3) an assurance that no mentor will be as-
25 signed to more than one at-risk youth, so as to en-
26 sure a one-to-one mentoring relationship;

1 (4) an assurance that a mentoring program op-
2 erated in a secondary school will provide at-risk
3 youth with a variety of experiences and support, in-
4 cluding—

5 (A) an opportunity to spend time in a work
6 environment and, when possible, participate in
7 the work environment;

8 (B) an opportunity to witness the job skills
9 that will be required for the at-risk youth to ob-
10 tain employment upon graduation;

11 (C) assistance with homework assignments;

12 and

13 (D) exposure to experiences that the at-
14 risk youth might not otherwise encounter;

15 (5) an assurance that the mentoring program
16 operated in elementary schools will provide at-risk
17 youth with—

18 (A) academic assistance;

19 (B) exposure to new experiences and ac-
20 tivities that at-risk youth might not encounter
21 on their own; and

22 (C) emotional support;

23 (6) an assurance that the mentoring program
24 will be monitored to ensure that each at-risk youth
25 participating in the mentoring program benefits

1 from a mentor relationship, including providing a
2 new mentor assignment if the original mentoring re-
3 lationship is not beneficial to the at-risk youth;

4 (7) the methods by which mentors and at-risk
5 youth will be recruited to the mentoring program;

6 (8) the method by which prospective mentors
7 will be screened; and

8 (9) the training that will be provided to men-
9 tors.

10 **SEC. 8. EVALUATION.**

11 (a) **EVALUATION.**—The Comptroller General of the
12 United States shall enter into a contract, with an evaluat-
13 ing organization that has demonstrated experience in con-
14 ducting evaluations, for the conduct of an ongoing rigor-
15 ous evaluation of the programs and activities assisted
16 under this Act.

17 (b) **EVALUATION CRITERIA.**—The Comptroller Gen-
18 eral of the United States, in consultation with the Sec-
19 retary, shall establish minimum criteria for evaluating the
20 programs and activities assisted under this Act. Such cri-
21 teria shall provide for a description of the implementation
22 of each program or activity assisted under this Act and
23 such program or activity's effect on all participants,
24 schools, communities, and youth served by such program
25 or activity.

1 **SEC. 9. REPORTS.**

2 (a) REPORT BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.—Each entity
3 receiving a grant under this Act shall submit to the evalu-
4 ating organization entering into the contract under section
5 8(a)(1) an annual report regarding any program or activ-
6 ity assisted under this Act. Each such report shall be sub-
7 mitted at such a time, in such a manner, and accompanied
8 by such information, as such evaluating organization may
9 require.

10 (b) REPORTS BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—The
11 Comptroller General shall submit to Congress not later
12 than September 30, 1999, a report regarding the success
13 and effectiveness of grants awarded under this Act in re-
14 ducing the school dropout rate, improving academic per-
15 formance of at-risk youth, and reducing juvenile delin-
16 quency and gang participation.

17 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 (a) MENTORING PROGRAMS.—There is authorized to
19 be appropriated \$35,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
20 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000 to carry out section
21 3.

22 (b) IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION GRANTS.—
23 There is authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for
24 each of the fiscal years 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000
25 to carry out section 4.

○