

# **Advancing Student Services in Schools Act**

## **Section-by-Section Summary**

*Legislation introduced by Representative Castor and Senator Warnock*

### **Sec. 1 – Short Title**

This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Student Services in Schools Act” or the “ASSIST Act.”

### **Sec. 2 – Increasing the Applicable FMAP for State Expenditures for Certain Behavioral Health Services**

- Amends the Social Security Act to increase the FMAP for medical assistance for mental health and substance use disorder care providers in school-based settings.
  - Increases the FMAP for these services to 90 percent one year after enactment of this legislation.
  - Includes exclusions for:
    - If a state’s FMAP is already greater than 90 percent for these services.
    - Payment limits for US territories if the FMAP increase would result in the territory exceeding its territorial cap.

### **Sec. 3 – Program to Increase Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Care Providers in Schools and School-Based Health Centers**

- Allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Secretary of Education, to award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to eligible entities to increase mental health and substance use disorder care providers in schools and school-based health centers.
  - Applications for these grants will include a description of the mental health and substance use disorder needs of the student population and provisions to ensure that providers supported by the grant provide culturally and linguistically competent care.
  - No funds may be used for threat assessment teams.
- Compels annual reports from grantees to the HHS Secretary on the number of providers supported through the award and the services provided, strategies to recruit and retain providers, and rates of retention for the providers.
- Requires periodic reports from the HHS Secretary to Congress on the effectiveness of this program.
- Definitions:
  - Eligible entities include local education agencies, an institution of higher education, a school operated by a Bureau of Indian Affairs, and a school-based health center.
  - Mental health and substance use disorder care providers are individuals who are licensed or credentialed to provide mental health and substance use disorder services, including school counselors, psychologists, child and adolescent psychiatrists, peer support specialist or peer recovery coach, licensed clinical social worker, addiction medicine specialist, and all other providers the Secretary determines appropriate.