

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section 2-3.176 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.176 new)

Sec. 2-3.176. Safe Schools and Healthy Learning Environments Grant Program.

(a) The State Board of Education, subject to appropriation, is authorized to award competitive grants on an annual basis under a Safe Schools and Healthy Learning Environments Grant Program. The goal of this grant program is to promote school safety and healthy learning environments by providing schools with additional resources to implement restorative interventions and resolution strategies as alternatives to exclusionary discipline, and to address the full range of students' intellectual, social, emotional, physical, psychological, and moral developmental needs.

(b) To receive a grant under this program, a school district must submit with its grant application a plan for implementing evidence-based and promising practices that are aligned with the goal of this program. The application may include proposals to (i) hire additional school support

personnel, including, but not limited to, restorative justice practitioners, school psychologists, school social workers, and other mental and behavioral health specialists; (ii) use existing school-based resources, community-based resources, or other experts and practitioners to expand alternatives to exclusionary discipline, mental and behavioral health supports, wraparound services, or drug and alcohol treatment; and (iii) provide training for school staff on trauma-informed approaches to meeting students' developmental needs, addressing the effects of toxic stress, restorative justice approaches, conflict resolution techniques, and the effective utilization of school support personnel and community-based services. For purposes of this subsection, "promising practices" means practices that present, based on preliminary information, potential for becoming evidence-based practices.

Grant funds may not be used to increase the use of school-based law enforcement or security personnel. Nothing in this Section shall prohibit school districts from involving law enforcement personnel when necessary and allowed by law.

(c) The State Board of Education, subject to appropriation for the grant program, shall annually disseminate a request for applications to this program, and funds shall be distributed annually. The criteria to be considered by the State Board of Education in awarding the funds shall be (i) the average ratio of school support personnel to students in the target schools over the preceding 3 school years, with priority given to

applications with a demonstrated shortage of school support personnel to meet student needs; and (ii) the degree to which the proposal articulates a comprehensive approach for reducing exclusionary discipline while building safe and healthy learning environments. Priority shall be given to school districts that meet the metrics under subsection (b) of Section 2-3.162.

(d) The State Board of Education, subject to appropriation for the grant program, shall produce an annual report on the program in cooperation with the school districts participating in the program. The report shall include available quantitative information on the progress being made in reducing exclusionary discipline and the effects of the program on school safety and school climate. This report shall be posted on the State Board of Education's website by October 31 of each year, beginning in 2020.

(e) The State Board of Education may adopt any rules necessary for the implementation of this program.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.