



Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act (H.R. 2617)

Teen parents face enormous barriers to success in school. The Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act (PPSAE) provides the necessary framework and resources to states and school districts to ensure that pregnant and parenting students have equal access to educational opportunities.

The Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act:

- **Enables states to create a plan for the education of pregnant and parenting students**, provide professional development and technical assistance to school districts, coordinate services with other state agencies, and disseminate information, among other activities.
- **Establishes a state coordinator and school district liaisons** for the education of pregnant and parenting students.
- **Requires school district grantees to:**
 - Provide academic support services for pregnant and parenting students;
 - Revise school policies and practices to remove barriers and encourage pregnant and parenting students to continue their education;
 - Assist students in finding affordable child care, early childhood education, and transportation services;
 - Engage in student outreach, recruitment, retention and mentoring;
 - Provide professional development for school personnel so they can connect students with available resources.
- **Allows school district grantees to:**
 - Offer parenting and life skills classes;
 - Provide case management services;
 - Refer students to pregnancy prevention, primary health care, family planning, mental health, substance abuse, housing assistance, legal aid, or other needed services;
 - Address school climate issues, including illegal discrimination against and stigmatization of pregnant and parenting students.
- **Collects and reports data** on pregnant and parenting students annually, including educational outcomes, and requires a rigorous evaluation of the program.

(See reverse side for background information.)

Facts on Pregnant & Parenting Students:

- The U.S. has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the developed world: nearly 3 in 10 girls in the U.S. get pregnant at least once before age 20 - and the rates are even higher for girls of color.
- Pregnancy and parenting responsibilities significantly increase a student's risk of dropping out of school: only half of teen mothers have a high school diploma by age 22, compared to 89 percent of their childless peers.
- In a nationwide survey of dropout youth, close to one-half of all female dropouts and one-third of male dropouts said that becoming a parent played a role in their decisions to leave school.

Overcoming Barriers:

- This alarming trend stems from the many barriers that pregnant and parenting teens face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school, such as:
 - The challenge of juggling schoolwork with parenting responsibilities;
 - A lack of access to affordable, quality child care, transportation, and other critical services;
 - Discrimination from teachers, coaches, or school administrators.
- This pattern has severe short- and long-term consequences for the economic success and well-being of their families and communities, as well as our nation. For example, the children of dropouts are more likely to drop out of school themselves.

Schools can and should take steps to engage and re-engage pregnant and parenting students by implementing voluntary programs that provide or arrange educational and related services for them. The PPSAE provides educators with the tools to advance this process.

Lead Sponsors:

- Representative Jared Polis (D-CO)
- Representative Susan Chu (D-CA)

Further Information

- Visit our webpage: www.nwlc.org/pregnantandparentingstudents
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