



#### H.4011

#### An Act Relative to School Attendance

H. 4011 calls on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average.

The pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community agencies serving students who reside in these districts.

The dropout prevention and recovery programs shall target high school students who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school using at least one of the following methods:

1. **Graduation coaches:** shall be professionals with youth development and academic support expertise providing the target population with graduation plans including academic, career, and postsecondary goals. Graduation coaches shall also provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome social-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services.
2. **Supports for expectant and parenting students**
3. **Dropout outreach and recovery**
4. **Alternative education**

While there is no one singular reason that students choose to leave school or one solution for helping them stay the course, national research points to a need for greater adult support within schools. Mass Mentoring Partnership understands the significant impact of mentoring on two early indicators of high school dropout: high levels of absenteeism and recurring behavior problems in school. Graduation coaches add an additional layer of social and emotional support that is integral to the wellbeing of students across our state.

#### The Need for Graduation Coaches

- In the U.S. only 56 percent of students who have dropped out report that there was a school staff person they could go to about school problems.
- Only 41 percent of students said there was an adult at school who they could share personal problems with.
- More than three out of five students said their school needed to do more to help them with problems outside of class.<sup>1</sup>
- Youth in developmental relationships are less likely to skip school, present better attitudes and behaviors at school, and are more likely to attend college than their peers.
- For every dollar spent on effective youth mentoring relationships, there is a return of \$2.72 through projected increases in lifetime earnings and dollars saved through reduced juvenile delinquency and crime, and youth engagement in risky behaviors such as drug, alcohol and tobacco use.

**Urge Chairman Dempsey and members of the House Ways and Means Committee to release H.4011 with a favorable report. [Contact his office today!](#)**

For questions, contact Chelsea Aquino, Manager of Government Relations, at [caquino@massmentors.org](mailto:caquino@massmentors.org)

<sup>1</sup> Bridgeland, J.M., DiOulio, J.J., Morison, K.B. (2006). The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts. Civic Enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.