

Fostering Learning and Excellence in Charter Schools (FLEX) Act

Representative Ryan Mackenzie (R-PA)

Modernizing the Charter Schools Program (CSP) to better align with what schools, families, and students actually need.

The Problem:

Red tape slows the flow of CSP funds to classrooms – where they belong.

- The CSP is the only federal program dedicated to expanding access to high-quality public charter schools, but outdated administrative hurdles can delay – or even prevent – these funds from reaching students and classrooms.
- Complex regulations and long decision-making processes create confusion about allowable uses of funds.
- Some grantees are required to report on issues outside of their control, resulting in significant paperwork that doesn't add value – or serve kids.

The Solution:

A high-impact, responsive CSP that meets the needs of students and families in real time.

The FLEX Act modernizes the CSP and maximizes the program's impact on students and families by:

- Providing limited flexibility in how existing CSP funds can be spent, so resources go where they're needed most each year. When demand for certain types of CSP support is lower, funds would be reallocated to other subgrants so investments go where they have the greatest impact.
- Allowing schools to add programming, alongside new seats, that responds directly to the needs of communities and families they serve. Existing charter schools could expand their learning pathways to add in-demand fields, like coding and robotics, to align with current and future workforce needs.
- Streamlining processes and responsibilities so that time, energy, and resources go to supporting kids. Non-profit grantees have no control over charter school authorizers, yet they're currently required to report on their activities. With this change, reporting would add real value, without sacrificing any accountability.

The Impact:

Charter schools have added over half a million students over the last six years. At a time when enrollment is nearing 4 million – an all-time high – the FLEX Act will help ensure that:

Charter schools have the resources they need to meet rising family demand.

The dollars we invest in the CSP end up where they belong – in classrooms with students – not wasted on red tape.

The CSP stays aligned to changing needs, now and in the future.



Find out more!

Scan the QR code for everything you need to know about H.R. 7082 Fostering Learning and Excellence in Charter Schools (FLEX) Act



A Deeper Look into the FLEX Act

ELIMINATING BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES:

- Supports essential infrastructure charter schools need to succeed.
Expands flexibility across the life of the grant to pay for teacher salaries, curriculum and instructional materials, transportation, and facilities.
- Supports student-centered programming that responds to community need.
Locks in flexibilities that allow schools with targeted programming, including single sex schools and adult education, to receive CSP funding.
- Helps charter schools better prepare students for college and in-demand careers.
Allows CSP funds to be used to expand curricular offerings at existing schools while serving more students.
- Responds to the changing needs of charter schools and communities.
Creates some flexibility to move funds between subprograms to meet changing needs.
- Prioritizes the highest-quality charter school applications, rather than fixed projections.
Permits adjustments to subgrant projections to fund the highest quality charter applications.
- Aligns funding with applicant and authorizer priorities.
Allows grantees to use resources for technical assistance across the lifecycle of the grant, so support is available when it's needed most.

STREAMLINING FOR EFFICIENCY:

- Eliminates redundant processes.
Affords State Entity grantees the ability to automatically make subgrants to newly authorized charter schools.
- Allows grantees to focus on getting dollars into classrooms, not red tape.
Streamlines reporting requirements for State Entity grantees.
- Clarifies which reporting obligations make sense for different types of grantees.
Eliminates requirements for non-state grantees to report on work outside the scope of their control, such as authorizer oversight.
- Elevates the voices of charter school leaders, educators, and families.
Requires proactive input from the charter school community before rulemaking.
- Ensures students benefit from commonsense flexibilities in the long-term.
Prohibits additional regulations that are not in the statute.
- Help states immediately benefit from smart, effective reform.
Requires waivers to be granted to current State Entity grantees, so they can apply new flexibilities to existing grants.

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