

Magnet Schools Accessibility, Growth, and Nonexclusionary Enrollment Transformation
(MAGNET) Act of 2022

Sponsored by: Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT) and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT)

Recognizing the benefits of racially and socioeconomically diverse schools, states and districts across the country have increasingly turned to magnet schools. Magnet schools are public schools designed to cater to different learning styles and attract a wide range of students from different racial backgrounds and zip codes, and their popularity has led to the creation of more than four thousand magnet schools serving nearly 3.5 million students in more than 600 school districts in nearly every state. For almost fifty years, the federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) has been a key driver in fueling the growth of magnet schools, providing grants to local districts to establish and operate magnet schools. However, as schools nationwide have become increasingly segregated by race and income, it's critical to update and improve MSAP to ensure funding goes to programs with the greatest impact on reducing segregation as well as helping districts build on the successes of their existing magnet school programs. The *Magnet Schools Accessibility, Growth, and Nonexclusionary Enrollment Transformation (MAGNET) Act of 2022* aims to provide targeted improvements to MSAP to recommit and expand on the original mission of ensuring magnet schools provide their communities with educational opportunities that promote diversity and academic excellence.

Specifically, the *MAGNET Act of 2022* will **amend the existing MSAP grant** to:

- Prioritize applicants that plan to establish whole-school magnet schools, emphasize inter-district diversity in places where it is permitted, propose strategies to improve diversity and academic performance across schools and districts, or utilize inclusive enrollment practices, with additional priority given to applicants that meet multiple criteria.
- Allow novice or first-time MSAP applicants to use grant funds for technical assistance in implementing their magnet school plan.

The *MAGNET Act of 2022* will also **authorize a new grant program housed under MSAP, called the Supplemental Diversity Grant (SDG)**, which aims to support the work of existing magnet programs aspiring to improve their diversity-related goals. Specifically, the SDG program will:

- Authorize grants of up to \$7.5 million each over a five-year period for qualified districts and states;
- Require each applicant, including states, to provide a greater range of information about the intended purpose and uses of their grant award;
- Prioritize applicants that plan to implement inclusive enrollment practices, close persistent educational disparities between different groups of students, focus on fostering inter-district socioeconomic and racial diversity where possible, or provide free and accessible transportation, with additional priority given to applicants that meet multiple criteria;
- Allow grant funds to be used on a range of activities that support diversity and accessibility for families and students;
- Prohibit magnet programs requiring application fees related to admissions from receiving a grant;
- Mandate the Secretary of Education to collect and publicize an annual report from each grant recipient to assess the effectiveness of the grant in helping each recipient meet its diversity- and accessibility-related goals; and
- Require the Secretary of Education to hold SDG recipients accountable for failing to show progress in meeting their goals, including by possibly revoking remaining grant funds.