To provide, develop, and support 21st century readiness initiatives that assist students in acquiring the skills necessary to think critically and solve problems, be an effective communicator, collaborate with others, and learn to create and innovate.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JULY 14, 2011
Mr. Petri (for himself and Mr. Loeb) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL
To provide, develop, and support 21st century readiness initiatives that assist students in acquiring the skills necessary to think critically and solve problems, be an effective communicator, collaborate with others, and learn to create and innovate.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the “21st Century Readiness Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
Congress finds the following:
(1) Students must be prepared in core academic subjects.

(2) Students must possess the skills to be able to think critically and solve problems, be effective communicators, collaborate with others, and learn to create and innovate.

(3) In order for students in the United States to be prepared to succeed in citizenship and workplaces of the present and future, core academic subjects must be fused with critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation skills, as such skills are critical for success in the 21st century.

(4) The work of the National Governors Association, along with the Council of Chief State School Officers, in developing a set of voluntary and internationally benchmarked national common standards in mathematics and English that include rigorous content and 21st century skills, is a positive development and should serve as a basis for incorporating those skills and other critical skills throughout other core academic subjects in the future. Federal policy must support State leadership and encourage continued State innovation.
SEC. 3. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

Section 1001 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (11), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (12), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(13) fusing core academic subject knowledge mastery and higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure that students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside content knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts.”.

SEC. 4. EVALUATING OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS.

Section 1501(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6491(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (O) as subparagraph (P); and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (N) the following:
“(O) The extent to which fusing core academic subjects and higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure that students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside content knowledge in real-world contexts leads to readiness for postsecondary education and careers.”

SEC. 5. SCHOOL REFORM THROUGH 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVES.

Section 1606(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6516(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (10);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (11) as paragraph (12); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (10) the following:

“(11) includes a 21st century readiness initiative designed to fuse core academic subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure students can apply a range of skill competencies
alongside content knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts; and”.

SEC. 6. SCHOOL DROP OUT PREVENTION STRATEGIES THROUGH 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVES.

Section 1822(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6561a(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(K) implementing 21st century readiness initiatives, such as initiatives that fuse core academic subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside content knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts.”.
SEC. 7. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AROUND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS.

Section 2102 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6602) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (5) through (7), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.—The term ‘high-quality professional development’ means professional development that incorporates an aligned system of teaching and learning that includes 21st century skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation), standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments, such as high-quality professional development that—

“(A) ensures that educators understand the importance of 21st century skills and how best to integrate such skills into daily instruction;

“(B) enables collaboration among all participants;

“(C) allows educators to construct their own learning communities;
“(D) uses expertise within a school or local educational agency through coaching, mentoring, and team teaching;
“(E) supports educators in their role as facilitators of learning; and
“(F) uses 21st century skills technology tools.”.

SEC. 8. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION.

Section 2122(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6622(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:
“(12) A description of how the local educational agency will provide high-quality professional development to enable educators to—
“(A) deliver instruction on higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure that students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside core academic subject knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts; and
“(B) use the latest available technology to deliver instruction on higher-order thinking skills.”.
SEC. 9. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING.


(1) in clause (iv), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (v), by striking the period at the end and adding “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(vi) provide training on how to deliver instruction on higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) so that students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside core academic subject knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts, which may include effectively integrating technology into curricula and instruction.”.

SEC. 10. EXPANDED 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITIES.

Section 4205(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7175(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (11), by striking “and” at the end;
(2) in paragraph (12), by striking the period at the end and adding “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(13) initiatives that allow students to apply a range of skill competencies (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) alongside core academic subjects, and do so in real-world contexts, which may include effectively using technology to improve student achievement.”.

SEC. 11. 21ST CENTURY READINESS ASSESSMENTS.

Section 6111(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7301(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(I) Developing or improving assessments that use technology to measure core academic subject knowledge and higher-order thinking skills (such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure that students can apply a range of skill competencies alongside core academic subject knowledge, and do so in real-world contexts.”.
SEC. 12. 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVE DEFINITION.

Section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (43) as paragraphs (2) through (44), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2), the following:

“(1) 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVE.—

The term ‘21st century readiness initiative’ means any initiative that—

“(A) embeds core academic subjects with critical skills; and

“(B) is focused on ensuring that students are prepared for postsecondary education and careers, upon graduation from secondary school.”

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