

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2536

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.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 2011

Mr. PETRI (for himself and Mr. LOEBSACK) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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## 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.

1        *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2        *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3        **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4        This Act may be cited as the “21st Century Readiness Act”.

6        **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7        Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Students must be prepared in core academic  
2 subjects.

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

7           (3) In order for students in the United States  
8 to be prepared to succeed in citizenship and work-  
9 places of the present and future, core academic sub-  
10 jects must be fused with critical thinking and prob-  
11 lem solving, communication, collaboration, and cre-  
12 ativity and innovation skills, as such skills are crit-  
13 ical for success in the 21st century.

14           (4) The work of the National Governors Asso-  
15 ciation, along with the Council of Chief State School  
16 Officers, in developing a set of voluntary and inter-  
17 nationally benchmarked national common standards  
18 in mathematics and English that include rigorous  
19 content and 21st century skills, is a positive develop-  
20 ment and should serve as a basis for incorporating  
21 those skills and other critical skills throughout other  
22 core academic subjects in the future. Federal policy  
23 must support State leadership and encourage contin-  
24 ued State innovation.

1 **SEC. 3. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STATEMENT OF**  
2 **PURPOSE.**

3 Section 1001 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
4 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301) is amended—

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

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

9 (3) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(13) fusing core academic subject knowledge  
11 mastery and higher-order thinking skills (such as  
12 critical thinking and problem solving, communica-  
13 tion, collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to en-  
14 sure that students can apply a range of skill com-  
15 petencies alongside content knowledge, and do so in  
16 real-world contexts.”.

17 **SEC. 4. EVALUATING OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READI-**  
18 **NESS.**

19 Section 1501(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary  
20 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6491(a)(2)) is amend-  
21 ed—

22 (1) by redesignating subparagraph (O) as sub-  
23 paragraph (P); and

24 (2) by inserting after subparagraph (N) the fol-  
25 lowing:

1           “(O) The extent to which fusing core aca-  
2           ademic subjects and higher-order thinking skills  
3           (such as critical thinking and problem solving,  
4           communication, collaboration, creativity, and in-  
5           novation) to ensure that students can apply a  
6           range of skill competencies alongside content  
7           knowledge in real-world contexts leads to readi-  
8           ness for postsecondary education and careers.”.

9   **SEC. 5. SCHOOL REFORM THROUGH 21ST CENTURY READI-**  
10                           **NESS INITIATIVES.**

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

13           (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph  
14           (10);

15           (2) by redesignating paragraph (11) as para-  
16           graph (12); and

17           (3) by inserting after paragraph (10) the fol-  
18           lowing:

19           “(11) includes a 21st century readiness initia-  
20           tive designed to fuse core academic subject knowl-  
21           edge and higher-order thinking skills (such as crit-  
22           ical thinking and problem solving, communication,  
23           collaboration, creativity, and innovation) to ensure  
24           students can apply a range of skill competencies

1 alongside content knowledge, and do so in real-world  
2 contexts; and”.

3 **SEC. 6. SCHOOL DROPOUT PREVENTION STRATEGIES**  
4 **THROUGH 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIA-**  
5 **TIVES.**

6 Section 1822(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary  
7 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6561a(b)(1)) is amend-  
8 ed—

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

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

13 (3) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(K) implementing 21st century readiness  
15 initiatives, such as initiatives that fuse core aca-  
16 demic subject knowledge and higher-order  
17 thinking skills (such as critical thinking and  
18 problem solving, communication, collaboration,  
19 creativity, and innovation) to ensure students  
20 can apply a range of skill competencies along-  
21 side content knowledge, and do so in real-world  
22 contexts.”.

1 **SEC. 7. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INI-**  
2 **TIATIVES AROUND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS.**

3 Section 2102 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
4 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6602) is amended—

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

7 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-  
8 lowing:

9 “(4) HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOP-  
10 MENT.—The term ‘high-quality professional develop-  
11 ment’ means professional development that incor-  
12 porates an aligned system of teaching and learning  
13 that includes 21st century skills (such as critical  
14 thinking and problem solving, communication, col-  
15 laboration, creativity, and innovation), standards,  
16 curriculum, instruction, and assessments, such as  
17 high-quality professional development that—

18 “(A) ensures that educators understand  
19 the importance of 21st century skills and how  
20 best to integrate such skills into daily instruc-  
21 tion;

22 “(B) enables collaboration among all par-  
23 ticipants;

24 “(C) allows educators to construct their  
25 own learning communities;

1           “(D) uses expertise within a school or local  
2 educational agency through coaching, men-  
3 toring, and team teaching;

4           “(E) supports educators in their role as  
5 facilitators of learning; and

6           “(F) uses 21st century skills technology  
7 tools.”.

8 **SEC. 8. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AP-**  
9 **PLICATION.**

10         Section 2122(b) of the Elementary and Secondary  
11 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6622(b)) is amended  
12 by adding at the end the following:

13           “(12) A description of how the local educational  
14 agency will provide high-quality professional develop-  
15 ment to enable educators to—

16           “(A) deliver instruction on higher-order  
17 thinking skills (such as critical thinking and  
18 problem solving, communication, collaboration,  
19 creativity, and innovation) to ensure that stu-  
20 dents can apply a range of skill competencies  
21 alongside core academic subject knowledge, and  
22 do so in real-world contexts; and

23           “(B) use the latest available technology to  
24 deliver instruction on higher-order thinking  
25 skills.”.

1 **SEC. 9. HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
2 **TRAINING.**

3 Section 2123(a)(3)(B) of the Elementary and Sec-  
4 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6623(a)(3)(B))  
5 is amended—

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

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

9 (3) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(vi) provide training on how to de-  
11 liver instruction on higher-order thinking  
12 skills (such as critical thinking and prob-  
13 lem solving, communication, collaboration,  
14 creativity, and innovation) so that students  
15 can apply a range of skill competencies  
16 alongside core academic subject knowledge,  
17 and do so in real-world contexts, which  
18 may include effectively integrating tech-  
19 nology into curricula and instruction.”.

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

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

24 (1) in paragraph (11), by striking “and” at the  
25 end;



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

3           (3) by adding at the end the following:

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

11 **SEC. 11. 21ST CENTURY READINESS ASSESSMENTS.**

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

15                 “(I) Developing or improving assessments  
16                 that use technology to measure core academic  
17                 subject knowledge and higher-order thinking  
18                 skills (such as critical thinking and problem  
19                 solving, communication, collaboration, cre-  
20                 ativity, and innovation) to ensure that students  
21                 can apply a range of skill competencies along-  
22                 side core academic subject knowledge, and do so  
23                 in real-world contexts.”.

1 **SEC. 12. 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVE DEFINI-**  
2 **TION.**

3 Section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-  
4 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801) is amended—

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

8 (2) by inserting before paragraph (2), the fol-  
9 lowing:

10 “(1) 21ST CENTURY READINESS INITIATIVE.—  
11 The term ‘21st century readiness initiative’ means  
12 any initiative that—

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

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

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