

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 497

To require training for teachers in social and emotional learning programming, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 22, 2015

Mrs. DAVIS of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To require training for teachers in social and emotional learning programming, and for other purposes.

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 “Supporting Emotional
5 Learning Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

8 (1) A positive, healthy school community where
9 children thrive and grow, both intellectually and
10 emotionally, takes purposeful and thoughtful plan-

1 ning. Students who develop personal strengths like
2 grit, perseverance, concern for others, and positive
3 academic mindsets become important contributors to
4 their school and community. Schools have a respon-
5 sibility to nurture the intrapersonal and inter-
6 personal skills students need to navigate social situa-
7 tions and effectively and respectfully communicate
8 with a diverse group of people.

9 (2) In the United States, we have always placed
10 an emphasis on developing academically rigorous
11 curriculum, but unfortunately have not been as de-
12 liberate about imparting children with important so-
13 cial and emotional life skills. There needs to be a
14 balance and integration between cognitive learning
15 and social emotional learning.

16 (3) While not a new concept, the term “social
17 and emotional education” has recently become an
18 important focal point for many researchers, adminis-
19 trators, and teachers. The term “social and emo-
20 tional learning” means the process through which
21 individuals acquire and effectively apply the knowl-
22 edge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand
23 and manage emotions, the ability to set and achieve
24 positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, es-

1 establish and maintain positive relationships, and
2 make responsible decisions.

3 (4) Research has shown that social and emo-
4 tional learning effectively boosts student academic
5 success and fosters the very skills that are being uti-
6 lized in the workforce. Social and emotional learning
7 both increases protective factors for helping children
8 learn and thrive as well as reducing risks for prob-
9 lems in both learning and behavior. These teachable
10 skills help children avoid risky behaviors such as ag-
11 gression and early drug and alcohol use and provide
12 a springboard for being a capable student, citizen,
13 and worker.

14 (5) Continued research is necessary to discover
15 best practices and prepare educators to integrate so-
16 cial-emotional skills into the curriculum and school
17 culture. In addition, we need to support well-de-
18 signed theoretical models and implementation sup-
19 ports in social and emotional learning. Social and
20 emotional learning should be included as a central
21 component of our education system. Federal law
22 needs to include language that prioritizes social and
23 emotional learning for educators.

1 **SEC. 3. DUTIES OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDU-**
2 **CATION RESEARCH.**

3 Section 133(a) of the Education Sciences Reform Act
4 of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9533(a)) is amended—

5 (1) in paragraph (10), by striking “and” at the
6 end;

7 (2) in paragraph (11), by striking the period at
8 the end and inserting “; and”; and

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

10 “(11) carry out research initiatives regarding
11 the impact of social and emotional education.”.

12 **SEC. 4. RESEARCH TOPICS OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR**
13 **EDUCATION RESEARCH.**

14 Section 133(c)(2) of the Education Sciences Reform
15 Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9533(c)(2)) is amended by adding
16 at the end the following:

17 “(L) Social and emotional skills and hab-
18 its.”.

19 **SEC. 5. COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS.**

20 Section 203(f)(1)(A)(ii) of the Education Sciences
21 Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9602(f)(1)(A)(ii)) is
22 amended—

23 (1) in subclause (II), by striking “and” at the
24 end; and

25 (2) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(IV) imparting social and emo-
2 tional life learning (as defined in sec-
3 tion 200(24) of the Higher Education
4 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1021)); and”.

5 **SEC. 6. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.**

6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 200 of the Higher Edu-
7 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1021) is amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (13), by inserting at the end
9 the following: “, except that such term includes a re-
10 quirement that highly qualified teachers have prepa-
11 ration in the understanding, use, and development of
12 social and emotional learning programming”; and

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

14 “(24) SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.—

15 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘social and
16 emotional learning’ means the processes
17 through which students acquire and effectively
18 apply the following set of interrelated com-
19 petencies:

20 “(i) Self-awareness and self-manage-
21 ment skills to achieve academic and life
22 success.

23 “(ii) Social awareness and relationship
24 skills to establish and maintain positive re-
25 lationships.

1 “(iii) Responsible decisionmaking
2 skills and behavior in personal, school, and
3 community contexts.

4 “(B) SELF-AWARENESS.—The term ‘self-
5 awareness’ means an individual’s ability to ac-
6 curately recognize—

7 “(i) the individual’s own feelings and
8 thoughts; and

9 “(ii) the influence of such feelings and
10 thoughts on the individual’s behaviors.

11 “(C) SELF-MANAGEMENT.—The term ‘self-
12 management’ means an individual’s ability to—

13 “(i) regulate the individual’s own emo-
14 tions, cognitions, and behaviors effectively
15 in different situations; and

16 “(ii) set and work toward personal
17 and academic goals.

18 “(D) SOCIAL AWARENESS.—The term ‘so-
19 cial awareness’ means an individual’s ability
20 to—

21 “(i) take the perspective of and
22 empathize with individuals from diverse
23 backgrounds and cultures; and

24 “(ii) recognize family, school, and
25 community resources and supports.

1 “(E) RELATIONSHIP SKILL.—The term
2 ‘relationship skill’ means an individual’s ability
3 to establish and maintain healthy and reward-
4 ing relationships with individuals from diverse
5 backgrounds and cultures through commu-
6 nicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating,
7 negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking
8 and offering help when needed.

9 “(F) RESPONSIBLE DECISIONMAKING
10 SKILLS AND BEHAVIOR.—The term ‘responsible
11 decisionmaking skills and behavior’ means an
12 individual’s ability to make constructive and re-
13 spectful choices about personal behavior and so-
14 cial interactions, based on consideration of eth-
15 ical standards, safety concerns, the realistic
16 evaluation of consequences that stem from ac-
17 tions, and the well-being of self and others.

18 “(25) SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PRO-
19 GRAMMING.—The term ‘social and emotional learn-
20 ing programming’ refers to instruction, activities,
21 and best practice initiatives that—

22 “(A) integrate social and emotional learn-
23 ing with academic achievement;

24 “(B) provide systematic instruction where-
25 by social and emotional skills are taught, mod-

1 eled, practiced, and applied so that students use
2 them as part of their daily behavior;

3 “(C) teach students to apply social and
4 emotional skills to prevent specific problem be-
5 haviors such as substance use, violence, bul-
6 lying, and school failure, and to promote posi-
7 tive behaviors in class, school, and community
8 activities; and

9 “(D) establish safe and caring learning en-
10 vironments that foster student participation,
11 engagement, and connection to learning and
12 school.”.

13 (b) TEACHER QUALITY PARTNERSHIP GRANTS.—
14 Section 202 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
15 U.S.C. 1022a) is amended—

16 (1) in subsection (b)—

17 (A) by striking the period at the end of
18 paragraph (7)(D) and inserting “; and”; and

19 (B) by adding at the end the following:

20 “(8) a description of how the eligible partner-
21 ship will prepare prospective and new teachers and
22 principals, if applicable, to understand, use, and de-
23 velop social and emotional learning programming.”;

24 (2) in subsection (e)(1)(C)—

1 (A) by striking “and” at the end of clause
2 (iii);

3 (B) by striking the period at the end of
4 clause (iv) and inserting “; and”; and

5 (C) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(v) preparation in understanding,
7 using, and developing social and emotional
8 learning programming.”; and

9 (3) in subsection (f)(1)(C)—

10 (A) by striking “and” at the end of clause
11 (ii);

12 (B) by striking the period at the end of
13 clause (iii) and inserting “; and”; and

14 (C) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(iv) preparation in understanding,
16 using, and developing social and emotional
17 learning programming.”.

18 (c) AUGUSTUS HAWKINS CENTERS OF EXCEL-
19 LENCE.—Section 242(b)(1)(B) of the Higher Education
20 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1033a(b)(1)(B)) is amended—

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

22 (2) by striking the period at the end of clause
23 (ii) and inserting “; and”; and

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

1 “(iii) promoting the understanding,
2 use, and development of social and emo-
3 tional learning programming.”.

4 (d) TEACH TO REACH GRANTS.—Section
5 251(c)(1)(B) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
6 U.S.C. 1034(c)(1)(B)) is amended—

7 (1) by striking “and” at the end of clause (iv);

8 and

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

10 “(vi) understanding, using, and devel-
11 oping social and emotional learning pro-
12 gramming; and”.

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