

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5288

To direct the Secretary of Education to establish a Civic Education and Service Learning Grant Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

Ms. SCANLON (for herself and Mr. MELJER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Education to establish a Civic Education and Service Learning Grant Program, 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 “Teaching Engaged
5 Citizenship Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. CIVIC EDUCATION AND SERVICE LEARNING GRANT**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education shall
4 establish the Civic Education and Service Learning Grant
5 Program to award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligi-
6 ble entities to—

7 (1) promote and expand civic education by sup-
8 porting the development and implementation of
9 high-quality civic education and service-learning pro-
10 gramming in public elementary schools and public
11 secondary schools;

12 (2) promote the development and implementa-
13 tion of evidence-based curricula and educational
14 standards and provide teacher development with re-
15 spect to civic education and service-learning pro-
16 gramming in public elementary schools and public
17 secondary schools; and

18 (3) assist State and local educational agencies,
19 institutions of higher education, and nonprofit orga-
20 nizations in supporting civic education and service-
21 learning in public elementary schools and public sec-
22 ondary schools.

23 (b) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under
24 this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary
25 an application in such form, at such time, and containing

1 such information as the Secretary determines appropriate,
2 including specifying whether the grant will be used for—

3 (1) the training of teachers with respect to civic
4 education and service-learning under subsection
5 (c)(1); or

6 (2) the development and implementation of civic
7 education and service-learning programs under sub-
8 section (c)(2).

9 (c) GRANT USES.—An eligible entity shall use grant
10 funds awarded under this section, in accordance with the
11 application submitted by such entity under subsection (b),
12 for one of the following activities:

13 (1) The development and implementation of
14 programs for the training of teachers with respect to
15 civic education and service-learning, including—

16 (A) training teachers with respect to effec-
17 tive strategies for instructing students in civic
18 education and service-learning;

19 (B) hosting training sessions for teachers
20 to share best practices and learn new skills;

21 (C) developing classroom resources to aid
22 teachers with respect to improving civic edu-
23 cation and service-learning programs for stu-
24 dents;

1 (D) supporting other programs designed to
2 provide teachers with the knowledge and skills
3 necessary for teaching civic education; and

4 (E) coordinating with local organizations
5 and community-based services and programs to
6 provide hands-on and experiential civic learning
7 development opportunities.

8 (2) The development and implementation of ef-
9 fective civic education and service-learning pro-
10 grams, including—

11 (A) establishing a new, or improving an ex-
12 isting, civic education or service-learning pro-
13 gram, including by—

14 (i) developing and modifying curricula
15 relating to civic education and service-
16 learning; and

17 (ii) creating and administering class-
18 room activities, thesis projects, individual
19 or group projects, internships, or commu-
20 nity service activities related to civic edu-
21 cation, including—

22 (I) simulated congressional hear-
23 ings;

24 (II) courtroom simulations; and

25 (III) simulated public hearings;

1 (B) evaluating and increasing the effective-
2 ness of such programs for participating stu-
3 dents, including with respect to—

4 (i) understanding of United States
5 law, history, and government by such stu-
6 dents;

7 (ii) the participation of such students
8 with respect to voting and other forms of
9 political and civic engagement;

10 (iii) critical thinking skills and media
11 and digital literacy of such students;

12 (iv) interest of such students in em-
13 ployment and careers in military, national,
14 and public service; and

15 (v) the ability of such students to
16 solve problems through collaboration and
17 compromise;

18 (C) developing and supporting programs
19 necessary to the efficacy of civic education or
20 service-learning programs, as determined by the
21 Secretary; and

22 (D) coordinating with Government entities,
23 nonprofit organizations, or a consortia of such
24 entities and organizations to provide students
25 with experiences related to civic education.

1 (d) SUBGRANTS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that is a
3 State educational agency may use the grant awarded
4 under this section to award subgrants, on a competi-
5 tive basis, to local educational agencies served by
6 such State educational agency.

7 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—A local educational agen-
8 cy receiving a subgrant from a State educational
9 agency under this subsection shall use the funds to
10 carry out the activities under subsection (c) for
11 which such State educational agency received the
12 grant.

13 (3) APPLICATION.—A local educational agency
14 shall submit to the State educational agency an ap-
15 plication in such form, at such time, and containing
16 such information as the State educational agency
17 deems appropriate.

18 (4) FUNDS.—Of the grant amount used to
19 award subgrants under this subsection, a State edu-
20 cational agency shall use not less than 50 percent to
21 award such subgrants to local educational agencies
22 that serve high-need schools.

23 (e) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—In awarding
24 grants under this section, the Secretary shall select eligible

1 entities that are located in different geographic regions of
2 the United States.

3 (f) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate
4 such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this
5 section, including—

6 (1) procedures for eligible entities to apply for
7 grants under this section;

8 (2) the competitive process for the awarding of
9 grants; and

10 (3) reporting requirements by recipients of such
11 grants.

12 (g) REPORT.—Not later than 12 months after the
13 date on which the first grant is awarded under this sec-
14 tion, and on an annual basis thereafter, the Secretary
15 shall submit to Congress a report containing the following:

16 (1) Information with respect to each eligible en-
17 tity to which a grant was awarded under this section
18 during the preceding 12-month period, including
19 with respect to—

20 (A) the programs funded by such grants;
21 and

22 (B) the schools involved in such programs.

23 (2) An evaluation of any successes of the pro-
24 grams for which grants are awarded under this sec-
25 tion, including with respect to—

1 (A) progress toward implementing a civic
2 education curriculum in all elementary schools
3 and secondary schools by 2031; and

4 (B) the number of students in grades 4, 8,
5 and 12 testing at or above the proficient level
6 in the civics and history portions of the Na-
7 tional Assessment of Education Progress Test
8 under section 303 of the National Assessment
9 of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20
10 U.S.C. 9622), as compared with the last admin-
11 istration of such assessment.

12 (3) An assessment of any need for additional
13 funding for programs under this section.

14 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
15 authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out
16 this section \$400,000,000 for each fiscal year, of which—

17 (1) 50 percent shall be used to award funds to
18 carry out programs authorized under subsection

19 (c)(1), of which—

20 (A) 50 percent shall be used to award
21 funds to eligible entities that are State edu-
22 cational agencies; and

23 (B) 50 percent shall be used to award
24 funds to eligible entities that are not State edu-
25 cational agencies; and

1 (2) 50 percent shall be used to award funds to
2 carry out programs authorized under subsection
3 (c)(2), of which—

4 (A) 50 percent shall be used to award
5 funds to eligible entities that are State edu-
6 cational agencies; and

7 (B) 50 percent shall be used to award
8 funds to eligible entities that are not State edu-
9 cational agencies.

10 **SEC. 3. OFFICE OF CIVIC EDUCATION.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Department of Education
12 Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.) is amended—

13 (1) in section 202(b)(1)—

14 (A) in subparagraph (E), by striking
15 “and” at the end;

16 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as
17 subparagraph (G); and

18 (C) by adding after subparagraph (E) the
19 following:

20 “(F) an Assistant Secretary for Civic Edu-
21 cation; and”; and

22 (2) in title II, by adding at the end the fol-
23 lowing:

24 **“SEC. 221. OFFICE OF CIVIC EDUCATION.**

25 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
2 lish in the Department an Office of Civic Education
3 (referred to in this section as the ‘Office’).

4 “(2) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The Office will
5 be administered by the Assistant Secretary for Civic
6 Education appointed under section 202(b) (referred
7 to in this section as the ‘Assistant Secretary’).

8 “(3) MISSION.—The mission of the Office shall
9 be to promote civic education throughout the United
10 States.

11 “(4) FUNCTIONS.—The Assistant Secretary
12 shall be responsible for engaging in activities to
13 carry out the mission described in paragraph (3), in-
14 cluding by—

15 “(A) managing the Civic Education and
16 Service Learning Grant Program established
17 under section 2 of the Teaching Engaged Citi-
18 zenship Act of 2021, including presenting rec-
19 ommendations of funding for such Civic Edu-
20 cation and Service Learning Grant Program to
21 the Secretary, who has authority to grant final
22 approval of the selected grantees;

23 “(B) advising the Secretary;

1 “(C) coordinating with the agencies and
2 offices of the Department to update relevant
3 programs;

4 “(D) engaging in stakeholder relations and
5 developing external partnerships;

6 “(E) identifying best practices by State
7 and local educational agencies, in conjunction
8 with the Center for Civic Excellence and the
9 Civic Education Advisory Committee, estab-
10 lished in this section; and

11 “(F) collaborating with other Federal
12 agencies.

13 “(b) CENTER FOR CIVIC EXCELLENCE.—The Office
14 shall establish a Center for Civic Excellence to—

15 “(1) analyze the programs created under the
16 Civic Education and Service Learning Grant Pro-
17 gram established under section 2 of the Teaching
18 Engaged Citizenship Act of 2021, including with re-
19 spect to suggestions for best practices from State
20 educational agencies and local educational agencies;
21 and

22 “(2) develop best practices with respect to the
23 implementation of civic education in accordance with
24 the recommendations of the Civic Education Advi-
25 sory Committee established in subsection (c).

1 “(c) CIVIC EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
3 after the date of enactment of this section, the Sec-
4 retary shall establish a Civic Education Advisory
5 Committee (referred to in this subsection as the
6 ‘Committee’) to advise the Assistant Secretary with
7 respect to civic education policy.

8 “(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall
10 be composed of 12 members, of whom—

11 “(i) 2 shall be students;

12 “(ii) 2 shall be civics educators;

13 “(iii) 4 shall be representatives from
14 State educational agencies or local edu-
15 cational agencies; and

16 “(iv) 4 shall be representatives from
17 nonprofit organizations that focus on civic
18 education.

19 “(B) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The Sec-
20 retary shall appoint the members of the Com-
21 mittee not later than 180 days after the date of
22 enactment of this section.

23 “(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A member of the
2 Committee shall be appointed for a term of 2
3 years.

4 “(B) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the
5 Committee—

6 “(i) shall not affect the powers of the
7 Committee; and

8 “(ii) shall be filled as soon as prac-
9 ticable in the same manner as the original
10 appointment.

11 “(C) CONSECUTIVE TERMS.—A member of
12 the Committee may serve an additional consecu-
13 tive term.

14 “(4) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet
15 not fewer than 4 times per year.

16 “(5) DUTIES.—The Committee shall—

17 “(A) develop recommendations and advise
18 the Assistant Secretary on policies, initiatives,
19 and outreach relating to civic education;

20 “(B) evaluate and review ongoing research
21 and promotion activities relating to civic edu-
22 cation;

23 “(C) evaluate the impact of the Civic Edu-
24 cation and Service Learning Grant Program es-
25 tablished under section 2 of the Teaching En-

1 gaged Citizenship Act of 2021 and recommend
2 ways to adjust funding levels and strategies;

3 “(D) use the information contained in the
4 report required under paragraph (7)(A) to se-
5 lect recipients of the Excellence in Civics Award
6 established under section 5 of the Teaching En-
7 gaged Citizenship Act of 2021; and

8 “(E) provide additional assistance and ad-
9 vice to the Assistant Secretary as appropriate.

10 “(6) PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

11 “(A) COMPENSATION.—A member of the
12 Committee shall serve without compensation.

13 “(B) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of
14 the Committee shall be allowed travel expenses,
15 including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in ac-
16 cordance with section 5703 of title 5, United
17 States Code.

18 “(7) REPORT.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12
20 months after the date of the establishment of
21 the Committee, the Committee shall submit to
22 the Assistant Secretary a report on criteria
23 used to evaluate—

24 “(i) high-quality civic education; and

25 “(ii) service learning.

1 “(B) USE.—The Assistant Secretary shall
 2 use the information contained in the report re-
 3 quired under subparagraph (A) to evaluate pro-
 4 grams created under the Civic Education and
 5 Service Learning Grant Program established
 6 under section 2 of the Teaching Engaged Citi-
 7 zenship Act of 2021.

8 “(8) DURATION.—The Committee shall be es-
 9 tablished for a period of 2 years and may be re-
 10 newed at the direction of the Secretary.”.

11 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
 12 tents in section 1 of the Department of Education Organi-
 13 zation Act (20 U.S.C. 3401 note) is amended by inserting
 14 after the item relating to section 220 the following:

“Sec. 221. Office of Civic Education.”.

15 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL CIVICS ASSESSMENT.**

16 (a) ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT
 17 OF 1965.—

18 (1) STATE PLANS.—Section 1111 of the Ele-
 19 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
 20 U.S.C. 6311) is amended—

21 (A) in subsection (g)(2)(D), by striking
 22 “reading and mathematics” and inserting
 23 “reading, mathematics, civics, and history”;
 24 and

1 (B) in subsection (h)(1)(C)(xii), by striking
 2 “reading and mathematics” and inserting
 3 “reading, mathematics, civics, and history”.

4 (2) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PLANS.—
 5 Section 1112(c)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary
 6 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6312(c)(3)) is
 7 amended by striking “reading and mathematics”
 8 and inserting “reading, mathematics, civics, and his-
 9 tory”.

10 (b) NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
 11 PROGRESS.—Section 303 of the National Assessment of
 12 Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622)
 13 is amended—

14 (1) in subsection (b)—

15 (A) in paragraph (2)—

16 (i) in subparagraphs (B), (C), and
 17 (E), by striking “reading and mathe-
 18 matics” and inserting “reading, mathe-
 19 matics, civics, and history”;

20 (ii) in subparagraph (D)—

21 (I) by striking “civics,”; and

22 (II) by striking “history,”;

23 (iii) in subparagraph (G), by striking
 24 “and” at the end;

1 (iv) in subparagraph (H), by striking
2 the period and inserting “; and”; and

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

4 “(I) ensure that achievement data from the
5 civics and history assessments described in sub-
6 paragraphs (B), (C), and (E) are made avail-
7 able both in the aggregate for the United States
8 and separately for each State.”; and

9 (B) in paragraph (3), in subparagraphs
10 (A)(i), (A)(ii), and (C)(ii), by striking “reading
11 and mathematics” and inserting “reading,
12 mathematics, civics, and history”; and

13 (2) in subsection (d)(3), in subparagraphs (A)
14 and (B), by striking “reading and mathematics” and
15 inserting “reading, mathematics, civics, and his-
16 tory”.

17 **SEC. 5. EXCELLENCE IN CIVICS AWARD.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after
19 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
20 award to eligible recipients, on an annual basis, the Excel-
21 lence in Civics Award to highlight excellence in the devel-
22 opment and teaching of civic education and service-learn-
23 ing, with special attention to programs that address com-
24 munity needs.

1 (b) NOMINATIONS.—To be eligible for an award
2 under subsection (a), an eligible recipient shall submit to
3 the Secretary a nomination, of any eligible recipient, in
4 such form, at such time, and containing such information
5 as the Secretary determines appropriate, including with
6 respect to the eligible recipient—

7 (1) a description of the innovative civic edu-
8 cation or service-learning programs or projects ad-
9 ministered or completed by such eligible recipient;

10 (2) with respect to an award for service-learn-
11 ing programs or projects, the impact of such pro-
12 grams or projects on—

13 (A) measurable civics learning outcomes;

14 or

15 (B) addressing community or national
16 needs, including—

17 (i) disaster relief;

18 (ii) education;

19 (iii) poverty reduction;

20 (iv) reintegration of individuals who
21 have been incarcerated;

22 (v) senior citizen aid; and

23 (vi) public safety; and

24 (3) with respect to an award for education pro-
25 grams, teaching styles, or projects, the ability of

1 such programs, teaching styles, or projects to be im-
2 plemented on a national level.

3 (c) SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.—The Civic Edu-
4 cation Advisory Committee established under section
5 221(c) of the Department of Education Organization Act
6 (20 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.), as added by section 3 of this
7 Act, shall, in accordance with paragraph (5)(D) of such
8 section 221(c), select recipients of awards under this sec-
9 tion.

10 (d) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT DEFINED.—For purposes
11 of this section, the term “eligible recipient” means—

12 (1) a State educational agency;

13 (2) a local educational agency;

14 (3) a public elementary school;

15 (4) a public secondary school;

16 (5) a teacher;

17 (6) a student;

18 (7) a group of students; and

19 (8) a consortium of—

20 (A) 1 or more of the entities described in
21 paragraphs (1) through (7); and

22 (B) a nonprofit, nongovernmental organi-
23 zation.

1 **SEC. 6. DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIAL RELATING TO CIVIC**
2 **EDUCATION AND EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Covered officials shall work joint-
4 ly to—

5 (1) develop educational materials and teaching
6 resources relating to civic education and effective
7 citizenship, including by—

8 (A) enhancing existing online resources;
9 and

10 (B) supporting the distribution of hard
11 copy and digital materials to local libraries,
12 polling locations, and schools; and

13 (2) distribute such materials to the public.

14 (b) REPORTING.—The covered officials shall submit
15 to Congress a report with respect to the development and
16 distribution efforts required under subsection (a).

17 (c) COVERED OFFICIAL DEFINED.—In this section,
18 term “covered official” means—

19 (1) the Librarian of Congress;

20 (2) the Director of the Institute of Museum and
21 Library Services; and

22 (3) the Archivist of the United States.

23 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be
25 necessary to carry out this section for fiscal year 2022
26 and each succeeding fiscal year.

1 **SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

2 Nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing
3 the Secretary of Education to prescribe a civics and his-
4 tory curriculum.

5 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

6 In this Act:

7 (1) CIVIC EDUCATION.—The term “civic edu-
8 cation” means an educational program that provides
9 participants with knowledge of law, government, and
10 the rights and responsibilities of citizens and skills
11 that enable participants to participate responsibly in
12 democracy.

13 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible enti-
15 ty” means—

16 (i) a State educational agency; or

17 (ii) an entity described in subpara-
18 graph (B) in partnership with a State edu-
19 cational agency or local educational agen-
20 cy.

21 (B) OTHER ENTITIES.—The entities de-
22 scribed in this subparagraph are as follows:

23 (i) An institution of higher education.

24 (ii) A community-based organization.

25 (iii) A nonprofit, nongovernmental or-
26 ganization.

1 (iv) A consortium of entities described
2 in subparagraphs (i) through (iii).

3 (3) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
4 school”, “institution of higher education”, “local
5 educational agency”, “poverty line”, “secondary
6 school”, “Secretary”, “State”, and “State edu-
7 cational agency” have the meanings given such
8 terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
9 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

10 (4) HIGH-NEED SCHOOL.—The term “high-need
11 school” means any public elementary school or sec-
12 ondary school that is located in an area in which the
13 percentage of students from families with incomes
14 below the poverty line is 30 percent or more, as de-
15 termined by the Secretary.

16 (5) SERVICE-LEARNING.—The term “service-
17 learning” has the meaning given such term in sec-
18 tion 101 of the National and Community Service Act
19 of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511).

○