

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2009

To provide for a rural education development initiative, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 26, 2000

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. BREAU, and Mrs. LINCOLN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To provide for a rural education development initiative, 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 “Rural Education De-
5 velopment Initiative for the 21st Century Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to provide rural school stu-
8 dents in the United States with increased learning oppor-
9 tunities.

1 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) While there are rural education initiatives
4 identified at the State and local level, no Federal
5 education policy focuses on the specific needs of
6 rural school districts and schools, especially those
7 that serve poor students.

8 (2) The National Center for Educational Statis-
9 tics (NCES) reports that 46 percent of our Nation's
10 public schools serve rural areas.

11 (3) A critical problem for rural school districts
12 involves the hiring and retention of qualified admin-
13 istrators and certified teachers (especially in science
14 and mathematics). Consequently, teachers in rural
15 schools are almost twice as likely to provide instruc-
16 tion in 3 or more subjects than teachers in urban
17 schools. Rural schools also face other tough chal-
18 lenges, such as shrinking local tax bases, high trans-
19 portation costs, aging buildings, limited course offer-
20 ings, and limited resources.

21 (4) Data from the National Assessment of Edu-
22 cational Progress (NAEP) consistently shows large
23 gaps between the achievement of students in high-
24 poverty schools and those in other schools. High-pov-
25 erty schools will face special challenges in preparing

1 their students to reach high standards of perform-
2 ance on State and national assessments.

3 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; LOCAL EDU-
6 CATIONAL AGENCY; SECONDARY SCHOOL; STATE
7 EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The terms “elementary
8 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
9 school”, and “State educational agency” have the
10 meanings given the terms in section 14101 of the
11 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
12 (20 U.S.C. 8801).

13 (2) ELIGIBLE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—
14 The term “eligible local educational agency” means
15 a local educational agency that serves—

16 (A) a school age population 15 percent or
17 more of whom are from families with incomes
18 below the poverty line; and

19 (B)(i) a rural locality; or

20 (ii) a school age population of 800 or fewer
21 students.

22 (3) METROPOLITAN AREA.—The term “metro-
23 politan area” includes the area defined as such by
24 the Bureau of the Census.

1 (4) POVERTY LINE.—The term “poverty line”
 2 means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of
 3 Management and Budget, and revised annually in
 4 accordance with section 673(2) of the Community
 5 Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2))) ap-
 6 plicable to a family of the size involved.

7 (5) RURAL LOCALITY.—The term “rural local-
 8 ity” means a locality that is not within a metropoli-
 9 tan area.

10 (6) SCHOOL AGE POPULATION.—The term
 11 “school age population” means the number of stu-
 12 dents aged 5 through 17.

13 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 14 the Secretary of Education.

15 **SEC. 5. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

16 (a) RESERVATION.—From amounts appropriated
 17 under section 9 for a fiscal year the Secretary shall reserve
 18 0.5 percent to make awards to elementary or secondary
 19 schools operated or supported by the Bureau of Indian Af-
 20 fairs to carry out the purpose of this Act.

21 (b) GRANTS TO STATES.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appropriated
 23 under section 9 that are not reserved under sub-
 24 section (a) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall
 25 award grants to State educational agencies that have

1 applications approved under section 7 to enable the
2 State educational agencies to award grants to eligi-
3 ble local educational agencies for local authorized ac-
4 tivities described in subsection (c).

5 (2) FORMULA.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational
7 agency shall receive a grant under this section
8 in an amount that bears the same relation to
9 the amount of funds appropriated under section
10 9 that are not reserved under subsection (a) for
11 a fiscal year as the school age population served
12 by eligible local educational agencies in the
13 State bears to the school age population served
14 by eligible local educational agencies in all
15 States.

16 (B) DATA.—In determining the school age
17 population under subparagraph (A) the Sec-
18 retary shall use the most recent data available
19 from the Bureau of the Census.

20 (3) DIRECT AWARDS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL
21 AGENCIES.—If a State educational agency elects not
22 to participate in the program under this Act or does
23 not have an application approved under section 7,
24 the Secretary may award, on a competitive basis, the
25 amount the State educational agency is eligible to

1 receive under paragraph (2) directly to eligible local
2 educational agencies in the State.

3 (4) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—Each eligible
4 local educational agency that receives a grant under
5 this Act shall contribute resources with respect to
6 the local authorized activities to be assisted, in cash
7 or in kind, from non-Federal sources, in an amount
8 equal to the Federal funds awarded under the grant.

9 (c) LOCAL AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grant funds
10 awarded to local educational agencies under this Act shall
11 be used for—

12 (1) educational technology, including software
13 and hardware;

14 (2) professional development;

15 (3) technical assistance;

16 (4) teacher recruitment and retention;

17 (5) parental involvement activities; or

18 (6) academic enrichment programs or other
19 education programs.

20 (d) RELATION TO OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING.—
21 Funds received under this Act by a State educational
22 agency or an eligible local educational agency shall not be
23 taken into consideration in determining the eligibility for,
24 or amount of, any other Federal funding awarded to the
25 agency.

1 **SEC. 6. STATE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.**

2 (a) AWARD BASIS.—A State educational agency shall
3 award grants to eligible local educational agencies accord-
4 ing to a formula developed by the State educational agency
5 and approved by the Secretary.

6 (b) FIRST YEAR.—For the first year that a State
7 educational agency receives a grant under this Act, the
8 State educational agency—

9 (1) shall use not less than 99 percent of the
10 grant funds to award grants to eligible local edu-
11 cational agencies in the State; and

12 (2) may use not more than 1 percent for State
13 activities and administrative costs related to the pro-
14 gram.

15 (c) SUCCEEDING YEARS.—For the second and each
16 succeeding year that a State educational agency receives
17 a grant under this Act, the State educational agency—

18 (1) shall use not less than 99.5 percent of the
19 grant funds to award grants to eligible local edu-
20 cational agencies in the State; and

21 (2) may use not more than 0.5 percent of the
22 grant funds for State activities and administrative
23 costs related to the program.

24 **SEC. 7. APPLICATIONS.**

25 Each State educational agency, or local educational
26 agency eligible for a grant under section 5(b)(3), that de-

1 sires a grant under this Act shall submit an application
2 to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accom-
3 panied by such information as the Secretary may require.

4 **SEC. 8. REPORTS; ACCOUNTABILITY; STUDY.**

5 (a) STATE REPORTS.—

6 (1) CONTENTS.—Each State educational agen-
7 cy that receives a grant under this Act shall provide
8 an annual report to the Secretary. The report shall
9 describe—

10 (A) the method the State educational agen-
11 cy used to award grants to eligible local edu-
12 cational agencies under this Act;

13 (B) how eligible local educational agencies
14 used funds provided under this Act;

15 (C) how the State educational agency pro-
16 vided technical assistance for an eligible local
17 educational agency that did not meet the goals
18 and objectives described in subsection (c)(3);
19 and

20 (D) how the State educational agency took
21 action against an eligible local educational
22 agency if the local educational agency failed, for
23 2 consecutive years, to meet the goals and ob-
24 jectives described in subsection (c)(3).

1 (2) AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make
2 the annual State reports received under paragraph
3 (1) available for dissemination to Congress, inter-
4 ested parties (including educators, parents, students,
5 and advocacy and civil rights organizations), and the
6 public.

7 (b) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY REPORTS.—Each
8 eligible local educational agency that receives a grant
9 under section 5(b)(3) shall provide an annual report to
10 the Secretary. The report shall describe how the local edu-
11 cational agency used funds provided under this Act and
12 how the local educational agency coordinated funds re-
13 ceived under this Act with other Federal, State, and local
14 funds.

15 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall pre-
16 pare and submit to Congress an annual report. The report
17 shall describe—

18 (1) the methods the State educational agencies
19 used to award grants to eligible local educational
20 agencies under this Act;

21 (2) how eligible local educational agencies used
22 funds provided under this Act; and

23 (3) the progress made by State educational
24 agencies and eligible local educational agencies re-
25 ceiving assistance under this Act in meeting specific,

1 annual, measurable performance goals and objectives
2 established by such agencies for activities assisted
3 under this Act.

4 (d) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—The Secretary, at the end of
5 the third year that a State educational agency participates
6 in the program assisted under this Act, shall permit only
7 those State educational agencies that met their perform-
8 ance goals and objectives, for two consecutive years, to
9 continue to participate in the program.

10 (e) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United
11 States shall conduct a study regarding the impact of as-
12 sistance provided under this Act on student achievement.
13 The Controller General shall report the results of the
14 study to Congress.

15 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

16 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
17 this Act \$300,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2001
18 through 2004.

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