

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5436

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize a national elementary and secondary service-learning program that promotes student academic achievement, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 7, 2012

Mr. LOEBSACK introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize a national elementary and secondary service-learning program that promotes student academic achievement, 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 “Engaging Students
5 Through Service Learning Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. K-12 SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Elementary and
3 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et
4 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

5 **“PART E—ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF**
6 **K-12 EDUCATION THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING**

7 **“SEC. 2501. FINDINGS.**

8 “The Congress finds as follows:

9 “(1) Students learn best when they are actively
10 engaged in meaningful and challenging learning ex-
11 periences that encourage higher order skills develop-
12 ment, critical thinking, and problem solving.

13 “(2) Service learning is a pedagogy that encom-
14 passes key elements of effective teaching and learn-
15 ing, including active learning, authentic experiences,
16 opportunities for peer collaboration, problem solving,
17 student leadership and empowerment, and cog-
18 nitively challenging academic activities.

19 “(3) Students invest themselves in learning
20 when their educational experiences have personal
21 meaning to them and are connected to authentic,
22 real issues in their everyday lives.

23 “(4) In service learning, students apply their
24 knowledge and skills to solve actual community
25 problems and experience the real-world value of what
26 they are learning in school. Service learning can

1 therefore have a powerful effect on students, increas-
2 ing their academic engagement, their civic engage-
3 ment and their social and emotional development.

4 “(5) Service learning can have a powerful effect
5 on students, helping them to increase their academic
6 engagement and performance, their civic engagement
7 and desire to help others, and their social-emotional
8 learning in areas related to 21st century skill acqui-
9 sition, such as task persistence, intellectual curiosity,
10 and ability to work in teams.

11 “(6) In service learning, students connect to the
12 community and to their classmates in ways that are
13 far more powerful than simple cooperative learning.

14 “(7) Service learning has been found to pro-
15 mote behavioral and dispositional factors that medi-
16 ate students’ educational success such as greater
17 motivation for school, engagement in learning tasks,
18 building of self-efficacy and self-esteem, and propen-
19 sity to engage in pro-social behaviors.

20 “(8) Research has demonstrated that test
21 scores of students who participated in service learn-
22 ing are higher in reading, writing, mathematics, so-
23 cial studies, and science than those of non-partici-
24 pants.

1 “(9) High-quality service learning will improve
2 student achievement and our schools because it em-
3 ploys effective, experiential learning strategies asso-
4 ciated with student engagement in academic work
5 and preparation for success in college and the work-
6 place, engages students in solving complex problems,
7 probes for deeper learning, and seeks opportunities
8 for students to transfer knowledge from one context
9 to another.

10 “(10) Principals report that service learning
11 has a positive impact on teacher satisfaction, school
12 climate, academic achievement, and school engage-
13 ment.

14 “(11) Teachers who use service learning in the
15 classroom as a type of positive teaching strategy
16 achieve better results in a variety of academic and
17 behavioral categories than those who don’t, are more
18 effective, challenged, and energized, and are more
19 likely to remain within their chosen profession.

20 “(12) Only an estimated 24 percent of the ap-
21 proximately 53,300,000 K–12 youth in the United
22 States are given the opportunity to engage in any
23 kind of service-learning experience, a decline from
24 32 percent in 1999.

1 “(13) Schools in high poverty areas are less
2 likely to employ service learning as a teaching strat-
3 egy, yet research has shown this is a particularly ef-
4 fective pedagogy for use in such schools. Service
5 learning can significantly reduce the achievement
6 gap between affluent and low-income students. Low-
7 income students who participated in service opportu-
8 nities have better school attendance and grades than
9 low-income students who do not participate.

10 “(14) There is a need for a rigorous and fo-
11 cused initiative to demonstrate and broadly promote
12 high-quality service learning that enhances teacher
13 effectiveness, improves student learning and edu-
14 cational success, and positively affects school cli-
15 mate.

16 “(15) State educational agencies are the only
17 entities with comprehensive, statewide responsibility
18 for the quality of learning within a State.

19 **“SEC. 2502. PURPOSE.**

20 “The purpose of this part is to authorize a national
21 elementary and secondary school service-learning program
22 that will expand opportunities for students to engage in
23 high-quality service learning that—

1 “(1) promotes student achievement in academic
2 subjects, including science, technology, engineering,
3 and mathematics;

4 “(2) incorporates 21st century skills, such as
5 critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration;

6 “(3) integrates content knowledge and use of
7 technology;

8 “(4) enhances school climate and civic engage-
9 ment; and

10 “(5) improves post-school outcomes.

11 **“SEC. 2503. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.**

12 “The Secretary shall reserve funds for national activi-
13 ties as follows:

14 “(1) The Secretary shall reserve not more than
15 10 percent to establish a National Center for K–12
16 Service Learning—

17 “(A) to provide resources to State edu-
18 cational agencies to develop and expand the ca-
19 pacity of local educational agencies to improve
20 teacher quality, school climate, and educational
21 outcomes by providing an infrastructure for
22 sustainable service-learning efforts through vi-
23 sion and leadership, professional development,
24 curriculum and assessment, school-community

1 collaborations, and continuous improvement;
2 and

3 “(B) to provide oversight, establish link-
4 ages with key Federal education initiatives, fos-
5 ter sustainability, provide evidence for the
6 strengths and limitations of service-learning
7 practices, and disseminate study findings.

8 “(2) The Secretary shall reserve not more than
9 10 percent for research and evaluation activities, in-
10 cluding a study, conducted by the Institute of Edu-
11 cation Sciences and connecting with State longitu-
12 dinal data systems, on the effects of academic serv-
13 ice learning on instructional quality and the aca-
14 demic success of students in low-performing schools.
15 The study shall include the following elements:

16 “(A) A comprehensive, rigorous research
17 design that builds on prior studies on effective
18 pedagogies, service learning, and student suc-
19 cess.

20 “(B) Gathering qualitative and quan-
21 titative data to comprehensively assess the im-
22 pact service learning has on students’ academic,
23 civic, and behavioral performance, including
24 student engagement.

1 “(C) Tracking and measuring the success
2 of systemic district-level change based on exem-
3 plary service-learning policies and practices.

4 “(D) Measuring the effectiveness of a qual-
5 ity professional development leadership system,
6 including the effect the professional develop-
7 ment provided under this section has on teach-
8 ing and pedagogy, including the impact on
9 teachers likelihood of providing students with
10 real-world problem-solving opportunities, oppor-
11 tunities for deeper learning and tying academic
12 concepts to real-world contexts, opportunities
13 for leadership, and opportunities for peer col-
14 laboration.

15 “(E) Systematically measuring the influ-
16 ence of service-learning participation on stu-
17 dents’ academic achievement within and across
18 States.

19 “(F) Reporting annually to the public and
20 the Congress.

21 “(3) The Secretary shall reserve not more than
22 5 percent for training and technical assistance for
23 State-level program development. The Secretary
24 shall contract with an entity, or entities, with a dem-

onstrated record of achievement in promoting and
disseminating best practices in service learning—

“(A) to continually scan the field and build
an ever-expanding knowledge base of exemplary
service-learning models;

“(B) to ensure the dissemination, adop-
tion, and continuous improvement of these ex-
emplary practices at the State and local level;
and

“(C) to conduct specific activities, includ-
ing—

“(i) developing and disseminating ex-
emplary program models that demonstrate
how high-quality service-learning programs
can be replicated and can become sustain-
able at the State and local level by advanc-
ing the use of service learning as a high-
quality instructional pedagogy;

“(ii) providing resources to support
effective policy development at the State
and local level to advance efforts with re-
spect to high-quality teachers and equi-
table distribution of quality teachers; and

“(iii) providing exemplary professional
development models and technical assist-

1 ance materials that are available to any in-
2 terested party.

3 **“SEC. 2504. STATE ACTIVITIES.**

4 “(a) GRANTS.—A State educational agency desiring
5 a grant under this part shall submit an application to the
6 Secretary that includes the following assurances:

7 “(1) All local educational agencies in the State
8 shall have access to high-quality professional devel-
9 opment and peer mentoring through a cascade
10 model, including resources and ongoing support to
11 transform instructional practices.

12 “(2) The State educational agency shall gen-
13 erate strategies for improvement in the lowest per-
14 forming areas utilizing service-learning policies and
15 practices, National School Climate Standards, and
16 exemplary practices for enhancing teacher quality.

17 “(3) The State educational agency shall estab-
18 lish State policies and support systems that result in
19 effective programs.

20 “(4) The State educational agency shall estab-
21 lish effective partnerships to develop systemic imple-
22 mentation of service learning in teacher preparation
23 and professional development.

24 “(b) SERVICE-LEARNING SPECIALIST.—Of the funds
25 made available to a State educational agency under this

1 part, the agency shall reserve 10 percent to support a serv-
2 ice-learning specialist who acts as a conduit of information
3 between the State and local level, provides training and
4 technical assistance, program improvement, and progress
5 monitoring

6 “(c) STATE-LEVEL ACTIVITIES.—Of the funds made
7 available to a State educational agency under this part,
8 the agency shall reserve 30 percent to support the fol-
9 lowing:

10 “(1) Collaboration and mentoring to increase
11 consistency in implementation across States to en-
12 sure high-quality practice and sustainability.

13 “(2) Implementation of a statewide cascade
14 professional development model.

15 “(3) Onsite support and mentoring of local edu-
16 cational agencies.

17 “(4) Dissemination of resources to support
18 quality implementation, capacity building, and sus-
19 tainability of local efforts, including through grants
20 or contracts with qualified national intermediaries or
21 community-based organizations.

22 **“SEC. 2505. SUBGRANTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-**
23 **CIES.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—A State educational agency that
25 receives funds under this part shall use the funds remain-

1 ing after the application of section 2504 to make sub-
2 grants to local educational agencies that use—

3 “(1) the service-learning model to strengthen
4 the content area disciplines and implementation of
5 key educational innovations in areas with a high per-
6 centage of underperforming youth; and

7 “(2) a cascade professional model to bring prac-
8 tice to scale.

9 “(b) COMPETITIVE SUBGRANTS.—Subgrants shall be
10 made on a competitive basis with consideration for geo-
11 graphic diversity, including an equitable distribution be-
12 tween urban and rural local educational agencies. Priority
13 shall go to local education agencies with high proportions
14 of students living in poverty or performing below grade
15 level.

16 “(c) APPLICATION.—A local educational agency ap-
17 plying for a subgrant under this section shall submit an
18 application to the State educational agency that includes
19 information on how—

20 “(1) funds will be used to participate in the
21 cascade professional development model, ensure sus-
22 tainability, and replicate the service-learning model
23 to increase academic engagement and performance
24 in content area courses, increase civic skills and en-
25 gagement, and enable students in low performing

1 schools to help their own communities by giving
2 them the knowledge, skills, and opportunities nec-
3 essary to participate in high-quality service-learning
4 experiences;

5 “(2) educators will—

6 “(A) receive support in using instructional
7 practices that incorporate the application of
8 academic knowledge and skills to address rel-
9 evant needs in their community; and

10 “(B) identify current data, set measurable
11 goals for their instructional activities, and
12 measure impact on both students and the com-
13 munity; and

14 “(3) partnerships will be established to create a
15 community-wide expectation that service learning is
16 an essential part of a high-quality education.

17 **“SEC. 2506. DEFINITION OF CASCADE PROFESSIONAL DE-**
18 **VELOPMENT MODEL.**

19 “In this part, the term ‘cascade professional develop-
20 ment model’ means a professional development model in
21 which specialists are trained in high-quality practice and
22 delivery of professional development. These experts then
23 train educators, who are responsible for training, men-
24 toring, and supporting their peers. This model allows for

1 replication of effective practice and increased consistency
 2 in quality among all States.

3 **“SEC. 2507. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 “There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
 5 this part such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year
 6 2013 and succeeding fiscal years.”.

7 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
 8 tents for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
 9 of 1965 is amended by inserting after the item relating
 10 to section 2441 the following:

“PART E—ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF K–12 EDUCATION
 THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

“Sec. 2501. Findings.

“Sec. 2502. Purposes.

“Sec. 2503. National activities.

“Sec. 2504. State activities.

“Sec. 2505. Subgrants to local educational agencies.

“Sec. 2506. Definition of cascade professional development model.

“Sec. 2507. Authorization of appropriations.”.

