

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1710

To authorize a grant-matching program that strengthens and accelerates interventions in the lowest-performing elementary schools and secondary schools.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 7, 2015

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. CASEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To authorize a grant-matching program that strengthens and accelerates interventions in the lowest-performing elementary schools and secondary schools.

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 “AmeriCorps School
5 Turnaround Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Students are most successful when they
9 have personal, attentive support.

1 (2) Turning schools around requires collabora-
2 tion among teachers, administrators, counselors,
3 business leaders, the philanthropic sector, and com-
4 munity members.

5 (3) National service provides valuable support
6 to elementary schools and secondary schools and has
7 a record for improving student academic achieve-
8 ment.

9 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are to—

10 (1) strengthen and accelerate interventions in
11 the lowest-performing elementary schools and sec-
12 ondary schools;

13 (2) provide financial support to eligible entities
14 that serve low-performing schools;

15 (3) significantly improve outcomes for students
16 in persistently low-performing schools by—

17 (A) providing opportunities for academic
18 enrichment;

19 (B) extending learning time; and

20 (C) providing individual support for stu-
21 dents; and

22 (4) improve high school graduation rates and
23 college readiness for the most disadvantaged stu-
24 dents.

1 **SEC. 3. SCHOOL TURNAROUND PROGRAM.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The term
4 “Chief Executive Officer” means the Chief Executive
5 Officer of the Corporation for National and Commu-
6 nity Service appointed under section 193 of the Na-
7 tional and Community Service Act of 1990 (42
8 U.S.C. 12651c).

9 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
10 ty” means—

11 (A) an elementary school or secondary
12 school; or

13 (B) any of the following entities that serve
14 low-performing schools:

15 (i) Public or private nonprofit organi-
16 zations, including faith-based and other
17 community organizations.

18 (ii) Local educational agencies.

19 (iii) Institutions of higher education.

20 (iv) Government entities within
21 States.

22 (v) Indian Tribes.

23 (vi) Labor organizations.

24 (3) LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOL.—The term
25 “low-performing school” means an elementary school
26 or secondary school that is identified under section

1 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
 2 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6316).

3 (4) NATIONAL SERVICE PARTICIPANT.—The
 4 term “national service participant” means an indi-
 5 vidual described under part III of the National and
 6 Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12591
 7 et seq.).

8 (5) SCHOOL TURNAROUND CORPS PROJECT.—
 9 The term “School Turnaround Corps project” means
 10 a project carried out by an eligible entity that is a
 11 permissible use of funds for a grant under this Act.

12 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 13 the Secretary of Education.

14 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT FOR SCHOOL TURN-**
 15 **AROUND GRANTS.**

16 (a) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer
 18 shall enter into an interagency agreement with the
 19 Secretary similar to an interagency agreement de-
 20 scribed in section 121(b)(1) of the National and
 21 Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
 22 12571(b)(1)) regarding the grant program described
 23 in section 5, except that funds appropriated under
 24 this Act may be used as if for the purposes for
 25 which funds may be provided through grants under

1 section 121(a) of the National and Community Serv-
2 ice Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12571(a)).

3 (2) AMENDMENT TO THE NCSA.—Section
4 121(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 12571(b)) is amend-
5 ed by adding at the end the following:

6 “(6) SCHOOL TURNAROUND GRANT INTER-
7 AGENCY AGREEMENT.—Notwithstanding paragraph
8 (1), the Corporation shall enter into an interagency
9 agreement similar to an interagency agreement de-
10 scribed in paragraph (1) with the Secretary of Edu-
11 cation under this subsection regarding the school
12 turnaround grant program described in section 5 of
13 the AmeriCorps School Turnaround Act of 2015.”.

14 (b) APPROVED NATIONAL SERVICE POSITIONS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Executive Officer
16 shall approve positions for School Turnaround Corps
17 projects as approved national service positions in ac-
18 cordance with subtitle C of title I of the National
19 and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
20 12571 et seq.).

21 (2) DISTRIBUTION OF ASSISTANCE AND AP-
22 PROVED POSITIONS UNAFFECTED.—Nothing in this
23 Act shall be construed to affect the distribution of
24 assistance or approved national service positions

1 under section 129 of the National and Community
2 Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12581).

3 (c) TREATMENT OF FUNDS APPROPRIATED.—

4 (1) NATIONAL SERVICE TRUST.—For purposes
5 of section 145(a)(1) of the National and Community
6 Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12601(a)(1)), a por-
7 tion of the funds appropriated under this Act, as de-
8 termined by the Chief Executive Officer based on
9 the number of participants selected for School Turn-
10 around Corps projects, shall be treated as funds
11 made available to carry out subtitle D of title I of
12 the National and Community Service Act of 1990
13 (42 U.S.C. 12601 et seq.).

14 (2) INVESTMENT OF TRUST FUNDS.—For pur-
15 poses of subsection (b) of section 145 of the Na-
16 tional and Community Service Act of 1990 (42
17 U.S.C. 12601), a portion of the funds appropriated
18 under this Act, as determined by the Chief Execu-
19 tive Officer based on the number of participants se-
20 lected for School Turnaround Corps projects, shall
21 be treated as if appropriated to the Trust estab-
22 lished under such section.

23 (3) RESERVE ACCOUNT.—For purposes of sec-
24 tion 149(b)(1)(B)(ii) of the National and Commu-
25 nity Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.

1 12606(b)(1)(B)(ii)), a portion of the funds appro-
 2 priated under this Act, as determined by the Chief
 3 Executive Officer based on the number of partici-
 4 pants selected for School Turnaround Corps
 5 projects, shall be treated as funds appropriated for
 6 the fiscal year involved under section 501 of the Na-
 7 tional and Community Service Act of 1990 (42
 8 U.S.C. 12681) and made available to carry out sub-
 9 title C or D of title I of such Act (42 U.S.C. 12571
 10 et seq.; 42 U.S.C. 12601 et seq.).

11 (4) AUDITS.—For purposes of section 149(c) of
 12 the National and Community Service Act of 1990
 13 (42 U.S.C. 12606(c)), funds appropriated under this
 14 Act shall be treated as appropriated funds for ap-
 15 proved national service positions.

16 **SEC. 5. SCHOOL TURNAROUND GRANT PROGRAM.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available
 18 under this Act after the reservation described in sub-
 19 section (b), the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation
 20 with the Secretary, shall award grants, on a competitive
 21 basis, to eligible entities to enable such eligible entities—

22 (1) to improve the academic achievement of ele-
 23 mentary school and secondary school students; and

1 (2) to select national service participants and
2 engage such participants' in School Turnaround
3 Corps projects.

4 (b) AMOUNTS RESERVED.—The Chief Executive Of-
5 ficer shall reserve not less than 1 percent, and not more
6 than 2 percent, of the amount appropriated to carry out
7 this Act for each fiscal year to award grants under this
8 Act to Indian tribes and organizations serving tribal popu-
9 lations.

10 (c) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this Act, the
11 Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Sec-
12 retary—

13 (1) shall give priority to eligible entities that
14 will serve significant populations of low-income stu-
15 dents; and

16 (2) may give priority to eligible entities that—

17 (A) are located in low-income communities;

18 (B) will serve communities with significant
19 populations of families with limited English
20 proficiency;

21 (C) will place national service participants
22 in urban or rural areas; or

23 (D) will increase the ability of educators to
24 provide appropriate services and coordinate ac-
25 tivities with State and local systems providing

1 services under part B of the Individuals with
2 Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et
3 seq.) for children with developmental delays or
4 disabilities, including such children in the child
5 welfare system of the State.

6 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that re-
8 ceives a grant under this section shall use the funds
9 made available through the grant to carry out 1 or
10 more of the activities described in paragraphs (2)
11 through (6), and shall engage national service par-
12 ticipants to carry out such activities.

13 (2) INCREASING HIGH-QUALITY, INDIVIDUAL-
14 IZED LEARNING TIME.—Improving the quality and
15 frequency of individualized learning time provided to
16 elementary school and secondary school students by
17 providing individualized support, which may include
18 increasing postsecondary education enrollment rates
19 through postsecondary education preparation coun-
20 seling assistance, including assistance with com-
21 pleting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
22 (FAFSA) and applications for institutions of higher
23 education, and educating students and their families
24 about financial literacy for postsecondary education.

1 (3) OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND EXTENDED LEARNING
2 PROGRAMS.—Increasing personalized, out-of-school
3 and extended learning programs provided to elemen-
4 tary school and secondary school students by engag-
5 ing national service participants to serve as—

6 (A) tutors who provide individualized, aca-
7 demic support outside of the standard school
8 day; and

9 (B) family resource mentors who connect
10 the student, family, and school in an open con-
11 versation about the student’s academic situa-
12 tion.

13 (4) COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AND
14 GRADUATION COACHES.—The provision of individual
15 graduation, postsecondary education, and career
16 preparation guidance and assistance by college or
17 career planing advisors.

18 (5) SCHOOLWIDE ACTIVITIES.—Carrying out
19 schoolwide activities, including—

20 (A) establishing a school culture and envi-
21 ronment that improves school safety, attend-
22 ance, and discipline and addressing other non-
23 academic factors that impact student achieve-
24 ment, such as students’ social, emotional, and
25 health needs; and

1 (B) carrying out activities to increase
2 graduation rates, such as early warning sys-
3 tems, credit-recovery programs, and re-engage-
4 ment strategies.

5 (6) ACCELERATING READING AND MATHE-
6 MATICS KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.—The provision of
7 activities to accelerate students’ acquisition of read-
8 ing and mathematics knowledge and skills.

9 **SEC. 6. ANNUAL REPORT.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—As a condition on receipt of any
11 funds for a program under this Act, each grantee shall
12 agree to submit an annual report at such time, in such
13 manner, and containing such information as the Chief Ex-
14 ecutive Officer, in consultation with the Secretary, may
15 require.

16 (b) CONTENT.—At a minimum, each annual report
17 under this subsection shall describe—

18 (1) the degree to which progress has been made
19 toward meeting the annual benchmarks and long-
20 term goals and objectives described in the grant re-
21 cipient’s application; and

22 (2) demographic data about low-performing
23 schools, including the number of low-income and mi-
24 nority students, served in each program.

1 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
3 this Act \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2016, and such sums
4 as may be necessary for each of the 5 succeeding fiscal
5 years.

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