

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 312

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding school libraries, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 29, 2015

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

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding school libraries, 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 “Strengthening Kids’
5 Interest in Learning and Libraries Act” or the “SKILLS
6 Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. REFERENCES.**

8 Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in
9 this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms
10 of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provi-

1 sion, the reference shall be considered to be made to a
 2 section or other provision of the Elementary and Sec-
 3 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.).

4 **TITLE I—IMPROVING EDU-**
 5 **CATION THROUGH SCHOOL**
 6 **LIBRARIES**

7 **SEC. 101. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 Section 1002(b)(4) (20 U.S.C. 6302(b)(4)) is amend-
 9 ed to read as follows:

10 “(4) IMPROVING LITERACY THROUGH SCHOOL
 11 LIBRARIES.—For the purpose of carrying out sub-
 12 part 4 of part B, there are authorized to be appro-
 13 priated such sums as may be necessary for fiscal
 14 year 2016 and for each of the 5 succeeding fiscal
 15 years.”.

16 **SEC. 102. STATE PLANS.**

17 Section 1111(b)(8) (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(8)) is amend-
 18 ed—

19 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
 20 by inserting “or include” after “describe”;

21 (2) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and”
 22 after the semicolon;

23 (3) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as sub-
 24 paragraph (F); and

1 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the fol-
 2 lowing:

3 “(E) an assurance that the State edu-
 4 cational agency will assist local educational
 5 agencies in developing effective school library
 6 programs to provide students an opportunity to
 7 develop digital literacy skills and the knowledge
 8 and skills described in the challenging academic
 9 content standards adopted by the State; and”.

10 **SEC. 103. LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PLANS.**

11 Section 1112(c)(1) (20 U.S.C. 6312(c)(1)) is amend-
 12 ed—

13 (1) in subparagraph (N), by striking “and”
 14 after the semicolon;

15 (2) in subparagraph (O), by striking the period
 16 and inserting “; and”; and

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

18 “(P) assist each school served by the agen-
 19 cy and assisted under this part in developing ef-
 20 fective school library programs consistent with
 21 section 1111(b)(8)(E).”.

22 **SEC. 104. SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAMS.**

23 Section 1114(b)(1)(D) (20 U.S.C. 6314(b)(1)(D)) is
 24 amended by inserting “school librarians,” after “teach-
 25 ers,”.

1 **SEC. 105. TARGETED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

2 Section 1115(c)(1)(F) (20 U.S.C. 6315(c)(1)(F)) is
3 amended by inserting “school librarians,” after “teach-
4 ers,”.

5 **SEC. 106. IMPROVING LITERACY AND COLLEGE AND CA-**
6 **REER READINESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE**
7 **SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS.**

8 Subpart 4 of part B of title I (20 U.S.C. 6383) is
9 amended to read as follows:

10 **“Subpart 4—Improving Literacy and College and Ca-**
11 **reer Readiness Through Effective School Li-**
12 **brary Programs**

13 **“SEC. 1251. IMPROVING LITERACY AND COLLEGE AND CA-**
14 **REER READINESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE**
15 **SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS.**

16 “(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subpart is to
17 improve students’ literacy skills and readiness for higher
18 education and careers, by providing students with effective
19 school library programs.

20 “(b) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this sec-
21 tion, the term ‘eligible entity’ means—

22 “(1) a local educational agency in which 20 per-
23 cent of the students served by the local educational
24 agency are from families with incomes below the
25 poverty line; or

1 “(2) a consortia of such local educational agen-
2 cies.

3 “(c) RESERVATION.—From the funds appropriated
4 under section 1002(b)(4) for a fiscal year, the Secretary
5 shall reserve—

6 “(1) one-half of 1 percent to award assistance
7 under this section to the Bureau of Indian Edu-
8 cation to carry out activities consistent with the pur-
9 pose of this subpart; and

10 “(2) one-half of 1 percent to award assistance
11 under this section to the outlying areas according to
12 their respective needs for assistance under this sub-
13 part.

14 “(d) GRANTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appro-
16 priated under section 1002(b)(4) and not reserved
17 under subsection (c), the Secretary shall award
18 grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to
19 enable such entities to carry out the authorized ac-
20 tivities described in subsection (e).

21 “(2) SUFFICIENT SIZE AND SCOPE.—The Sec-
22 retary shall award grants under this section of suffi-
23 cient size and scope to allow the eligible entities to
24 carry out effective school library programs under
25 this subpart.

1 “(3) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall en-
 2 sure that grants under this section are equitably dis-
 3 tributed among the different geographic regions of
 4 the United States, and among eligible entities serv-
 5 ing urban and rural areas.

6 “(4) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award
 7 grants under this section for a period of 3 years.

8 “(5) LOCAL APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity
 9 desiring to receive a grant under this section shall
 10 submit an application to the Secretary at such time,
 11 in such manner, and containing such information as
 12 the Secretary may require. Such application shall in-
 13 clude, for each school that the eligible entity identi-
 14 fies as participating in a grant program under this
 15 section, the following information:

16 “(A) A needs assessment relating to the
 17 need for literacy improvement at all grade levels
 18 and the need for effective school library pro-
 19 grams, based on the age and condition of school
 20 library resources, including—

21 “(i) book collections;

22 “(ii) access to advanced technology;

23 “(iii) the availability of well-trained,
 24 State certified or licensed school librarians;
 25 and

1 “(iv) the current level of coordination
2 and shared planning time among school li-
3 brarians and classroom teachers.

4 “(B) A description of—

5 “(i) which grade spans will be served,
6 and an assurance that funding will be dis-
7 tributed to serve students in elementary,
8 middle, and high schools;

9 “(ii) how the eligible entity will exten-
10 sively involve school librarians, teachers,
11 administrators, and parents in the activi-
12 ties assisted under this section, and the
13 manner in which the eligible entity will
14 carry out the activities described in sub-
15 section (e) using programs and materials
16 that are grounded in scientifically valid re-
17 search;

18 “(iii) the manner in which the eligible
19 entity will effectively coordinate the funds
20 and activities provided under this section
21 with Federal, State, and local funds and
22 activities under this subpart and other lit-
23 eracy, library, technology, and professional
24 development funds and activities, including

1 those funded through the Institute of Mu-
2 seum and Library Services; and

3 “(iv) the manner in which the eligible
4 entity will collect and analyze data on the
5 quality and impact of activities carried out
6 under this section by schools served by the
7 eligible entity.

8 “(e) LOCAL ACTIVITIES.—Funds under this section
9 may be used to develop and enhance effective school li-
10 brary programs, which may include activities to—

11 “(1) acquire up-to-date school library resources,
12 including books and reading materials that—

13 “(A) are appropriate for students in all
14 grade levels to be served and for students with
15 special learning needs, including students who
16 are limited English proficient; and

17 “(B) engage the interest of readers at all
18 reading levels;

19 “(2) acquire and use advanced technology, in-
20 corporated into the curricula of the school, to de-
21 velop and enhance the digital literacy skills of stu-
22 dents;

23 “(3) facilitate Internet links and other resource-
24 sharing networks among schools and school libraries,
25 and public and academic libraries, where possible;

1 “(4) provide—

2 “(A) professional development in the ac-
3 quisition of digital literacy skills and literacy in-
4 struction that is appropriate for all grades, in-
5 cluding the assessment of student literacy
6 needs, the coordination of reading and writing
7 instruction across content areas, and training in
8 literacy strategies in all content areas for school
9 librarians; and

10 “(B) activities that foster increased col-
11 laboration among school librarians, teachers,
12 and administrators; and

13 “(5) provide students with access to school li-
14 braries during nonschool hours, including the hours
15 before and after school, during weekends, and dur-
16 ing summer vacation periods.

17 “(f) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds made
18 available under this section shall be used to supplement,
19 and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds
20 expended to carry out activities relating to library, tech-
21 nology, or professional development activities.

22 “(g) ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.—Each eligi-
23 ble entity that receives funds under this section for a fiscal
24 year shall prepare and submit a report to the Secretary
25 regarding how the funding was used and the extent to

1 which the availability of, the access to, and the use of,
 2 up-to-date school library resources in the elementary
 3 schools and secondary schools served by the eligible entity
 4 was increased.”.

5 **TITLE II—PREPARING, TRAIN-**
 6 **ING, AND RECRUITING HIGH-**
 7 **LY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS,**
 8 **SCHOOL LIBRARIANS, AND**
 9 **PRINCIPALS**

10 **SEC. 201. TEACHER, SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, AND PRINCIPAL**
 11 **TRAINING AND RECRUITING FUND.**

12 Title II (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) is amended—

13 (1) in the title heading, by striking “**HIGH**
 14 **QUALITY TEACHERS AND PRIN-**
 15 **CIPALS**” and inserting “**HIGHLY EFFEC-**
 16 **TIVE TEACHERS, SCHOOL LIBRAR-**
 17 **ANS, AND PRINCIPALS**”; and

18 (2) in the part heading for part A, by striking
 19 “**TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL**” and inserting
 20 “**TEACHER, SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, AND PRIN-**
 21 **CIPAL**”.

22 **SEC. 202. PURPOSE.**

23 Section 2101(1) (20 U.S.C. 6601(1)) is amended to
 24 read as follows:

1 “(1) increase student achievement through
2 strategies such as—

3 “(A) improving teacher, school librarian,
4 and principal quality; and

5 “(B) increasing the number of highly effec-
6 tive teachers in the classroom, highly effective
7 school librarians in the library, and highly effec-
8 tive principals and assistant principals in the
9 school; and”.

10 **SEC. 203. STATE APPLICATIONS.**

11 Section 2112(b)(4) (20 U.S.C. 6612(b)(4)) is amend-
12 ed by inserting “, school librarians,” before “and prin-
13 cipals”.

14 **SEC. 204. STATE USE OF FUNDS.**

15 Section 2113(c) (20 U.S.C. 6613(c)) is amended—
16 (1) in paragraph (4)—

17 (A) in the matter preceding subparagraph
18 (A), by striking “principals,” and inserting
19 “highly effective school librarians, and highly
20 qualified principals,”; and

21 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and
22 principals” and inserting “, highly effective
23 school librarians, and highly qualified prin-
24 cipals”; and

1 (2) in paragraph (6), by striking “teachers and
2 principals” each place the term appears and insert-
3 ing “teachers, school librarians, and principals”.

4 **SEC. 205. LOCAL USE OF FUNDS.**

5 Section 2123(a) (20 U.S.C. 6623(a)) is amended by
6 inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

7 “(9)(A) Developing and implementing strategies
8 to assist in recruiting and retaining highly effective
9 school librarians; and

10 “(B) providing appropriate professional devel-
11 opment for school librarians, particularly related to
12 skills necessary to assist students to improve the
13 students’ academic achievement, including digital lit-
14 eracy skills and preparation for higher education
15 and careers.”.

16 **TITLE III—GENERAL**
17 **PROVISIONS**

18 **SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.**

19 Section 9101 (20 U.S.C. 7801) is amended—

20 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (16), (17), and
21 (18) through (43) as paragraphs (17), (18), and
22 (20) through (45), respectively;

23 (2) by inserting after paragraph (15) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(16) DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS.—The term
 2 ‘digital literacy skills’ has the meaning given the
 3 term in section 202 of the Museum and Library
 4 Services Act.”; and

5 (3) by inserting after paragraph (18) (as redes-
 6 ignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

7 “(19) EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LIBRARY PRO-
 8 GRAM.—The term ‘effective school library program’
 9 means a school library program that—

10 “(A) is staffed by a State certified or li-
 11 censed school librarian;

12 “(B) has up-to-date books, materials,
 13 equipment, and technology (including broad-
 14 band);

15 “(C) includes regular collaboration between
 16 classroom teachers and school librarians to as-
 17 sist with development and implementation of
 18 the curriculum and other school reform efforts;
 19 and

20 “(D) supports the development of digital
 21 literacy skills.”.

22 **SEC. 302. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

23 The table of contents in section 2 of the Act is
 24 amended—

- 1 (1) by striking the items relating to subpart 4
2 of part B of title I and inserting the following:

“SUBPART 4—IMPROVING LITERACY AND COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS
THROUGH EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS

“Sec. 1251. Improving literacy and college and career readiness through effective school library programs.”;

- 3 (2) by striking the item relating to title II and
4 inserting the following:

“TITLE II—PREPARING, TRAINING, AND RECRUITING HIGHLY
EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, SCHOOL LIBRARIANS, AND PRINCIPALS”;

- 5 and

- 6 (3) by striking the item relating to part A of
7 title II and inserting the following:

“PART A—TEACHER, SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, AND PRINCIPAL TRAINING AND
RECRUITING FUND”.

