

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 342

To promote the use of blended learning in classrooms across America.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2015

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

A BILL

To promote the use of blended learning in classrooms across America.

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 “21st Century Class-
5 room Innovation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. REFERENCES.**

7 Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in
8 this Act an amendment is expressed in terms of an amend-
9 ment to a section or other provision, the reference shall
10 be considered to be made to a section or other provision

1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
 2 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.).

3 **SEC. 3. ENCOURAGING STATE AND LOCAL BLENDED**
 4 **LEARNING PROJECTS.**

5 (a) STATE APPLICATIONS.—Section 2112(b) (20
 6 U.S.C. 6612(b)) is amended by inserting at the end the
 7 following:

8 “(13) In the case of a State that will carry out
 9 a program to award grants under section 2121(b),
 10 a description of the program, which shall include—

11 “(A) the criteria the State will use to
 12 award grants under such section to eligible enti-
 13 ties to carry out blended learning projects;

14 “(B) the State policies and procedures to
 15 be waived by the State, consistent with Federal
 16 law, for such eligible entities to carry out such
 17 projects, which may include waivers with re-
 18 spect to—

19 “(i) restrictions on class sizes;

20 “(ii) restrictions on licensing or
 21 credentialing of personnel supervising stu-
 22 dent work in such projects;

23 “(iii) restrictions on the use of State
 24 funding for instructional materials for the
 25 purchase of digital instructional resources;

1 “(iv) restrictions on advancing stu-
 2 dents based on demonstrated mastery of
 3 learning outcomes, rather than seat-time
 4 requirements; and

5 “(v) restrictions on secondary school
 6 students in the State enrolling in online
 7 coursework;

8 “(C) how the State will inform eligible en-
 9 tities of the availability of the waivers described
 10 in subparagraph (B); and

11 “(D) how the State will provide the non-
 12 Federal match required under section
 13 2121(b)(2)(D).”.

14 (b) RESERVATION OF SUBGRANT FUNDS FOR
 15 BLENDED LEARNING.—Section 2121 of the Elementary
 16 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6621)
 17 is amended by adding at the end the following:

18 “(b) RESERVATION FOR BLENDED LEARNING.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
 20 provision of this part, a State that receives a grant
 21 under subpart 1 may reserve not more than 5 per-
 22 cent of the amount reserved to carry out this part
 23 under section 2113(a)(1) to make grants to local
 24 educational agencies to enable the agencies to carry

1 out blended learning projects described in paragraph
2 (2).

3 “(2) BLENDED LEARNING PROJECTS.—

4 “(A) IN GENERAL.—

5 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The State edu-
6 cational agency may use the funds de-
7 scribed in paragraph (1) to carry out a
8 program to award grants on a competitive
9 basis to eligible entities in the State to
10 carry out blended learning projects de-
11 scribed in this paragraph.

12 “(ii) RESERVATION FOR RURAL
13 AREAS.—In awarding grants under this
14 paragraph, a State educational agency
15 shall reserve 5 percent of the funds avail-
16 able to carry out this paragraph for eligible
17 entities that will serve rural areas.

18 “(B) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity de-
19 siring to receive a grant under this paragraph
20 shall submit an application to the State edu-
21 cational agency at such time and in such man-
22 ner as the agency may require, and which de-
23 scribes—

24 “(i) the blended learning project to be
25 carried out by the eligible entity, including

1 the design of the instructional model to be
2 carried out by the eligible entity and how
3 such eligible entity will use funds provided
4 under this paragraph to carry out the
5 project;

6 “(ii) in the case of an eligible entity
7 described in subclause (I) or (III) of sub-
8 paragraph (E)(iii), the schools that will
9 participate in the project;

10 “(iii) the expected impact on student
11 academic achievement;

12 “(iv) how the eligible entity will en-
13 sure sufficient information technology is
14 available to carry out the project;

15 “(v) how the eligible entity will ensure
16 sufficient digital instructional resources are
17 available to students participating in the
18 project;

19 “(vi) the ongoing professional develop-
20 ment to be provided for teachers, school
21 leaders, and other personnel carrying out
22 the project;

23 “(vii) the State policies and proce-
24 dures for which the eligible entity requests
25 waivers from the State to carry out the

1 project, which may include requests for the
2 waivers described in section
3 2112(b)(13)(B);

4 “(viii) as appropriate, how the eligible
5 entity will use the blended learning project
6 to improve instruction and access to the
7 curriculum for diverse groups of students,
8 including students with disabilities and
9 students who are limited English pro-
10 ficient;

11 “(ix) how the eligible entity will evalu-
12 ate the project in terms of student aca-
13 demic achievement and publicly report the
14 results of such evaluation; and

15 “(x) how the eligible entity will sus-
16 tain the project beyond the grant period.

17 “(C) USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity
18 receiving a grant under this paragraph shall use
19 such grant to carry out a blended learning
20 project, which shall include at least 1 of the fol-
21 lowing activities:

22 “(i) Planning activities, which may in-
23 clude development of new instructional
24 models (including blended learning tech-
25 nology software and platforms), the pur-

chase of digital instructional resources, initial professional development activities, and one-time information technology purchases, except that such expenditures may not include expenditures related to significant construction or renovation of facilities.

“(ii) Ongoing professional development for teachers, school leaders, or other personnel involved in the project that is designed to support the implementation and academic success of the project.

“(D) NON-FEDERAL MATCH.—A State educational agency that carries out a grant program under this paragraph shall provide non-Federal matching funds equal to not less than 10 percent of the grant funds awarded by the State educational agency to eligible entities under this paragraph.

“(E) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) BLENDED LEARNING PROJECT.—
The term ‘blended learning project’ means a formal education program—

“(I) that includes an element of online learning, and instructional time

1 in a supervised location away from
 2 home;

3 “(II) that includes an element of
 4 student control over time, path, or
 5 pace; and

6 “(III) in which the elements are
 7 connected to provide an integrated
 8 learning experience.

9 “(ii) CHARTER SCHOOL.—The term
 10 ‘charter school’ has the meaning given the
 11 term in section 5210.

12 “(iii) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term
 13 ‘eligible entity’ means a—

14 “(I) local educational agency;

15 “(II) charter school; or

16 “(III) consortium of the entities
 17 described in subclause (I) or (II),
 18 which may be in partnership with a
 19 for-profit or nonprofit entity.”.

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