

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2604

To provide demonstration grants to local educational agencies to enable the agencies to extend time for learning and the length of the school year.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 9 (legislative day, OCTOBER 2), 1998

Mr. TORRICELLI introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To provide demonstration grants to local educational agencies to enable the agencies to extend time for learning and the length of the school year.

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. DEMONSTRATION GRANTS.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

5 (1) the length of the academic year at most ele-
6 mentary and secondary schools in the United States
7 consists of approximately 175 to 180 academic days,
8 while the length of the academic years at elementary
9 and secondary schools in a majority of the other in-

1 industrialized countries consists of approximately 190
2 to 240 academic days;

3 (2) eighth-grade students from the United
4 States have scored lower, on average, in mathe-
5 matics than students in Japan, France, and Canada;

6 (3) various studies indicate that extending the
7 length of the academic year at elementary and sec-
8 ondary schools results in a significant increase in ac-
9 tual student learning time, even when much of the
10 time in the extended portion of the academic year is
11 used for increased teacher training and increased
12 parent-teacher interaction;

13 (4) in the final 4 years of schooling, students
14 in schools in the United States are required to spend
15 a total of 1,460 hours on core academic subjects,
16 which is less than half of the 3,528 hours so re-
17 quired in Germany, the 3,280 hours so required in
18 France, and the 3,170 hours so required in Japan;

19 (5) American students' lack of formal schooling
20 is not counterbalanced with more homework as only
21 29 percent of American students report spending at
22 least 2 hours on homework per day compared to half
23 of all European students;

24 (6) extending the length of the academic year
25 at elementary and secondary schools will lessen the

1 need for review, at the beginning of an academic
2 year, of course material covered in the previous aca-
3 demic year; and

4 (7) in 1994, the Commission on Time and
5 Learning recommended that school districts keep
6 schools open longer to meet the needs of children
7 and communities.

8 (b) DEMONSTRATION GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education,
10 from amounts appropriated under subsection (d) for
11 a fiscal year, shall award demonstration grants to
12 local educational agencies to—

13 (A) enable the local educational agencies to
14 extend the length of the school year to 210
15 days;

16 (B) study the feasibility of an effective
17 methods for extending learning time within or
18 beyond the school day or year, including con-
19 sultation with other schools or local educational
20 agencies that have designed or implemented ex-
21 tended learning time programs;

22 (C) conduct outreach to and consult with
23 community members, including parents, stu-
24 dents, and other stakeholders, such as tribal
25 leaders, to develop a plan to extend learning

1 time within or beyond the school day or year;
2 and

3 (D) research, develop, and implement
4 strategies, including changes in curriculum and
5 instruction, for maximizing the quality and per-
6 centage of common core learning time in the
7 school day and extending learning time during
8 or beyond the school day or year.

9 (2) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term
10 “common core learning time” means high-quality,
11 engaging instruction in challenging content in the
12 core academic subjects of English, mathematics,
13 science, foreign languages, civics and government,
14 economics, arts, history, and geography.

15 (c) APPLICATION.—A local education agency desiring
16 a grant under this section shall submit an application to
17 the Secretary of Education at such time, in such manner,
18 and accompanied by such information as the Secretary
19 may require. Each application shall describe—

20 (1) the activities for which assistance is sought;

21 (2) any study or other information-gathering
22 project for which funds will be used;

23 (3) the strategies and methods the applicant
24 will use to enrich and extend learning time for all
25 students and to maximize the percentage of common

1 core learning time in the school day, such as block
2 scheduling, team teaching, longer school days or
3 years, and extending learning time through new dis-
4 tance-learning technologies.

5 (4) the strategies and methods the applicant
6 will use, including changes in curriculum and in-
7 struction, to challenge and engage students and to
8 maximize the productiveness of common core learn-
9 ing time, as well as the total time students spend in
10 school and in school-related enrichment activities;

11 (5) the strategies and methods the applicant in-
12 tends to employ to provide continuing financial sup-
13 port for the implementation of any extended school
14 day or school year;

15 (6) with respect to any application seeking as-
16 sistance for activities described in subsection
17 (b)(1)(A), a description of any feasibility or other
18 studies demonstrating the sustainability of a longer
19 school year;

20 (7) the extent of involvement of teachers and
21 other school personnel in investigating, designing,
22 implementing and sustaining the activities assisted
23 under this part;

24 (8) the process to be used for involving parents
25 and other stakeholders in the development and im-

1 plementation of the activities assistance under this
2 section;

3 (9) any cooperation or collaboration among
4 public housing authorities, libraries, businesses, mu-
5 seums, community-based organizations, and other
6 community groups and organizations to extend en-
7 gaging, high-quality, standards-based learning time
8 outside of the school day or year, at the school or
9 at some other site;

10 (10) the training and professional development
11 activities that will be offered to teachers and others
12 involved in the activities assisted under this section;

13 (11) the goals and objectives of the activities
14 assisted under this section, including a description of
15 how such activities will assist all students to reach
16 State standards;

17 (12) the methods by which the applicant will
18 assess progress in meeting such goals and objectives;
19 and

20 (13) how the applicant will use funds provided
21 under this section in coordination with funds pro-
22 vided under other Federal laws.

23 (d) DURATION.—A grant under this section shall be
24 awarded for a period of 3 years.

25 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
2 appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000
3 for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

4 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of Edu-
5 cation shall use not less than 50 percent of the
6 amount appropriated for each fiscal year under
7 paragraph (1) to award grants to applicants that
8 want to extend the school year to at least 210 days.

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