

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 311

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide for partnerships in character education.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 13, 2001

Mr. DOMENICI (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. FRIST, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. HARKIN) 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 to provide for partnerships in character education.

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 “Strong Character for
5 Strong Schools Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PARTNERSHIPS IN CHARACTER EDUCATION PRO-**
 2 **GRAM.**

3 Section 10103 of the Elementary and Secondary
 4 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8003) is amended to
 5 read as follows:

6 **“SEC. 10103. PARTNERSHIPS IN CHARACTER EDUCATION**
 7 **PROGRAM.**

8 “(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized
 10 to award grants to eligible entities for the design
 11 and implementation of character education programs
 12 that incorporate the elements of character described
 13 in subsection (d), as well as other character elements
 14 identified by the eligible entities.

15 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
 16 tity’ means—

17 “(A) a State educational agency in part-
 18 nership with 1 or more local educational agen-
 19 cies;

20 “(B) a State educational agency in part-
 21 nership with—

22 “(i) one or more local educational
 23 agencies; and

24 “(ii) one or more nonprofit organiza-
 25 tions or entities, including institutions of
 26 higher education;

1 “(C) a local educational agency or consor-
 2 tium of local educational agencies; or

3 “(D) a local educational agency in partner-
 4 ship with another nonprofit organization or en-
 5 tity, including institutions of higher education.

6 “(3) DURATION.—Each grant under this sec-
 7 tion shall be awarded for a period not to exceed 3
 8 years, of which the eligible entity shall not use more
 9 than 1 year for planning and program design.

10 “(4) AMOUNT OF GRANTS FOR STATE EDU-
 11 CATIONAL AGENCIES.—Subject to the availability of
 12 appropriations, the amount of grant made by the
 13 Secretary to a State educational agency in a part-
 14 nership described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of
 15 paragraph (2), that submits an application under
 16 subsection (b) and that meets such requirements as
 17 the Secretary may establish under this section, shall
 18 not be less than \$500,000.

19 “(b) APPLICATIONS.—

20 “(1) REQUIREMENT.—Each eligible entity de-
 21 siring a grant under this section shall submit an ap-
 22 plication to the Secretary at such time and in such
 23 manner as the Secretary may require.

24 “(2) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—Each appli-
 25 cation submitted under this section shall include—

1 “(A) a description of any partnerships or
2 collaborative efforts among the organizations
3 and entities of the eligible entity;

4 “(B) a description of the goals and objec-
5 tives of the program proposed by the eligible
6 entity;

7 “(C) a description of activities that will be
8 pursued and how those activities will contribute
9 to meeting the goals and objectives described in
10 subparagraph (B), including—

11 “(i) how parents, students (including
12 students with physical and mental disabili-
13 ties), and other members of the commu-
14 nity, including members of private and
15 nonprofit organizations, will be involved in
16 the design and implementation of the pro-
17 gram and how the eligible entity will work
18 with the larger community to increase the
19 reach and promise of the program;

20 “(ii) curriculum and instructional
21 practices that will be used or developed;

22 “(iii) methods of teacher training and
23 parent education that will be used or devel-
24 oped; and

1 “(iv) how the program will be linked
2 to other efforts in the schools to improve
3 student performance;

4 “(D) in the case of an eligible entity that
5 is a State educational agency—

6 “(i) a description of how the State
7 educational agency will provide technical
8 and professional assistance to its local edu-
9 cational agency partners in the develop-
10 ment and implementation of character edu-
11 cation programs; and

12 “(ii) a description of how the State
13 educational agency will assist other inter-
14 ested local educational agencies that are
15 not members of the original partnership in
16 designing and establishing character edu-
17 cation programs;

18 “(E) a description of how the eligible enti-
19 ty will evaluate the success of its program—

20 “(i) based on the goals and objectives
21 described in subparagraph (B); and

22 “(ii) in cooperation with the national
23 evaluation conducted pursuant to sub-
24 section (c)(2)(B)(iii);

1 “(F) an assurance that the eligible entity
 2 annually will provide to the Secretary such in-
 3 formation as may be required to determine the
 4 effectiveness of the program; and

5 “(G) any other information that the Sec-
 6 retary may require.

7 “(c) EVALUATION AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT.—

8 “(1) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—

9 “(A) STATE AND LOCAL REPORTING AND
 10 EVALUATION.—Each eligible entity receiving a
 11 grant under this section shall submit to the
 12 Secretary a comprehensive evaluation of the
 13 program assisted under this section, including
 14 the impact on students (including students with
 15 physical and mental disabilities), teachers, ad-
 16 ministrators, parents, and others—

17 “(i) by the second year of the pro-
 18 gram; and

19 “(ii) not later than 1 year after com-
 20 pletion of the grant period.

21 “(B) CONTRACTS FOR EVALUATION.—

22 Each eligible entity receiving a grant under this
 23 section may contract with outside sources, in-
 24 cluding institutions of higher education, and
 25 private and nonprofit organizations, for pur-

poses of evaluating its program and measuring the success of the program toward fostering in students the elements of character described in subsection (d).

“(2) NATIONAL RESEARCH, DISSEMINATION,
AND EVALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to make grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, State or local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, tribal organizations, or other public or private agencies or organizations to carry out research, development, dissemination, technical assistance, and evaluation activities that support or inform State and local character education programs. The Secretary shall reserve not more than 5 percent of the funds made available under this section to carry out this paragraph.

“(B) USES.—Funds made available under subparagraph (A) may be used—

“(i) to conduct research and development activities that focus on matters such as—

1 “(I) the effectiveness of instruc-
 2 tional models for all students, includ-
 3 ing students with physical and mental
 4 disabilities;

5 “(II) materials and curricula that
 6 can be used by programs in character
 7 education;

8 “(III) models of professional de-
 9 velopment in character education; and

10 “(IV) the development of meas-
 11 ures of effectiveness for character
 12 education programs which may in-
 13 clude the factors described in para-
 14 graph (3);

15 “(ii) to provide technical assistance to
 16 State and local programs, particularly on
 17 matters of program evaluation;

18 “(iii) to conduct a national evaluation
 19 of State and local programs receiving fund-
 20 ing under this section; and

21 “(iv) to compile and disseminate,
 22 through various approaches (such as a na-
 23 tional clearinghouse)—

24 “(I) information on model char-
 25 acter education programs;

1 “(II) character education mate-
2 rials and curricula;

3 “(III) research findings in the
4 area of character education and char-
5 acter development; and

6 “(IV) any other information that
7 will be useful to character education
8 program participants, educators, par-
9 ents, administrators, and others na-
10 tionwide.

11 “(C) PRIORITY.—In carrying out national
12 activities under this paragraph related to devel-
13 opment, dissemination, and technical assistance,
14 the Secretary shall seek to enter into partner-
15 ships with national, nonprofit character edu-
16 cation organizations with expertise and success-
17 ful experience in implementing local character
18 education programs that have had an effective
19 impact on schools, students (including students
20 with disabilities), and teachers.

21 “(3) FACTORS.—Factors which may be consid-
22 ered in evaluating the success of programs funded
23 under this section may include—

24 “(A) discipline issues;

25 “(B) student performance;

1 “(C) participation in extracurricular activi-
2 ties;

3 “(D) parental and community involvement;

4 “(E) faculty and administration involve-
5 ment;

6 “(F) student and staff morale; and

7 “(G) overall improvements in school cli-
8 mate for all students, including students with
9 physical and mental disabilities.

10 “(d) ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible entity desir-
12 ing funding under this section shall develop char-
13 acter education programs that incorporate the fol-
14 lowing elements of character:

15 “(A) Caring.

16 “(B) Civic virtue and citizenship.

17 “(C) Justice and fairness.

18 “(D) Respect.

19 “(E) Responsibility.

20 “(F) Trustworthiness.

21 “(G) Any other elements deemed appro-
22 priate by the members of the eligible entity.

23 “(2) ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER.—

24 An eligible entity participating under this section
25 may, after consultation with schools and commu-

1 nities served by the eligible entity, define additional
 2 elements of character that the eligible entity deter-
 3 mines to be important to the schools and commu-
 4 nities served by the eligible entity.

5 “(e) USE OF FUNDS BY STATE EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
 6 CY RECIPIENTS.—Of the total funds received in any fiscal
 7 year under this section by an eligible entity that is a State
 8 educational agency—

9 “(1) not more than 10 percent of such funds
 10 may be used for administrative purposes; and

11 “(2) the remainder of such funds may be used
 12 for—

13 “(A) collaborative initiatives with and be-
 14 tween local educational agencies and schools;

15 “(B) the preparation or purchase of mate-
 16 rials, and teacher training;

17 “(C) grants to local educational agencies,
 18 schools, or institutions of higher education; and

19 “(D) technical assistance and evaluation.

20 “(f) SELECTION OF GRANTEES.—

21 “(1) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall select,
 22 through peer review, eligible entities to receive
 23 grants under this section on the basis of the quality
 24 of the applications submitted under subsection (b),
 25 taking into consideration such factors as—

1 “(A) the quality of the activities proposed
2 to be conducted;

3 “(B) the extent to which the program fos-
4 ters in students the elements of character de-
5 scribed in subsection (d) and the potential for
6 improved student performance;

7 “(C) the extent and ongoing nature of pa-
8 rental, student, and community involvement;

9 “(D) the quality of the plan for measuring
10 and assessing success; and

11 “(E) the likelihood that the goals of the
12 program will be realistically achieved.

13 “(2) DIVERSITY OF PROJECTS.—The Secretary
14 shall approve applications under this section in a
15 manner that ensures, to the extent practicable, that
16 programs assisted under this section—

17 “(A) serve different areas of the Nation,
18 including urban, suburban, and rural areas; and

19 “(B) serve schools that serve minorities,
20 Native Americans, students of limited-English
21 proficiency, disadvantaged students, and stu-
22 dents with disabilities.

23 “(g) PARTICIPATION BY PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN
24 AND TEACHERS.—Grantees under this section shall pro-
25 vide, to the extent feasible and appropriate, for the partici-

1 pation of students and teachers in private elementary and
2 secondary schools in programs and activities under this
3 section.

4 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section,
6 \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2002 and such sums as may
7 be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.”.

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