

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2149

To establish a grant program to ensure that students in high-need schools have equal access to a quality education delivered by an effective, diverse workforce.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2015

Ms. JUDY CHU of California (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. TED LIEU of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To establish a grant program to ensure that students in high-need schools have equal access to a quality education delivered by an effective, diverse workforce.

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 “Equal Access to Qual-
5 ity Education Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION GRANT**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education shall
4 make grants on a competitive basis to eligible partnerships
5 in high-need areas to—

6 (1) develop and strengthen high-quality path-
7 ways for the teaching and education leadership pro-
8 fessions;

9 (2) create professional induction programs for
10 the teaching profession; and

11 (3) provide a stable and collaborative learning
12 environment for educators and students.

13 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the grant program
14 established under this section shall be to—

15 (1) increase the percentage of highly qualified
16 teachers in States, including teachers from under
17 represented minority groups and teachers with dis-
18 abilities;

19 (2) close the achievement gap for students with-
20 in subgroups that are not showing expected perform-
21 ance;

22 (3) decrease shortages of highly qualified teach-
23 ers in poor urban and rural areas;

24 (4) decrease high turnover rates for educators
25 in high-need schools;

1 (5) increase the number of highly qualified
2 teachers in shortage areas, including special edu-
3 cation, bilingual education, and education for
4 English language learners, and in science, mathe-
5 matics, engineering, and technology;

6 (6) increase opportunities for enhanced and on-
7 going professional development that—

8 (A) improves the academic content knowl-
9 edge of teachers in the subject areas in which
10 teachers are certified or licensed to teach or in
11 which the teachers are working toward certifi-
12 cation or licensure to teach;

13 (B) promotes strong teaching skills, includ-
14 ing instructional strategies that address diverse
15 needs, the use of data to inform instruction,
16 and strategies to improve student achievement;
17 and

18 (C) provides time for teachers to share
19 their knowledge and innovation; and

20 (7) provide all educators with the knowledge
21 base and professional skills to meet the needs of di-
22 verse learners, including English language learners
23 and students with disabilities.

24 (c) APPLICATION.—

1 (1) APPLICATIONS REQUIRED.—An eligible
2 partnership that desires to receive a grant under
3 this Act shall submit an application to the Secretary
4 at such time, in such manner, and containing such
5 information as the Secretary may require.

6 (2) CONTENTS.—An application submitted
7 under paragraph (1) include—

8 (A) a description of—

9 (i) how the eligible partnership will
10 meet the purposes under subsection (b);

11 (ii) how the partnership will carry out
12 the activities required under subsection
13 (d), including—

14 (I) how the partnership will de-
15 sign, implement, or enhance a year-
16 long and rigorous teaching residency
17 program component; and

18 (II) how the partnership will de-
19 sign, implement, or enhance a rig-
20 orous teacher induction and retention
21 program;

22 (iii) a description of the partnership's
23 plan for continuing the activities carried
24 out under a grant received under this Act
25 after the grant funding ceases;

1 (iv) how the grant will increase the
2 number of highly qualified teachers —

3 (I) in high-need schools operated
4 by high-need local educational agen-
5 cies (in urban or rural school dis-
6 tricts); and

7 (II) in high-need academic sub-
8 jects; and

9 (v) with respect to the teacher induc-
10 tion and retention program that will be
11 carried out using the grant—

12 (I) the partnership's capability
13 and commitment to, and the accessi-
14 bility to and involvement of teachers
15 in, the use of empirically based prac-
16 tice and scientifically valid research on
17 teaching and learning; and

18 (II) a description of how the
19 partnership will design and implement
20 an induction program to support,
21 through not less than the first 2 years
22 of teaching, all new teachers who are
23 prepared by the teacher preparation
24 program in the partnership and who
25 teach in the high-need local edu-

1 cational agency in the partnership,
2 and, to the extent practicable, all new
3 teachers who teach in such high-need
4 local educational agency, in the fur-
5 ther development of the new teachers'
6 teaching skills, including the use of
7 mentors who are trained and com-
8 pensated by such program for the
9 mentors' work with new teachers.

10 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—

11 (1) REQUIRED USES.—An eligible partnership
12 that receives a grant under this section shall use the
13 funds to carry out the following:

14 (A) Establish or support a teacher prepa-
15 ration program that—

16 (i) requires participants in the pro-
17 gram to complete at least one year of resi-
18 dency at a high-need school in the local
19 educational agency participating in the eli-
20 gible partnership;

21 (ii) requires participants in the pro-
22 gram to teach in a high-need school in
23 such local educational agency for at least 3
24 years after completing such residency; and

1 (iii) awards a teaching credential, an
2 undergraduate degree, or a Masters degree
3 that meets State requirements for a teach-
4 ing license or certification upon completion
5 of the program.

6 (B) Establish or support a teacher induc-
7 tion and retention program that provides sup-
8 port and advances the retention of beginning
9 teachers and principals during not less than the
10 first 2 years of participation in such program,
11 which promotes effective teaching and leader-
12 ship skills and includes—

13 (i) high-quality mentoring;

14 (ii) periodic, structured time for col-
15 laboration and classroom observation op-
16 portunities with teachers in the same de-
17 partment or field, including mentor teach-
18 ers, as well as time for information-sharing
19 among teachers, principals, administrators,
20 other appropriate educators, and partici-
21 pating faculty in the partner institution of
22 higher education;

23 (iii) the application of empirically
24 based practice and scientifically valid re-
25 search on instructional practices;

1 (iv) opportunities for new teachers
 2 and principals to draw directly on the ex-
 3 pertise of mentors, faculty, local edu-
 4 cational agency personnel, and researchers
 5 to support the integration of empirically
 6 based practice and scientifically valid re-
 7 search with practice;

8 (v) the development of skills in in-
 9 structional and behavioral interventions de-
 10 rived from empirically based practice, and
 11 where applicable, scientifically valid re-
 12 search; and

13 (vi) faculty who—

14 (I) model the integration of re-
 15 search and practice in the classroom;
 16 and

17 (II) assist new teachers and prin-
 18 cipals with the effective use and inte-
 19 gration of technology in instruction.

20 (C) Otherwise fulfill the purposes described
 21 in subsection (b).

22 (2) AUTHORIZED USES.—In addition to the ac-
 23 tivities described in paragraph (1), a partnership
 24 that receives a grant under this section may use the
 25 funds for any of the following:

1 (A) Providing support to each mentor
2 teacher working with new teachers.

3 (B) Providing preparation in effective, evi-
4 dence-based instructional assessment practices
5 and classroom management strategies for gen-
6 eral education teachers serving students with
7 disabilities and students with limited English
8 proficiency.

9 (C) Enabling teachers to engage in study
10 groups, professional learning communities, and
11 other collaborative activities and collegial inter-
12 actions regarding instruction assessment.

13 (D) Paying for release time and substitute
14 teachers in order to enable teachers to partici-
15 pate in professional development and mentoring
16 activities.

17 (E) Creating libraries of professional mate-
18 rial, catalogues of expert instruction, and edu-
19 cation technology.

20 (F) Providing high-quality professional de-
21 velopment for other instructional staff, such as
22 paraprofessionals, librarians, and counselors.

23 (G) Developing partnerships with busi-
24 nesses and community-based organizations.

1 (H) Providing tuition assistance, scholar-
2 ships, or student loan repayment to teachers.

3 (I) Providing stipends or another financial
4 incentive to participants in the teacher prepara-
5 tion program under paragraph (1)(A).

6 (J) Providing support for home visitation,
7 parenting education, and family engagement,
8 especially for parents who have limited English
9 proficiency.

10 (e) REPAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish
11 such requirements as the Secretary determines to be ap-
12 propriate to ensure that each participant of a teacher
13 preparation program under this Act who receives a stipend
14 or other financial incentive as described in subsection
15 (d)(2)(I), but fails to complete the participant’s teaching
16 obligation under subsection (d)(1)(A)(ii), repays all or a
17 portion of such stipend or incentive to the eligible partner-
18 ship that awarded such stipend or incentive.

19 (f) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
20 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible partner-
21 ships that meet the requirements of one of the following
22 paragraphs:

23 (1) Demonstrating—

1 (A) a plan to recruit teachers from among
2 minority and local candidates and from individ-
3 uals with disabilities; and

4 (B) the use of a valid and reliable teacher
5 performance assessment.

6 (2) Meeting the requirements of paragraph
7 (1)(B) and including in the partnership—

8 (A) an institution of higher education that
9 is an “eligible institution” for purposes of the
10 TEACH Grant program under subpart 9 of
11 part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act
12 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070g et seq.);

13 (B) a Tribal College or University, as de-
14 fined in section 316(b)(3) of such Act (20
15 U.S.C. 1059c(b)(3));

16 (C) an Asian American and Native Amer-
17 ican Pacific Islander-serving institution, as de-
18 fined in section 320(b) of such Act (20 U.S.C.
19 1059g(b));

20 (D) a Hispanic-serving institution, as de-
21 fined in section 502(a)(5) of such Act (20
22 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(5)); or

23 (E) a historically Black college and univer-
24 sity, as defined in section 631(a)(5) of such Act
25 (20 U.S.C. 1132(a)(5)).

1 (g) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—

2 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of
3 the cost of any activities funded by a grant received
4 under this section shall not exceed 75 percent.

5 (2) PAYMENT OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The
6 non-Federal share may be paid in cash or in kind,
7 fairly evaluated, including services.

8 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP.—The term “eligi-
10 ble partnership” means a partnership—

11 (A) between a high-need local educational
12 agency and an institution of higher education;
13 and

14 (B) that may include a teacher organiza-
15 tion or a nonprofit educational organization.

16 (2) FAMILY ENGAGEMENT.—The term “family
17 engagement” means a shared responsibility of fami-
18 lies and schools for student success, in which schools
19 and community-based organizations are committed
20 to reaching out to engage families, especially parents
21 of non-Native English speakers, in meaningful ways
22 that encourage the families to actively support their
23 children’s learning and development, as well as the
24 learning and development of other children. The
25 shared responsibility is continuous from birth

1 through young adulthood and reinforces learning
2 that takes place in the home, school, and commu-
3 nity.

4 (3) HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
5 CY.—The term “high-need local educational agency”
6 means a local educational agency—

7 (A)(i) that serves not fewer than 10,000
8 low-income children;

9 (ii) for which not less than 20 percent of
10 the children served by the agency are low-in-
11 come children;

12 (iii) that meets the eligibility requirements
13 for receiving funding under the Small, Rural
14 School Achievement Program under section
15 6211(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
16 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7345(b)) or the
17 Rural and Low-Income School Program under
18 section 6221(b) of such Act (20 U.S.C.
19 7351(b)); or

20 (iv) that has a percentage of low-income
21 children that is in the highest quartile among
22 such agencies in the State; and

23 (B)(i) for which one or more schools served
24 by the agency is persistently low achieving; or

1 (ii) for which one or more schools served
2 by the agency has a high teacher turnover rate.

3 (4) HIGHLY QUALIFIED.—The term “highly
4 qualified” has the meaning given the term in section
5 9101(23) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
6 cation Act (20 U.S.C. 7801(23)). The definition
7 given the term “highly qualified teacher” in section
8 163 of Public Law 111–242 shall not apply with re-
9 spect to this section.

10 (5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
11 term “institution of higher education” has the
12 meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher
13 Education Act of 1965.

14 (6) LOW-INCOME CHILDREN.—The term “low-
15 income children” means—

16 (A) children from families with incomes
17 below the poverty line (as defined by the Office
18 of Management and Budget and revised annu-
19 ally in accordance with section 673(2) of the
20 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981)
21 applicable to a family of the size involved; or

22 (B) children who are eligible for free or re-
23 duced price lunches under the Richard B. Rus-
24 sell National School Lunch Act.

1 (7) MENTOR TEACHER.—The term “mentor
2 teacher” means a teacher who—

3 (A) is highly qualified;

4 (B) has a minimum of 3 years of teaching
5 experience;

6 (C) is recommended by the principal and
7 other current master and mentor teachers on
8 the basis of—

9 (i) instructional excellence through ob-
10 servations and other evidence of classroom
11 practice, including standards-based evalua-
12 tions, such as certification by the National
13 Board for Professional Teaching Stand-
14 ards;

15 (ii) an ability, as demonstrated by evi-
16 dence of student learning in high-need
17 schools, to increase student learning; and

18 (iii) excellent instruction and commu-
19 nication with an understanding of how to
20 facilitate growth in other teachers, includ-
21 ing new teachers; and

22 (D) participates in training and ongoing
23 professional development on how to—

24 (i) help teachers learn to improve stu-
25 dent achievement;

- 1 (ii) help teachers learn to improve in-
2 struction; and
3 (iii) facilitate mentor-to-mentor col-
4 laboration and coaching.

5 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
6 the Secretary of Education.

7 (9) TEACHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—
8 The term “teacher performance assessment” means
9 a program, based on State or national professional
10 teaching standards, that will measure teachers’ cur-
11 riculum planning, instruction, and assessment of
12 students, including appropriate plans and adapta-
13 tions for English language learners and students
14 with disabilities, and multiple sources of evidence
15 about student learning. Such assessment will be vali-
16 dated against professional assessment standards and
17 reliably scored by trained external evaluators with
18 appropriate auditing of scoring to ensure consist-
19 ency.

20 (10) TEACHING CREDENTIAL.—The term
21 “teaching credential” means a program of instruc-
22 tion for individuals who have completed a bacca-
23 laureate degree, that does not lead to a graduate de-
24 gree, and that consists of courses required by a
25 State for a teacher candidate to receive a profes-

- 1 sional certification or license that is required for em-
- 2 ployment as a teacher in an elementary school or
- 3 secondary school in that State.

