

sequences that integrate rigorous academics, work-based learning, and career and technical education;

“(BB) measures of a high-quality and accelerated academic program as determined appropriate by the State, which may include the percentage of students who participate in a State-approved career and technical program of study as described in section 122(c)(1)(A) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 and measures of technical skill attainment and placement described in section 113(b) of such Act and reported by the State in a manner consistent with section 113(c) of such Act, or other substantially similar measures;

“(CC) student performance on assessments aligned with the expectations for first-year postsecondary education success;

“(DD) student performance on admissions tests for postsecondary education;

“(EE) student performance on assessments of career readiness and acquisition of industry-recognized credentials that meet the quality criteria established by the State under section 123(a) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102);

“(FF) student enrollment rates in postsecondary education;

“(GG) measures of student remediation in postsecondary education; and

“(HH) measures of student credit accumulation in postsecondary education;

On page 57, line 14, strike “; and” and insert “, which may include participation and performance in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, and early college high school programs; and”.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 13, the Senate vote on the following amendments, with no second-degree amendments in order to any of the amendments prior to the votes: Hatch amendment No. 2080 and Kaine amendment No. 2118.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from North Dakota.

#### EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I thank Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY for crafting this bipartisan proposal to reform and reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main source of Federal aid for K-through-12 education.

The Every Child Achieves Act takes many important steps to return the authority of K-12 education back to the States and to the local school districts and directly to those who are best equipped to understand and respond to what it takes to educate our students. Importantly, this bill empowers States to develop their own education accountability plans. Instead of a one-size-fits-all Federal mandate, this bill

charges the States to work with teachers, school districts, Governors, parents, and other stakeholders to develop a State-led education plan for all students without interference from Washington.

The bill affirms that the Federal Government cannot dictate a State's specific academic standards, curriculum or assessment. I repeat. The bill affirms that the Federal Government cannot dictate State-specific academic standards, curriculum or assessments. It affirms local control and accountability while maintaining important achievement information to provide parents with information on how their children are performing as well as to help teachers target support to those who are struggling to meet State standards.

We also recognize that science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—or STEM—education continues to play an increasingly important role in preparing our students for the careers of tomorrow.

In North Dakota, STEM education prepares students to fulfill the workforce needs of our dynamic economy, from the high-tech industries in the east to the energy fields in the west. For example, we have one school district, the West Fargo school district, which has created a STEM center for students in grades 6, 7, and 8, and is doing an exceptional job of integrating STEM teaching into the classroom. This school district program started in 2009 with 150 students in the sixth and seventh grades. Since then, it has been expanded to serve eighth grade students as well. They have also created a STEM pathway program at the high school level. The approach focuses on project-based learning that connects their school work to solving real world problems through the engineering and design process.

When Senator KLOBUCHAR and I visited the school this spring, we witnessed students working hands-on with a wide range of technologies at cooperative lab stations, including drones and flight simulators. West Fargo students have received numerous awards and honors, placing first in the Nation in a lunar water recycling design competition sponsored by NASA to excelling in a number of Web page design and robotics competitions around the country.

This education is not just about teaching students more science, math or engineering. This approach reaches across subjects to promote problem solving, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills.

The Every Child Achieves Act includes a formula grant aimed at providing State resources to improve STEM education. The Improving STEM Instruction and Student Achievement Program provides grants to States to improve STEM instruction, student engagement, and increased student achievement in STEM subjects. Under this program, States have the ability

to award subgrants to projects of their choice to serve high-need school districts or form partnerships with higher education institutions. States can also use these funds to recruit qualified teachers and instructional leaders in STEM subjects or to develop a STEM master teacher corps.

In recent years, North Dakota has chosen to award funds to projects that partner with our State's higher education institutions to provide professional development opportunities for K-12 math and science teachers.

I have worked with Senator KLOBUCHAR to craft amendment No. 2138. Our proposal will give States the option to award those funds to create or enhance a STEM-focused specialty school or a STEM program within a school.

STEM-focused specialty schools or STEM programs within a school are those that engage students in rigorous, relevant, and integrated-learning STEM experiences. Allowing funds to go toward a STEM program within a school will allow successful programs such as those occurring in our State to benefit. It will also encourage other school districts to begin their own programs.

So if a school district would like to better integrate STEM concepts into their teaching practices, this amendment allows those districts to submit a proposal to the State for resources to carry out that plan.

The Klobuchar-Hoeven amendment also requires the Education Secretary to identify STEM-specific needs of States and districts receiving funds and publicize information about those activities. The Secretary is then directed to align Federal STEM activities with State and district needs.

Finally, this amendment directs the U.S. Department of Education to avoid unnecessary duplication of STEM programmatic activities supported by the Department and other Federal agencies. This is important because there are so many disjointed STEM activities and programs throughout our government.

In a May 2015 report, the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service states that despite recent reductions in the number of Federal STEM programs, recent estimates suggest there are still between 105 and 254 STEM programs scattered throughout as many as 15 Federal agencies. These programs account for \$2.8 billion to \$3.4 billion in spending. These programs have their own distinct requirements and obligations that allow very little collaboration or coordination. We simply want to ensure that States and schools are aware of the existing efforts underway to best utilize public resources.

In conclusion, we believe that this bipartisan amendment should be agreeable to both sides and will strengthen the Every Child Achieves Act. In fact, I have just been informed that both the chairman and the ranking member from the HELP Committee and the