

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3397

To establish high-quality dual language immersion programs in low-income communities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 20, 2021

Mr. GRIJALVA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To establish high-quality dual language immersion programs in low-income communities, and for other purposes.

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 “Supporting Young
5 Language Learners’ Access to Bilingual Education Act of
6 2021” or the “SYLLABLE Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

9 (1) The demand for bilingual employees in the
10 United States continues to outpace our supply.

1 (2) Dual language immersion engenders an in-
2 clusive learning environment for all students.

3 (3) Studies have demonstrated that all students
4 in multilanguage immersion programs have higher
5 academic achievement as measured by statewide ex-
6 amination, regardless of socioeconomic status.

7 (4) Dual language immersion has proven to be
8 one of the most effective and longest lasting inter-
9 vention methods for English learners.

10 (5) The Rand Corporation found that long-term
11 participation in dual language immersion programs
12 is correlated with closing or substantial reduction of
13 achievement gaps for historically underserved stu-
14 dents.

15 (6) Few children from low-income families, par-
16 ticularly African-American children, have had access
17 to a well-developed and well-implemented dual lan-
18 guage program.

19 (7) Children in dual language programs experi-
20 ence substantial gains in language, literacy, and
21 mathematics.

22 **SEC. 3. DUAL LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP GRANTS.**

23 (a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are as
24 follows:

1 (1) To provide incentives for local educational
2 agencies to develop innovative strategies for planning
3 and implementing dual language immersion pro-
4 grams serving children from low-income families, in-
5 cluding English learners and minority children.

6 (2) To improve the school readiness of children
7 from low-income families, including English learners
8 and minority children, and to ensure they enter
9 school ready to succeed.

10 (3) To provide consistent support for learning
11 through high-quality dual language programs from
12 preschool through the fifth grade.

13 (4) To authorize the Secretary to carry out
14 projects to enhance the multiliteracy and bilin-
15 gualism skills for children from low-income families,
16 including English learners and minority children,
17 through the use and longitudinal evaluation of dual
18 language programs beginning in preschool through
19 the fifth grade.

20 (b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From funds made
21 available under subsection (i), and after reserving funds
22 under subsection (c), the Secretary is authorized to award
23 not more than five grants to fund programs proposed by
24 eligible entities to demonstrate effective strategies in en-
25 suring the academic success of students from low-income

1 families, including English learners and minority students,
2 through the implementation and evaluation of high-quality
3 multilanguage programs that—

4 (1) serve children in high-need schools, includ-
5 ing English learners and minority children, from
6 preschool through fifth grade;

7 (2) establish an infrastructure that supports
8 programs through a rigorous assessment system,
9 dedicated staff time, professional development in as-
10 sessment, a data collection plan, and the collection
11 of multiple measures of academic progress, bilin-
12 gualism, and multiliteracy;

13 (3) implement and align a curriculum that pro-
14 motes the development of bilingual and multiliterate
15 competencies for all students through at least grade
16 five;

17 (4) utilize and align student-centered instruc-
18 tional methods that enhance the development of bi-
19 lingualism, multiliteracy, and academic achievement;

20 (5) align professional development and training
21 for early childhood education instructors and ele-
22 mentary school teachers and staff, with an emphasis
23 on dual language instruction, second language acqui-
24 sition, and content knowledge;

1 (6) recruit, train, and continuously develop staff
2 to implement high-quality, dual language immersion
3 programs; and

4 (7) establish a responsive infrastructure for
5 positive, active, and ongoing relationships with stu-
6 dents' families and the community that responds to
7 and is reflective of the needs of the community and
8 goals of the program.

9 (c) RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall reserve not
10 more than 5 percent of the amount appropriated under
11 subsection (i) to carry out this Act, including the technical
12 assistance and evaluation described in subsection (g) and
13 dissemination of best practices described in subsection (h).

14 (d) DURATION.—Each grant under this section shall
15 be awarded for a period of not more than five years.

16 (e) APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible entity desiring
18 a grant under this section shall submit an applica-
19 tion to the Secretary at such time and in such man-
20 ner as the Secretary may require.

21 (2) REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION.—Each appli-
22 cation submitted by an eligible entity under this sec-
23 tion for proposed programs shall include documenta-
24 tion that—

1 (A) the eligible entity has partnered with a
2 technical assistance entity that has proven ex-
3 pertise in the implementation of high-quality
4 dual language programs to provide on-going
5 technical assistance and assist with the evalua-
6 tion of the program;

7 (B) the eligible entity has the qualified
8 personnel to develop, administer, evaluate, and
9 implement the program; and

10 (C) the eligible entity serves children from
11 low-income families, including English learners
12 and minority children.

13 (3) OTHER APPLICATION CONTENTS.—Each ap-
14 plication submitted by an entity under this section
15 for a proposed program shall include—

16 (A) data showing that the program serves
17 children from low-income families, including
18 English learners and minority children;

19 (B) a description of how the program will
20 align the language of assessment with the lan-
21 guage of instruction;

22 (C) a description of how the program will
23 be evaluated to assess the goals of the program;

24 (D) a description, if applicable, of how the
25 evaluation will be used to inform broader efforts

1 to improve instruction for English learners, in-
2 cluding for preschool-aged children;

3 (E) a description of activities that will be
4 pursued by the program including a description
5 of—

6 (i) how the activities will further the
7 school readiness and academic progress of
8 children served by this program and sup-
9 port dual language development through
10 grade five;

11 (ii) methods of designing culturally re-
12 sponsive and linguistically appropriate dual
13 language curriculum; and

14 (iii) methods of teacher professional
15 development and parent outreach that will
16 be used or developed through the pro-
17 grams;

18 (F) an assurance that the program will an-
19 nually provide such information as may be re-
20 quired by the Secretary; and

21 (G) any other information that the Sec-
22 retary may require.

23 (f) SELECTION OF GRANTEES.—The Secretary
24 through a peer review process shall select eligible entities
25 to receive grants under this section based on—

1 (1) the articulation of preschool through fifth
2 grade instructional practices, curriculum, and as-
3 sessments strategies;

4 (2) the extent to which relevant and directly im-
5 pacted school leaders have been involved with the
6 proposed programs and indicated a commitment to
7 carrying out high-quality dual language immersion
8 programs; and

9 (3) the quality of the programs proposed in the
10 applications submitted under subsection (e).

11 (g) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION.—
12 From the amount appropriated under subsection (i) for
13 a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve \$250,000 to con-
14 tract with an eligible entity with a proven track record
15 in dual language immersion programs for the purpose of—

16 (1) providing technical assistance to local edu-
17 cational agencies receiving grants under this Act in
18 order to strengthen programs conducted by grantees
19 pursuant to this Act; and

20 (2) conducting an evaluation of programs fund-
21 ed under this Act, which shall—

22 (A) be used by the Secretary to determine
23 the effectiveness of programs funded through
24 this Act and improve services to participating
25 children; and

1 (B) include—

2 (i) a comprehensive evaluation of the
3 impact of the programs on students, in-
4 cluding an assessment of literacy skills and
5 language development in both English and
6 the primary home language;

7 (ii) a comprehensive evaluation of the
8 effectiveness of instructional practices used
9 in the programs; and

10 (iii) a comprehensive evaluation of
11 professional development strategies.

12 (h) DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICES.—The Sec-
13 retary shall disseminate information on model programs,
14 materials, and other information developed under this sec-
15 tion that the Secretary determines to be appropriate for
16 use by early childhood education providers to improve the
17 school readiness of English learners.

18 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
19 purposes of carrying out this section, there are authorized
20 to be appropriated \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 and
21 such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 suc-
22 ceeding fiscal years.

23 (j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM.—

2 The term “dual language immersion program”
3 means an instructional strategy in which students—

4 (A) are taught literacy and content in
5 English and a partner language;

6 (B) use the partner language for at least
7 half of the instructional day; and

8 (C) foster bilingualism, multiliteracy, en-
9 hanced awareness of linguistic and cultural di-
10 versity, and high levels of academic achievement
11 through instruction in English and a partner
12 language.

13 (2) EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PRO-
14 GRAM.—The term “early childhood education pro-
15 gram” includes a State-funded preschool program
16 and a Head Start program.

17 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
18 ty” means a partnership between—

19 (A) at least one local educational agency;

20 (B) at least one early childhood education
21 program; and

22 (C) at least one technical assistance entity.

23 (4) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term “English
24 learner” has the meaning given the term in section

1 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
2 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

3 (5) HIGH-NEED SCHOOL.—The term “high-need
4 school” has the meaning given the term in section
5 2221(b)(3)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary
6 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6641(b)(3)(A)).

7 (6) LOW-INCOME FAMILY.—The term “low-in-
8 come family” has the meaning given the term in sec-
9 tion 2221(b)(3)(B) of the Elementary and Sec-
10 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
11 6641(b)(3)(B)).

12 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
13 the Secretary of Education.

14 (8) STATE-FUNDED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM.—
15 The term “State-funded preschool program” means
16 a program that—

17 (A) serves children who are ages 3 through
18 5;

19 (B) has a primary focus of supporting
20 early childhood education, including supporting
21 children’s cognitive, social, emotional, and phys-
22 ical development and approaches to learning;

23 (C) helps prepare children for a successful
24 transition to kindergarten;

1 (D) is either a public school- or commu-
2 nity-based program; and

3 (E) is funded either in whole or in part by
4 a State through a State agency with authority
5 to promulgate regulations and monitor partici-
6 pating programs.

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