

# 118th CONGRESS

## 1st Session

### A BILL

To strengthen public education in the United States through universal access, accountability, equity, and transparency, and for other purposes.

**Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,**

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “**Public Education Revitalization and Accountability Act of 2025.**”

### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act:

1. **Local educational agency (LEA).**—The term has the meaning given in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).
2. **State educational agency (SEA).**—The term has the meaning given in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
3. **High-need school.**—A public school in which not less than 50 percent of enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.).
4. **Receivership.**—Temporary operational control of an LEA by a federally appointed receiver pursuant to section 12(d).
5. **Equivalent private-sector profession.**—An occupation requiring comparable education, certification, and responsibility as teaching, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
6. **Pathway.**—A defined sequence of coursework leading to a high school diploma under section 5.
7. **Non-exclusive course.**—Any course available to students across multiple pathways.
8. **Digital literacy.**—The ability to use digital technology, communication tools, and networks to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information safely and responsibly.
9. **Data breach.**—Any unauthorized acquisition of personally identifiable student information maintained by an LEA or vendor.

10. **À la carte item.**—Any food or beverage offered for sale outside the federally reimbursable meal program.

## SEC. 3. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

Congress finds:

1. The United States must restore global leadership in education by strengthening public schools.
2. Federal education funds are most effective when directed to public schools that serve all students without exclusion.
3. Students require multiple, flexible pathways to graduation that reflect diverse talents and aspirations.
4. Accountability in teaching requires transparent evaluation of instructional methods, not punitive grading curves.
5. Parents and families are essential partners in evaluating and improving the educational environment.
6. Teacher compensation must be fair, transparent, and competitive with equivalent private-sector professions.
7. All public schools must be equally and adequately equipped to provide high-quality education, regardless of geography or local wealth.
8. Hunger undermines learning; no child should be denied access to nutritionally complete meals in school.

## SEC. 4. FEDERAL FUNDING RESTRICTIONS.

(a) **Exclusive Use for Public Schools.**—As a condition of receiving funds under this Act, federal funds appropriated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), or any other federal education program shall be used exclusively for public elementary and secondary schools operated by LEAs.

(b) **Clarification.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict the rights of parents to choose private, charter, or religious education for their children; however, such schools shall not be eligible to receive direct federal education funds.

## SEC. 5. GRADE-LEVEL PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT.

(a) **Retention.**—As a condition of receiving funds under this Act, an LEA shall not promote a student who fails to demonstrate grade-level proficiency, as determined by state academic standards under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

(b) **Remediation.**—LEAs shall provide targeted remediation, tutoring, and instructional support to retained students.

(c) **Protections.**—Nothing in this section shall limit the rights of students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(d) **Due Process.**—Parents shall receive written notice of retention decisions, an individualized remediation plan, and the right to appeal to an SEA review panel.

(e) **Civil Rights Monitoring.**—The Secretary shall monitor retention data disaggregated by subgroup; disproportionate impacts shall trigger corrective action plans.

## **SEC. 6. MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION.**

(a) **Establishment.**—Each SEA shall provide at least three distinct graduation pathways:

1. Academic Pathway;
2. Technical Pathway;
3. Artistic Pathway.

(b) **Equivalency.**—All pathways shall result in a high school diploma of equal legal standing.

(c) **Flexibility.**—Students may switch pathways at any time upon recommendation of teachers, counselors, or parents, or upon the student’s own request, provided that credit portability is ensured through statewide equivalency matrices.

(d) **Non-Exclusivity of Courses.**—No course of study shall be restricted to a single pathway.

(e) **Counseling Support.**—LEAs shall provide counseling to ensure pathway changes do not delay graduation.

## **SEC. 7. QUARTERLY STANDARDIZED TESTING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION.**

(a) **Requirement.**—As a condition of receiving funds under this Act, each LEA shall administer quarterly standardized assessments.

(b) **Purpose.**—Assessments shall be used exclusively to evaluate instructional methods, curricula, and teacher effectiveness, and shall not be used to penalize or rank students.

(c) **Testing Time Limits.**—No student shall be required to spend more than 2 percent of instructional time annually on standardized testing under this section.

(d) **Alternative Measures.**—LEAs may use validated formative or performance-based assessments in lieu of standardized tests, subject to approval by the SEA and the Secretary.

(e) **Bias Review.**—All assessments shall undergo independent validation and bias review.

## **SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON CURVED GRADING.**

No public elementary or secondary school receiving federal funds under this Act shall employ grading practices that require a fixed percentage of students to fail or succeed irrespective of mastery.

## **SEC. 9. 360-DEGREE STUDENT-TEACHER REVIEW.**

- (a) **Establishment.**—Each LEA shall implement a 360-degree review system whereby students, teachers, administrators, and parents provide structured feedback on classroom instruction and learning environment.
- (b) **Parental Role.**—Parental feedback shall be given equal weight to student and teacher feedback.
- (c) **Transparency.**—Results shall be anonymized and made publicly available in aggregate form.
- (d) **Complaint Handling.**—LEAs shall establish timelines for responding to parental complaints and shall document the evidence basis for decisions.

## **SEC. 10. FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN TEACHER COMPENSATION.**

- (a) **Market Alignment.**—Teacher salaries shall be benchmarked against equivalent private-sector professions requiring comparable education, certification, and responsibility, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- (b) **Transparency.**—Each LEA shall publish annual reports detailing teacher pay scales, adjustments, and comparisons to private-sector benchmarks.
- (c) **Equity.**—No LEA shall disproportionately underfund teacher salaries in high-need or rural districts.
- (d) **Collective Bargaining.**—Nothing in this section shall abrogate existing collective bargaining agreements; however, future agreements shall incorporate market-aligned benchmarks.
- (e) **Mediation.**—The Secretary shall establish a mediation process for disputes between LEAs and bargaining units regarding compliance with this section.

## **SEC. 11. EQUITY IN SCHOOL RESOURCES.**

- (a) **Minimum Standards.**—The Secretary shall establish national minimum standards for school facilities, technology, instructional materials, and extracurricular opportunities within 12 months of enactment.
- (b) **Resource Parity.**—Federal funds shall be distributed to ensure that all public schools, regardless of location or local property tax base, meet or exceed these minimum standards.
- (c) **Maintenance of Equity.**—No LEA shall reduce per-pupil expenditures in high-need schools at a greater rate than in other schools within the district.

(d) **Phased Implementation.**—LEAs shall achieve compliance with minimum standards within 7 years of enactment, with milestone targets at years 3 and 5.

## **SEC. 12. ENFORCEMENT AND OVERSIGHT.**

(a) **Office of Public Education Accountability (OPEA).**—There is established within the Department of Education an Office of Public Education Accountability to oversee compliance with this Act.

(b) **Audits.**—The OPEA shall conduct annual audits of LEAs receiving federal funds.

(c) **Corrective Action.**—LEAs found in violation shall be subject to corrective action plans, with technical assistance provided by the Department of Education.

(d) **Federal Receivership for Persistent Non-Compliance.**—

1. If an LEA fails to comply with this Act for two consecutive years, the Secretary of Education may petition the appropriate United States district court for appointment of a federal receiver.
2. **Due Process.**—Prior to receivership, the LEA shall receive notice, an opportunity for a hearing, and the right to present evidence.
3. **Scope.**—The receiver shall assume operational control of the LEA only for the limited purpose of bringing the district into compliance with this Act.
4. **Judicial Review.**—Receivership orders shall be subject to periodic judicial review every 12 months.
5. **Exit.**—Receivership shall terminate once the LEA demonstrates full compliance for two consecutive academic years.

(e) **Whistleblower Protections.**—Teachers, parents, or administrators who report violations shall be protected from retaliation under 5 U.S.C. § 2302.

(f) **Public Reporting.**—The OPEA shall publish an annual national compliance report, disaggregated by state and LEA, available to the public online.

## **SEC. 13. UNIVERSAL NUTRITIONALLY COMPLETE SCHOOL MEALS.**

(a) **Universal Access by Default.**—All public schools shall provide nutritionally complete breakfast and lunch, at no cost to all students, automatically and without the need for registration, application, or enrollment.

(b) **Nutritional Standards.**—Meals shall conform to USDA standards, prevent both undernutrition and overnutrition, and include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

(c) **Optional À La Carte Items.**—Schools may offer additional food items for purchase at cost, with revenues used exclusively to support the meal program.

- (d) **Allergy and Cultural Protocols.**—LEAs shall provide medically necessary substitutions and culturally appropriate meal options.
- (e) **Stigma Elimination.**—No student shall be identified or separated based on participation, since all students are automatically included.
- (f) **Oversight.**—The OPEA shall audit compliance with this section.

## **SEC. 14. TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

- (a) **Professional Learning Plans.**—Each SEA and LEA shall adopt annual professional learning plans that are job-embedded, evidence-based, and aligned to instructional improvement goals.
- (b) **Mentorship and Induction.**—LEAs shall implement mentorship programs pairing novice teachers with trained mentors for at least two academic years.
- (c) **Micro-Credentialing.**—The Secretary shall recognize educator micro-credentials in high-need competencies, with compensation differentials for completion.
- (d) **Paid Time and Access.**—LEAs shall provide paid professional development days, substitute coverage, and access to training materials without educator cost.
- (e) **Evaluation.**—Professional development shall be evaluated for instructional impact and student mastery gains, with aggregate results published.

## **SEC. 15. TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LITERACY.**

- (a) **Minimum Technology Standards.**—The Secretary shall establish minimum standards for student devices, classroom technology, and secure broadband connectivity within 12 months of enactment.
- (b) **Universal Connectivity.**—LEAs shall ensure secure, content-appropriate broadband access on campus, with off-campus access supports for students lacking home connectivity.
- (c) **Digital and Media Literacy Curriculum.**—SEAs shall integrate standards for digital citizenship, media literacy, cybersecurity hygiene, data privacy, coding fundamentals, and AI literacy into K–12 curricula.
- (d) **Privacy and Safety.**—LEAs shall prohibit commercial tracking and targeted advertising on school-issued devices and platforms.
- (e) **Accessibility.**—All digital content and platforms shall meet accessibility standards.
- (f) **Procurement and Sustainability.**—Devices and platforms shall comply with Buy American preferences, repairability standards, and e-waste recycling requirements.

## SEC. 16. STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND COUNSELING.

- (a) **Staffing Ratios.**—LEAs shall achieve, within five years, counselor-to-student ratios not to exceed 1:250 and school psychologist-to-student ratios not to exceed 1:500.
- (b) **Comprehensive Services.**—LEAs shall provide access to licensed mental health professionals, trauma-informed practices, suicide prevention programming, and crisis response protocols.
- (c) **Screening and Referrals.**—LEAs may implement universal, developmentally appropriate mental health screening with parental notification and opt-out; findings shall trigger timely referrals.
- (d) **Confidentiality.**—All services and records shall comply with FERPA and HIPAA where applicable.
- (e) **Telehealth.**—LEAs may utilize secure telehealth services to expand access, subject to state licensure and privacy requirements.

## SEC. 17. CURRICULUM INTEGRITY AND PARENTAL INPUT.

- (a) **Parental Partnership.**—Parents shall be recognized as essential partners in their children’s education and shall have a structured avenue to provide input on curricula, instructional materials, and classroom practices.
- (b) **Public Transparency.**—LEAs shall publish curricula, syllabi, and core instructional materials online before each academic year and within 30 days of any substantive change.
- (c) **Fact-Based Instruction.**—LEAs shall ensure instruction is consistent with established facts derived from the scientific consensus and the documented historical record. Demonstrably false claims shall not be taught as factual content.
- (d) **Review Process.**—SEAs shall establish curriculum review panels comprising educators, subject-matter experts, and parent representatives to adjudicate disputes. Panel decisions shall be guided by evidence, standards, and student learning objectives, and published with rationales.
- (e) **Respect for Diverse Beliefs.**—This section shall not restrict the discussion of religious or personal beliefs in appropriate contexts, provided such beliefs are not presented as scientific or historical fact within required academic standards.
- (f) **Weighting of Input.**—Parental input shall be formally considered and recorded, and its adoption shall be contingent on alignment with evidence-based standards and student welfare.

## SEC. 18. AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.

- (a) **Authorization.**—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2035.
- (b) **Formula Adjustments.**—The Secretary shall revise Title I and Title II funding formulas under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to:

1. Weight allocations toward high-need districts, rural districts, and districts under receivership;
2. Ensure equitable per-pupil funding across states, adjusted for cost of living;
3. Provide dedicated set-asides for technology, mental health, professional development, and facilities modernization.

(c) **Phased Implementation.**—Funding shall be distributed with phased timelines:

- Devices: full compliance within 3 years;
- Mental health staffing ratios: 5 years;
- Facilities modernization: 7 years.

## **SEC. 19. ALIGNMENT WITH THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESSA).**

(a) **Title I Amendments.**—Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) is amended to incorporate:

1. Grade-level proficiency requirements under section 5 of this Act;
2. Quarterly instructional assessments under section 7;
3. Equity audits and dashboards under section 20.

(b) **Title II Amendments.**—Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is amended to incorporate professional development requirements under section 14.

(c) **Title IV Amendments.**—Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is amended to incorporate:

1. Technology and digital literacy mandates under section 15;
2. Student mental health supports under section 16;
3. Universal meal provisions under section 13.

## **SEC. 20. ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS AND DASHBOARDS.**

(a) **Indicators.**—The Secretary shall establish national indicators for:

1. Instructional quality and student mastery;
2. Teacher compensation equity;
3. Resource parity across schools;
4. Student mental health access;
5. Digital literacy proficiency.

(b) **Dashboards.**—Each LEA shall publish an online dashboard with disaggregated data by student subgroup, updated quarterly.

(c) **Public Access.**—Dashboards shall be accessible to the public without login or registration requirements.

## **SEC. 21. STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AND GOVERNANCE.**

(a) **Consent.**—Parental consent shall be required for collection of personally identifiable student data beyond instructional use.

(b) **Minimization.**—Only data strictly necessary for educational purposes may be collected.

(c) **Retention.**—Student data shall be deleted within one year of graduation or withdrawal, unless otherwise required by law.

(d) **Vendor Contracts.**—All third-party vendors must comply with federal student privacy standards; contracts shall prohibit sale or secondary use of data.

(e) **Breach Reporting.**—LEAs must notify parents within 30 days of any data breach.

(f) **Independent Audits.**—The OPEA shall conduct biennial audits of data practices.

(g) **Data Protection Officers.**—Each LEA shall designate a Data Protection Officer responsible for compliance, breach drills, and vendor oversight.

(h) **Advertising Ban.**—Behavioral advertising and commercial tracking on school-issued devices and platforms are prohibited.

## **SEC. 22. TEACHER PIPELINE AND RETENTION.**

(a) **Scholarships and Residencies.**—The Secretary shall fund teacher preparation scholarships and paid residencies in high-need districts.

(b) **Loan Forgiveness.**—Teachers serving five consecutive years in high-need schools shall be eligible for full federal student loan forgiveness.

(c) **Housing Stipends.**—LEAs may provide housing stipends or assistance in high-cost areas.

(d) **Reciprocity.**—States shall recognize out-of-state teaching credentials to reduce barriers to mobility.

## **SEC. 23. SUPPORTS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS.**

(a) **English Learners.**—Dedicated funding shall support bilingual educators, dual-language programs, and translation services.

(b) **Gifted Students.**—LEAs shall provide advanced coursework and enrichment opportunities.

(c) **Homeless and Foster Youth.**—LEAs shall ensure immediate enrollment, transportation, and wraparound supports for homeless and foster youth.

(d) **Civil Rights Monitoring.**—The Secretary shall monitor outcomes for these populations and require corrective action where disparities exist.

## **SEC. 24. SCHOOL SAFETY AND CLIMATE.**

(a) **Evidence-Based Practices.**—LEAs shall implement restorative justice, anti-bullying programs, and trauma-informed discipline.

(b) **Civil Rights Protections.**—Discipline policies shall be bias-free and consistent with federal civil rights law.

(c) **Facilities Safety.**—LEAs shall maintain safe, accessible, and hazard-free facilities, subject to OPEA inspection.

## **SEC. 25. TRANSPORTATION AND FACILITIES MODERNIZATION.**

(a) **Transportation.**—Federal funds under this Act may be used to support safe, reliable, and environmentally sustainable student transportation, including electric or low-emission buses.

(b) **Facilities Modernization.**—The Secretary shall establish a capital improvement grant program for HVAC upgrades, water quality improvements, accessibility retrofits, and modernization of school buildings.

(c) **Phased Implementation.**—LEAs shall achieve compliance with modernization standards within 7 years of enactment, with milestone targets at years 3 and 5.

## **SEC. 26. COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND WRAPAROUND SERVICES.**

(a) **Community School Model.**—LEAs may establish schools that integrate health, social services, after-school programs, and family engagement.

(b) **Partnerships.**—Federal funds may be used to partner with local nonprofits, health providers, and workforce agencies.

(c) **Evaluation.**—The Secretary shall evaluate the impact of community schools on student outcomes and publish findings biennially.

## **SEC. 27. RESEARCH, PILOTS, AND REAUTHORIZATION.**

(a) **Pilot Programs.**—The Secretary may authorize pilot programs to test innovative instructional models, assessment systems, or pathway structures.

(b) **Longitudinal Studies.**—The Institute of Education Sciences shall conduct long-term studies on the impact of retention, pathways, receivership, and universal meals.

(c) **Reauthorization.**—This Act shall be subject to congressional reauthorization every 10 years, with independent evaluation reports submitted to Congress.

## **SEC. 28. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND COMPENSATION.**

(a) **Respect for Agreements.**—Nothing in this Act shall abrogate existing collective bargaining agreements.

(b) **Alignment.**—Future agreements shall incorporate market-aligned compensation benchmarks under section 10.

(c) **Mediation and Arbitration.**—The Secretary shall establish a mediation and binding arbitration process for conflicts between LEAs and bargaining units regarding compliance with this Act.

## **SEC. 29. CHARTER SCHOOL STATUS.**

(a) **District-Authorized Charters.**—Charter schools directly authorized and operated by LEAs shall be treated as public schools for purposes of this Act.

(b) **Independent Charters.**—Charter schools not under LEA control shall not be eligible for federal funds under this Act, except as otherwise provided under separate federal law.

(c) **Transparency.**—Any charter school receiving federal funds under other statutes shall comply with transparency and accountability requirements equivalent to those imposed on LEAs under this Act.

## **SEC. 30. STATE FLEXIBILITY AND WAIVERS.**

(a) **Innovative Waivers.**—The Secretary may grant waivers to SEAs or LEAs to pilot alternative approaches, provided they:

1. Demonstrate equal or greater equity and accountability;
2. Include independent evaluation;
3. Sunset within five years unless reauthorized.

(b) **Guardrails.**—Waivers shall not exempt compliance with civil rights, student safety, or nutritional standards.

## **SEC. 31. RULEMAKING AND DEADLINES.**

(a) **Rulemaking.**—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations to implement this Act within 365 days of enactment.

(b) **Interim Guidance.**—Within 180 days, the Secretary shall issue interim guidance to SEAs and LEAs.

(c) **Default Standards.**—If deadlines are missed, interim standards published by the Secretary shall remain in effect until final regulations are issued.

## **SEC. 32. SEVERABILITY; EFFECTIVE DATE.**

(a) **Severability.**—If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of the Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

(b) **Effective Date.**—This Act shall take effect beginning with the first fiscal year after enactment.

## **SEC. 33. INTERAGENCY EDUCATION COORDINATION COUNCIL.**

(a) **Establishment.**—There is established an **Interagency Education Coordination Council** (hereinafter “the Council”) to ensure cross-agency alignment in implementing this Act.

(b) **Membership.**—The Council shall include:

1. The Secretary of Education (Chair);
2. The Secretary of Agriculture;
3. The Secretary of Health and Human Services;
4. The Chair of the Federal Communications Commission;
5. The Chair of the Federal Trade Commission;
6. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
7. Such other federal officials as the President may designate.

(c) **Duties.**—The Council shall:

1. Issue joint guidance within 180 days of enactment on nutrition, broadband, mental health, privacy, and facilities modernization standards under this Act;
2. Coordinate funding streams to prevent duplication and ensure efficient use of federal resources;
3. Establish shared data standards and reporting formats for LEAs and SEAs;
4. Publish an annual interagency implementation report to Congress and the public;
5. Convene quarterly meetings with state and local representatives for feedback.

(d) **Transparency.**—All Council reports, guidance, and meeting minutes shall be made publicly available online.

(e) **Termination.**—The Council shall remain in effect for the duration of this Act and may be reauthorized by Congress at reauthorization under section 27(c).