

U.S. CONGRESSMAN JARED POLIS (D-CO)

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THE GREAT TEACHING FOR GREAT SCHOOLS ACT

While many factors affect student learning, studies show that teacher and school administrator quality rank first and second among school-related factors influencing student achievement. Peer learning, mentoring and continuous, high quality professional development have all been found to improve instruction, which is the key to ensuring that every child attends an excellent school.

Regrettably, the average American teacher receives only 14 to 16 hours of professional development per year. Research shows that an average of nearly 50 hours boosted student achievement by approximately 21 percentile points while less than 14 hours showed no statistically significant effect on student learning. There is a large, unmet need for new investments in targeted resources that will help teachers and administrators become more effective so students can achieve at higher levels.

THE GREAT TEACHING FOR GREAT SCHOOLS ACT WOULD:

OFFER NEW RESOURCES TO SUPPORT GREAT TEACHING. The bill provides \$500 million of targeted resources annually to high-need local education agencies and schools to improve the quality of teacher, principal, and other instructional staff through comprehensive, school-wide system of professional development.

ENSURE EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. The bill would advance a new definition of professional development in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that is based on research and best practices and that is aligned with student learning goals.

PROMOTE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS. The bill enables educators to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement that includes: analyzing student, school and teacher performance data; determining learning plans; designing joint lessons that employ evidence-based strategies; providing structured mentoring and coaching to support improvement of classroom instruction and application of new learning; and, assessing the effectiveness of educator learning.

STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATOR LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOLS. The bill helps school districts increase principals' knowledge and skills in establishing a shared vision of school success among all school stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community organizations; establishing the school as a professional learning community; and promoting the effective use of data by educators.

DIRECT INVESTMENTS TO SCHOOLS NEEDING THE MOST HELP. The bill focuses resources on the schools with the greatest need of improvement by awarding grants to states via Title I formula and then competitively to high-need school districts, with priority given to districts with high percentages of low-income students and high school graduation rates of less than 65 percent.

FIND BEST PRACTICES BASED ON RESEARCH. The bill evaluates the impact of professional learning on teachers' instructional practice, retention and effectiveness, and on students' learning gains, graduation and college readiness rates, and attendance rates. The evaluation must also ensure that coaches, teachers, and schools are using data to inform instructional practices and that the professional development is integrated and aligned with the state's school improvement efforts.

Original Cosponsors: Rep. John Conyers (MI-14), Rep. Raul Grijalva (AZ- 07), Rep. Laura Richardson (CA-37), Rep. Donald Payne (NJ-10), Rep. Russ Carnahan (MO-03)