

GREAT Teachers and Principals Act

Senator Michael F. Bennet

Senator Lamar Alexander

Senator Barbara Mikulski

Senator Mary Landrieu

Senator Mark Kirk

Quality Teachers and Principals Matter

Nothing makes a bigger difference to learning than great teaching. And a great principal is critical to supporting great teaching. However, our current system for training and supporting teachers and principals, especially to teach in high-need schools, is falling short. We lose nearly half of teachers in the first five years of the profession, and the majority of teachers that enter the classroom feel their preparation left them woefully unprepared to meet the challenges they face.

Meeting Our Nation's Need for Quality Teachers and Principals

The Growing Excellent Achievement Training Academies (GREAT) Teachers and Principals Act would create new and more effective avenues for the preparation of great teachers and principals, by harnessing the power of innovation.

The bipartisan bill supports the growth of new kinds of teacher and principal training academies. Academies would receive federal resources directly through participating states. The academies are defined by key characteristics:

- Rigorous selection in admissions to get the best and brightest into the schools where they are needed most
- Emphasis on clinical instruction in preparing teacher and principal candidates
- Graduation tied to improving student academic achievement. Programs that fail to produce great teachers or principals will be not be reauthorized.

In return for accepting this accountability, academies will be free from burdensome, input-based regulations that are unrelated to student achievement.

Emphasis on Results

To prepare our teachers and leaders for success in the classroom, academies will:

- Limit admission to candidates who demonstrate strong potential to be effective teachers or principals, based on prior academic performance or professional experience
- Provide their candidates with significant hands-on, clinical instruction to prepare them to teach in the classroom, and to lead great schools
- Promise to produce a minimum number of effective teachers or principals within a defined period of time, as set forth in each academy's charter

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- Ensure that candidates will graduate from these academies only *after* demonstrating a track record of success in improving student achievement
 - Focus on preparing teachers for success in high-need schools and shortage areas
 - Survey academy alumni periodically to track the number serving as teachers or principals, or in education

Voluntary State Participation

States that choose to participate will establish state authorizers responsible for approving and overseeing these academies. The authorizers will ensure that the academies are held accountable for producing the results they promise. If the academies do not meet high standards, they will not be reauthorized. A priority will be placed on awarding grants to existing programs with a demonstrated record of success.

Evidence

The evidence that we need to do a better job of preparing teachers and principals is overwhelming.

- Three years of good teaching can mean as much as a 53 percentile-point difference in student academic achievement as compared with ineffective teaching.
- The skill gap is one that disproportionately hurts low-income and minority students. Yet a leading study of 28 educational schools revealed that more than 60 percent of alumni said that they were not adequately prepared for the classroom