

Strength in Diversity Act of 2022 (Section-by-Section)

Sponsored by: Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) and Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA)

Section 1 – Short title

This Act is called the “The Strength in Diversity Act of 2022.”

Section 2 – Purpose

This section provides that the purpose of the Strength in Diversity Act of 2022 is to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of strategies to address the effects of racial isolation or concentrated poverty by increasing racial and socioeconomic diversity in public schools.

Section 3 – Reservation for National Activities and State Activities

This section allows the Secretary of Education to set aside no more than 5 percent of funding for national activities. The national activities include: research, development, data collection, monitoring, technical assistance, evaluation, dissemination activities, and development and maintenance of best practices on school diversity. This section also allows the Secretary to reserve no more than 10 percent of funding for grants to State educational agencies.

Section 4 – Grant Program Authorized

This section provides detail on the two types of grants; planning and implementation, criteria for evaluating applications, award priority, and duration of grants, which will encompass one year for a planning grant and three years for an implementation grant. Implementation grants can be extended for an additional two years. This section also establishes criteria to prioritize grant awards, including a priority for applicants that applied for the Opening Doors, Expanding Opportunity grant program and a priority for entities that address racial isolation in public schools.

Section 5 – Applications

This section provides information for grant application submissions to the Secretary of Education. Application requirements include a description of the program, how the grant will be used, outreach to parents and students in a language that parents and students can understand, consultation with students and families in the district or region targeted for diversity improvement efforts, and how the eligible entity will identify and define racial isolation and income level and socioeconomic status.

Section 6 – Uses of Funds

This section specifies further detail on planning and implementation grants. Planning grants will complete a comprehensive assessment of the geographic area served and develop a robust family, student, and community engagement plan. Implementation grants will apply a high-quality plan that includes a comprehensive set of strategies to improve student outcomes, evidence of family and community engagement, goals to increase school diversity, development of innovative and equitable school assignment plans, collection and analysis of data, and a rigorous method of evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. Implementation grant funding can be used to recruit, hire, and train teachers and other innovative activities designed to increase racial and socioeconomic diversity and engagement among students from different, racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Grant funding also supports school districts under a court-ordered school desegregation plan.

Section 7 – Performance Measures

This section provides information on performance measures for the programs and activities carried out through use of the grants. These performance measures include but are not limited to academic performance, school readiness, achievement gaps, graduation rates, reducing school discipline rates, and post-secondary career readiness.

Section 8 – Annual Reports

This section provides that entities that receive a grant will submit a report to the Secretary of Education with a description of the efforts to increase inclusivity and information on the progress of the grant in respect to performance measures and data to support said progress.

Section 9 – Authorization of Appropriations

This section provides that the program is to be funded for fiscal year 2021 and for five succeeding fiscal years.

Section 10 – Definitions

This section provides definitions found within the bill.