

111th Congress

1st Session

H.R. ____

To authorize the establishment of the National Education Leadership Academy to train experienced principals and superintendents to lead transformations of our lowest-performing public schools so as to accomplish key purposes of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

_____, 2009

Mr./Ms. _____ (for him/herself, _____, _____, etc.)

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 “National Education Leadership Academy Act.”

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to authorize the establishment of the National Education Leadership Academy to train experienced principals, superintendents and senior district officials working together, to lead teams of teacher leaders and other key stakeholders in successful transformations of our lowest-performing public schools so as to accomplish key purposes of Titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, especially academic proficiency for all students and closing the achievement gap. The Academy will greatly enhance our national capacity to transform such schools by gathering in one place the most outstanding leaders of school turnaround, trainers and scholars of transformation. They will distil their diverse experience and expand their knowledge to create a state-of-the-art curriculum and pedagogy, including field placements, to train principals, superintendents and senior district officials to effectively lead, guide and coordinate teams of stakeholders in this critical process. Those same outstanding specialists will then teach this model curriculum to a small number of experienced principals, superintendents and senior staff and mentor them in their turnaround work. After a trial period, the Academy will be brought to scale by having

selected training organizations, partnerships, universities or other qualified entities teach the same transformation curriculum and pedagogy in regional campuses.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) The No Child Left Behind Act has spotlighted that millions of our public school students lack academic proficiency in reading and math. About 85 percent of black and Hispanic students lack “Proficiency” in reading and math at their respective grade levels, as measured by the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress, the “Nation’s Report Card.” About 46 percent of low income students lack even “Basic” skills, or partial mastery, at their grade level in reading and 37 percent of low income students are below “Basic” in math.
- (2) Americans have strong national – not just state and local – economic, political, security and social stability interests in giving all our students the academic knowledge and skills, including higher-order thinking and communications skills, they need to be productive members of our society in the 21st century.
- (3) Our most poorly educated students are disproportionately concentrated in certain chronically low-performing urban, rural and suburban public schools. Indeed, under No Child Left Behind, about 3,500 schools nationwide are now required to go through “restructuring,” with that number projected to increase to about 5,000 schools by 2010.
- (4) In many schools in “restructuring,” and other similar schools, for the students to learn at a high academic level, the expectations, attitudes and practices of principals, teachers, parents and students need to be dramatically changed.
- (5) While it is possible to transform the rigor of the curriculum, the effectiveness of the teaching and the extent of parental and other adult support for student learning, it is difficult and complex to do so.
- (6) The most critical ingredient for turning around the is having skilled leaders capable of leading, guiding and coordinating teams of teacher leaders and other key stakeholders in the complex transformation process.
- (7) Although the United States has some educators with the necessary skills and experience to lead successful school transformations, experts agree that there is a huge gap between the number of such leaders available and the large number of skilled leaders necessary to guide the overhaul of the lowest-performing public schools.

- (8) While various individuals have substantial experience with, and knowledge about, how to conduct successful school turnarounds, their knowledge and experience is fragmented. There is not yet agreement on all principles and practices necessary for the school transformation process to succeed, nor on the best curriculum for preparing individuals to lead it.
- (9) At the same time, our nation has an urgent need to train many individuals how to effectively lead overhauls of the schools in which large percentages of students are persistently learning at a very low level, especially in middle and high schools. Because the greatest need in school turnarounds is to dramatically improve the quality of instruction in the classroom, support for academic learning from home, and the school culture, training needs to concentrate on increasing the capacity of experienced principals, superintendents and senior district officials, working with teams of teacher leaders and other key stakeholders, to bring about these results.
- (10) A highly effective way to train large numbers of such leaders is to assemble in one place – the National Education Leadership Academy - the diverse practitioners who have successfully led such transformations, including principals, superintendents, teachers and community engagement specialists, with the scholars who study this process and trainers in school leadership. Together this faculty will distil, integrate and enrich their experience and knowledge to create a state-of-the-art national model curriculum and pedagogy, including supervised field placements, for most effectively training experienced principals, superintendents and senior staff to lead turnarounds of our lowest-achieving schools. This would include identifying: the key knowledge and skills that such leaders need to have; the expectations, attitudes and practices that need to be changed; and a full range of strategies for implementing the necessary changes, including the pros and cons of each and how to evaluate which strategies are most effective in which situations.
- (11) The faculty will then use its pedagogy to teach the curriculum to selected school leaders. After the Academy’s initial development, the small number of 130 experienced principals, superintendents and senior staff initially trained as transformation leaders needs to be greatly expanded. The Academy will be scaled up to train as many as 1,040 transformation leaders per year by having selected partnerships, universities, training organizations or other qualified entities provide the Academy’s model curriculum and pedagogy in as many as 7 regional campuses around the country.
- (12) The Academy will build on, rather than duplicate, the work of existing private, university, city, state and foundation school administrator preparation programs by bringing these efforts to the next level. It will be the only national academy focusing on training school turnaround leaders and will serve all the states. The Academy will be large scale, training, in all its campuses combined, as many as 1,040 principals, superintendents and senior district officials per year.

The Academy will create and teach a new, state-of-the-art curriculum and pedagogy focused exclusively on how to lead transformations of our lowest-achieving schools, and be governed by an independent, nonpartisan board nominated by stakeholder organizations and selected by the Secretary of Education. It will be funded by a federal/state/philanthropic partnership, and will exist for only about 10 years to meet the country's immediate challenge for turning around our lowest-performing schools.

(13) Creating the Academy will enable the federal government to offer an effective, proportionate and narrowly targeted means for helping states and localities to transform the very schools the government has spotlighted in the No Child Left Behind Act as demanding fundamental improvements: the schools in "restructuring."

(14) Unless many school turnaround leaders can be trained and deployed soon, millions of poor, minority and other students will continue to be deprived of an adequate education. This would impose an immense cost not only on these otherwise promising young people, but on their communities and the nation as a whole.

(15) There is longstanding precedent for the Government to call together far-flung experts to address critical national problems, as with the National Academy of Sciences and the Manhattan Project. The federal government has the prestige to attract top transformation specialists and the financial capacity to fund a national program.

(16) The Academy is urgently required to fill a huge unmet need in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: to provide our lowest-performing schools the skilled leadership capacity essential to being able to effectively transform themselves. The Academy is particularly needed now to provide the trained transformation leaders required to fulfill the Executive's goal of turning around 5,000 of our chronically lowest-achieving public schools. Accordingly, the Academy should be authorized now, under a free-standing law, without waiting potentially years for the reauthorization of that Act.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

There shall be established in the Department of Education the National Education Leadership Academy to carry out the purposes described in section 2.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD

As part of the National Education Leadership Academy, there shall be established the National Education Leadership Academy Governing Board. The Governing Board shall have the power and duty to govern the Academy as described in subsection (g).

(a) Appointment and Composition of Governing Board

The Governing Board shall be appointed by the Secretary of Education and be composed as follows:

- (1) Two Governors, or former Governors, who shall not be members of the same political party.
- (2) Two State legislators, who shall not be members of the same political party.
- (3) Two chief State school officers.
- (4) One member of a local board of education.
- (5) Three superintendents/assistant superintendents of local educational agencies, of whom one shall be from an urban district, one from a rural district, and one from a suburban district.
- (6) Three school principals/assistant principals of whom one shall be from an elementary school, one from a middle school, and one from a high school.
- (7) Three school teachers, of whom one shall be from an elementary school, one from a middle school, and one from a high school.
- (8) One school social worker, psychologist, counselor, nurse, paraprofessional or other school staff member.
- (9) Two current or former principals or superintendents who have successfully led transformations of very low-performing schools or districts.
- (10) Two scholars who closely study the process of such turnarounds.
- (11) Two parents of public school children who are not employed by a local, State or Federal educational agency.
- (12) One representative of business or industry.
- (13) One representative of educational philanthropy.
- (14) Three additional members who are representatives of the general public from various regions.

(b) Director of the National Education Leadership Academy

The Director of the National Education Leadership Academy shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Governing Board.

(c) Independence, Balance and Diversity

In the exercise of their responsibilities, the Academy and the Governing Board shall be independent of the Secretary and the other offices and officers of the Department. The Secretary and the Governing Board shall seek to ensure at all times that the Governing Board exercise their independent judgment objectively,

nonideologically, and free of partisan political influences and special interests and that the membership of the Board reflects regional, racial, gender, and cultural balance and diversity.

(d) Nominations of Board Members

(1) Organizations – The Secretary shall appoint the original members of the Board, as well as fill any Board vacancies, from among individuals who are nominated by organizations representing the type of individuals described in subsection (a) with respect to which the vacancy exists.

(2) Process – Each organization submitting nominations to the Secretary with respect to a particular vacancy shall nominate for such vacancy six individuals who are qualified by experience or training to fill the particular Board vacancy.

(3) Additional Nominations – The Secretary may request that each organization described in subsection (d)(1) submit additional nominations if the Secretary determines that none of the individuals nominated by such organization has appropriate knowledge or expertise, or that none is available.

(e) Terms

(1) In General – Terms of service of members of the Governing Board shall be staggered and shall normally be for four years. Initial terms may be shortened as necessary to implement staggering, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) Service Limitation - Members of the Board may not serve more than two full terms.

(3) Continuation Of Service After Expiration – Any member of the Board whose term has expired may serve until such member's successor has taken office, or until the end of the calendar year in which such member's term has expired, whichever is earlier.

(f) Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Board shall annually elect a chair and vice-chair from among the members of the Board. Chairs and vice-chairs may serve more than one year at a time.

(g) Duties and Powers of the Board

The Governing Board shall have the power and duty to:

- (1) determine all of the policies of the Academy, including the: location of the main campus; number of regional campuses to be established, up to seven; sequence, timing and location for establishing regional campuses, provided that one regional campus shall be in, or near, a rural area; adequacy of proposed campus facilities; and which states constitute each region.
- (2) review and approve the Academy's budget, subject to the availability of appropriations and other funding;
- (3) hire the Academy's Director;
- (4) review and approve the Regional Directors for the regional campuses proposed by the Director;
- (5) approve which training organizations, partnerships, universities or other qualified entities will be retained to operate the regional campuses;
- (6) provide 50 percent of the annual cost of each of as many as seven regional campuses to assist them in broadening the availability of the Academy's training program;
- (7) establish its own rules, procedures and committees;
- (8) and take all other actions as may be necessary to accomplish the purposes and terms of the Act, subject to the powers and responsibilities of the Director in subsection 6(b), the Regional Directors in subsection 6(c) and the faculty in section 11.

(h) Meetings

The Board shall meet not less than *four* times each year. The Board shall hold additional meetings at the call of the Chair or upon written request of not less than 6 voting members of the Board. [Meetings of the Board shall be open to the public.?] [The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply with respect to the Governing Board, other than sections 10, 11 and 12 of such Act.] {check this}

(i) Quorum

A majority of the voting members of the Board serving at the time of the meeting shall constitute a quorum.

(j) Attendance

Members of the Board shall attend not less than 50 percent of all duly convened meetings of the Board in any calendar year. A member who fails to meet the requirement of the preceding sentence shall forfeit membership, and the Board shall appoint a new member to fill such vacancy not later than 30 days after such vacancy is certified by the Chairman of the Board.

(k) Compensation

Members of the Board shall serve without pay for such service. Nor may members of the Board who are officers or employees of the United States receive additional allowances or benefits by reason of their service on the Board.

(l) Travel Expenses

The members of the Board shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with subchapter 1 of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code. {check this}

(m) Status

The members of the Board shall not, by reason of such membership, be deemed to be officers or employees of the United States, provided that a voting member of the Board shall be considered a special Government employee for the purposes of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978. {check this}

SEC. 6. DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, REGIONAL DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, FACULTY AND STAFF

(a) Appointment

The Academy shall have a Director and Regional Directors appointed by the Board. In addition, it shall have such other officers, faculty and staff as may be appointed by the Director, after consultation with the Board, and such officials and staff for the regional campuses as may be appointed by the Regional Directors.

(b) Powers and Duties of the Director

The Director shall be the chief executive officer of the Academy. The Director shall be responsible for: carrying out the Board's policies and decisions; recruiting and recommending proposed Regional Directors to the Board; recruiting and hiring faculty, officers and staff on the main campus; approving hiring of regional campus faculty recommended by the regional directors; entering into contracts with qualified entities approved by the Board to operate the regional campuses; approving and contracting with other providers, as

appropriate; working closely with main campus faculty; seeking non-federal grants for its regional campuses; preparing the main campus' proposed budgets; monitoring and overseeing the operation of the regional campuses to ensure compliance with Board policies and decisions; and taking all other appropriate steps to lead and administer the Academy so that it accomplishes its purposes under section 2.

(c) Powers and Duties of the Regional Directors

Each Regional Director shall be the chief executive officer of that Director's regional campus. The Regional Director shall be responsible for: carrying out the Board's policies and decisions; proposing to the Director faculty for the regional campus; hiring the campus' officers and staff; seeking non-federal grants for the campus; working closely with the operating entity and faculty of the campus; preparing the campus' proposed budget; and taking all other appropriate steps consistent with the contract entered under subsection 14(c) to lead and administer the campus so that it fully promotes the Academy's purposes under section 2.

(d) Compensation

The Director, Regional Directors and other officers, faculty and staff of the Academy shall be compensated at rates of compensation fixed by the Board, provided that the Director shall receive the rate of basic pay for level II of the Executive Schedule. No officer or employee of the Academy may be compensated by the Academy at an annual rate of pay which exceeds the rate of basic pay in effect from time to time for level I [or II?] of the Executive Schedule.

(e) Removal

The Director and Regional Directors shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. Faculty and staff shall be hired for such terms as the Director may determine.

(f) No Political Test

No political test or qualification shall be used in selecting, appointing, promoting, or taking other personnel actions with respect to officers, agents, and employees of the Academy.

SEC. 7. PURPOSE, ACTIVITIES AND POWERS OF ACADEMY

(a) Purpose

The purpose of the Academy shall be as described in section 2.

(b) Powers

In order to carry its purpose, the Academy is authorized to –

1. obtain grants from and make contracts with individuals and with private, State and Federal agencies, organizations, and institutions;
2. hire or accept the voluntary services of consultants, experts, advisory boards, and panels to aid the Academy in carrying out the purposes of this Act;
3. develop model curriculum, pedagogy, types of clinical projects, and relationships with field supervisors and mentors;
4. conduct training, research and demonstrations in matters related to training school transformation leaders;
5. provide to each of as many as seven regional campuses 50 percent of the annual cost of operating such campus;
6. take such other actions as may be necessary to accomplish the purposes set forth in section 2.

Nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed to commit the Federal Government to provide any sums for the payment of any obligation of the Academy which exceeds amounts provided in advance in appropriation Acts.

SEC. 8. SELECTION OF FACULTY

(a) Backgrounds

The Director shall appoint the Academy's faculty from outstanding: (1) school transformation practitioners, including principals, superintendents, teachers and community engagement leaders, either currently employed or retired; (2) knowledgeable and insightful scholars who study the turnaround process; and (3) accomplished administrator educators and other school leadership trainers, as well as similar teacher educators.

(b) Criteria

The Academy will select as faculty on each campus only individuals who: (A) are highly respected in their fields; (B) are committed to collaborating with other Academy faculty and expanding the range of knowledge about school turnaround leadership; (C) are skilled and effective in teaching adults; (D) between them are experienced in, and knowledgeable about, the full range of transformation strategies and research on both school

transformation practices and approaches to training school transformation leaders, nationally and internationally; and (E) come from diverse schools and districts, private training organizations, city academies, universities and state departments of education. In addition, the Academy will select as practitioner faculty only individuals who (A) have, in their respective professional role, successfully led a school transformation and (B) have a high degree of self-awareness as to what they did and why various initiatives were successful or unsuccessful.

(c) Diversity and Practitioner Concentration

The faculty shall reflect racial, ethnic and gender diversity and its majority shall be school – and district – based practitioners.

SEC. 9. FUNCTIONS OF MAIN CAMPUS FACULTY

(a) Model Curriculum

The main campus practitioners, trainers and scholars shall present to, and discuss with, each other their diverse experiences, lessons learned, knowledge gained and research done and seek to develop the best possible curriculum for teaching experienced principals, superintendents and senior staff how to successfully lead teams of teacher leaders and other key stakeholders in transformations of the lowest-performing schools. The curriculum shall explore the full range of strategies used for school turnarounds, both nationally and internationally, evaluate the effectiveness and pros and cons of each and which strategies are most successful in what situations, and shall be intensive, integrated and coherent. The curriculum shall focus on the need for transformation leaders to identify, assemble, and work closely with teams of key stakeholders, including teacher leaders and parents, to respect the roles of all stakeholders and to be flexible over time as schools' structure and organization may change.

The Academy's curriculum shall address the need to change the expectations, attitudes and practices of principals, teachers, parents and students. It shall emphasize how turnaround leaders, including teacher leaders, can best support improving teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills and the importance of transformation leaders continually focusing on providing engaging instruction for all children on a challenging curriculum. It shall focus on how to strengthen parental knowledge to support students' learning at home and how to enlist parental involvement and community help for turnarounds, including how to educate and involve the public in school transformation goals and strategies and engage their support. The curriculum shall include instruction in the culture of the school and the community in which the school is located. And it shall address the best uses of technology. The curriculum shall differentiate content,

where appropriate, to meet the different needs of leaders from elementary, middle and high schools and from urban, rural and suburban areas.

(b) Model Pedagogy

The main campus faculty shall develop the most effective, imaginative, state-of-the-art techniques to teach the curriculum to the trainees. These shall include, where appropriate, techniques that concentrate on active trainee participation in solving real problems encountered in the turnaround process and grouping trainees by geographical areas of their respective districts and grade levels of their respective schools.

(c) Field Projects

The main campus faculty shall identify and develop instructive kinds of projects for principal trainees to work on during their field placement period, and shall arrange with the supervising principals to have principal trainees assigned to such responsibilities to the maximum extent possible. The main campus faculty shall also arrange for principal trainees to work as teams of consultants for other principals currently grappling with the transformation process, and a shorter team consultation for superintendent and senior staff trainees with like superintendents during the academic year.

(d) Other Functions

The main campus faculty shall also be responsible for updating and refining, when and as appropriate, the model curriculum, pedagogy and profiles of field projects, facilitating regional campus faculty's use of instructional materials generated at the main campus, conducting, publishing and presenting papers, studies and research on the Academy's work, and otherwise advancing the Academy's program.

SEC. 10. ACADEMY'S PROGRAM

(a) Overall Components

The Academy's program shall include: intensive coursework; training and assisting teams of experienced principals, superintendents and senior district officials to plan and coordinate transformation for school(s) in each of their respective districts; extended, supervised field placements for principals; having principal trainees periodically go to the schools at which they will be leading transformations to prepare them for the turnaround process; individualized mentoring during and after the initial training period; certification upon successful completion of initial training; post-completion group support sessions; expansion of the availability of the Academy's curriculum through regional campuses; research and dissemination; and evaluation of its effectiveness.

(b) Term and Participants

The Academy's initial training program shall be for one calendar year. Principals shall participate in summer coursework for a minimum of six weeks, followed by a full-time field placement for an entire academic year. During the field placement, all principals will return periodically to the lowest-performing public schools which they will lead upon Academy graduation to prepare for, and, to the extent possible begin, the transformation process. In so doing, they will work closely with the interim principal to enhance that leader's understanding, knowledge, and cooperation in the turnaround process.

In each participating district, the superintendent and a senior district staff member selected by the superintendent shall participate in the summer coursework program for the longest period(s) the Academy finds feasible, based on surveys, focus groups or other appropriate inquiries, but not less than one week for superintendents and three weeks for senior officials.. Participation times shall be selected to maximize the opportunity for principals, their own superintendent and senior district official to work together and develop a shared approach to leading school transformations in their district. In addition, representative school board members, teacher and parent leaders, and other stakeholders shall be invited to participate in appropriate portions of the summer program to promote a shared understanding and cooperation in leading turnarounds in each district. For superintendents and their senior staff members, there will also be ongoing training programs during the academic year. Both the principals' and district leaders' training programs shall be followed by periodic group sessions to support trainees' transformation leadership initiatives over no less than two years after the completion of the one-year program.

(c) Coursework

All Academy faculty shall teach the model curriculum developed pursuant to subsection (11)(a) using the model pedagogy developed pursuant to subsection (11)(b). For principals, superintendents and senior staff, the basic coursework shall be in July and August at the beginning of the Academy's program each year and will be held at the full-time facilities of the main and regional campuses.

(d) Field Placements

The Academy shall arrange to place each principal trainee for a full academic year with a principal who has successfully led the school turnaround process. To the maximum extent feasible, the receiving school shall be of a similar grade span and geographical setting to the one to which the trainee will go upon completing the Academy. The receiving school shall be one that uses teams of key stakeholders in the transformation process and, to the maximum extent possible, shall be one then undergoing turnaround. The receiving principal will supervise

and mentor the trainee on site, for which the Academy will pay the principal an appropriate stipend.

(e) Trainee Consultant Teams

To expand trainees' exposure to schools and districts in different stages of the transformation process and facing different problems than their own, to dramatize the benefits of peer collaboration, and to provide valuable advice and support to other leaders grappling with the difficulties of turnaround, the program shall include having trainees work as teams of on-site consultants to principals and superintendents in other schools and districts in transformation. The consultations shall include: on-site visits; interviews; observations; data collection; a written report, with findings and recommendations for improving the turnaround process; post-report monitoring and follow-up advice. The consultations shall be arranged by the Academy, seeking to put each trainee in a team consulting for a school or district in a similar geographic area, and, for principals, similar grade levels, as their own school or district. Consultations shall be conducted during the academic year for such time periods, longer for principals than for superintendents and senior district officials, as the Academy shall determine appropriate.

(f) Beginning the Transformation Process

Principal trainees will return periodically during their field placement period to the very low-performing school which they will be leading upon graduation to plant the seeds for transformation: beginning to change expectations and attitudes and otherwise starting the turnaround process to the extent possible.

g) Short-term Training Sessions

The Academy shall bring superintendent and senior staff trainees and faculty together periodically during the academic year for short-term sessions in which trainees share, and learn from, their respective experiences leading transformations.

(h) Mentoring

Throughout the program, from coursework through post-certification support, every trainee will be provided a faculty mentor to provide in-depth, individualized advice and assistance to the trainee. Mentors will be assigned so that, to the extent possible, their backgrounds match the training needs of each participant. Prior to beginning their mentoring, all mentors will be provided an intensive program on how to serve as a mentor and coach.

During the field placements, each faculty mentor will closely coordinate his/her mentoring with the trainee's field mentor. Mentoring by the faculty mentor will

continue for all trainees for two additional years after the trainees' completion of the one-year program.

(i) Certification

Every trainee who successfully completes the Academy's program will receive a certificate from the Academy verifying that achievement.

SEC. 11. TRAINEES

(a) Selection

(1) Application Process

The Academy will select trainees based on applications from local educational agencies. Such agencies may apply on behalf of experienced principals, superintendents and other senior staff who are either current employees of their district or will become employees by the beginning of the Academy's program in which the trainees would be enrolled.

(2) District Teams

Nominees will be selected in small teams consisting of one or more principals, their superintendent, and a senior district official chosen by the superintendent, provided that, in exceptional circumstances, the Director may allow a principal to attend the Academy without the district's superintendent and/or senior staff member. After developing the model curriculum and establishing the regional campuses, the Board may also propose that Congress create a training program solely for superintendents, should the Board determine that that would advance the purposes of this Act.

(3) Criteria

(A) Schools

For attendance at the main campus, the Academy will, to the extent practicable, select nominees from public elementary, middle and high schools, including charter schools, and from urban, rural and suburban districts from all regions of the country, in approximate proportion to the numbers of schools of such grade levels and from such districts that have been very low performing for an extended period. For regional campuses, nominees will be selected on the same criteria, from schools in the respective states served by each campus.

(B) Individual Qualifications

The Academy will select as trainees only experienced principals, superintendents and senior district officials who –

- (i) have demonstrated leadership skills and accomplishments in education or similar endeavors;
- (ii) are interested in learning about how to lead successful school transformations; and
- (iii) express the intent to lead or actively assist, at the school, district, or state education agency level, the process of transforming the lowest-performing public schools for at least three years after receiving Academy certification.

(C) Numbers

The main campus and each regional campus will each select and train teams from approximately 25 diverse districts and 80 schools per year. Of the candidates selected for each campus, approximately 80 shall be principals, 25 shall be superintendents and 25 shall be senior district officials chosen by their superintendent to assist the transformation process, for a total of about 130 trainees per campus per year. The candidates selected shall reflect racial, ethnic and gender diversity.

(b) Scholarships and Stipends

(1) Principals

Every principal trainee will receive a full scholarship to the Academy and a stipend approximately equal to his/her current salary and benefits for the program's calendar year. In addition, each principal trainee will receive travel costs for round-trips home and to the school at which the trainee will become a transformation principal, as well as a fixed stipend to assist in covering the costs of meals, lodging, materials, travel and other expenses for attending post-certification implementation support sessions.

(2) Superintendents

Every superintendent and senior official trainee will receive travel costs for a round-trip home at the beginning and end of each phase of the summer program attended and a fixed stipend to assist in covering the costs of meals, lodging, materials, travel and other expenses for

attending short-term sessions during the academic year and post-certification implementation support sessions.

(c) Continuity and Completion of Service

As part of the application, every principal and the sponsoring local education agency, shall submit a mutually signed Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum shall provide that the principal shall be an employee of the agency throughout the Academy's one-year program. Further, it shall provide that, upon satisfactory completion of the program, the principal will be assigned by the agency to lead the transformation process in a specified school for at least three consecutive years thereafter, absent unsatisfactory performance by the principal, school closing or other unforeseeable reason. In addition, the Memorandum shall provide that the agency will permit and assist the principal to go periodically to that school during the Academy program to begin to prepare for transformation. Any principal trainee who fails to complete at least three years of service leading the turnaround process at one of the lowest-performing public schools shall be obligated to repay the Government a proportion of the value of his/her training, as determined by the Academy, that is equal to that unmet term of service, provided that this requirement shall not apply to trainees who become unable to complete three years of service for reasons beyond their control.

SEC. 12. MAIN CAMPUS FACILITY.

(a) Composition

The main campus shall be housed in a building or buildings that provide such offices, classrooms and meeting spaces for faculty and staff as the Board shall determine appropriate. The facility and its grounds shall be conducive to maximizing the development and exchange of creative and insightful ideas and cooperation among all participants in the Academy.

(b) Location

The main campus shall be located within 50 miles of a major airport that provides affordable, scheduled air service to all regions of the control.

SEC. 13. OPERATIONS

(a) First Year

The Academy shall use its first year of operations to secure a facility for the main campus, recruit nominees for the Board, staff and faculty for the main campus, develop curriculum, pedagogy and field projects, arrange field placements, and recruit and select the first class of trainees. The Academy shall begin its training program no later than the first summer after it has performed those functions.

(b) Second Year

In its second year of operations, the Academy shall conduct a study and prepare a plan on how funds available to it under section 18(c) can best be allocated to regional campuses to meet the objectives of the Act. The plan, which shall be based on the conclusions resulting from the study, shall be submitted by the Academy to the Congress not later than _____. Unless directed otherwise by an Act of Congress, the Academy shall implement the plan as soon as the Board is satisfied that the Academy has solved any significant problem in the design or conduct of the training program, provided that this is no earlier than the fiscal year beginning after the fiscal year in which the plan is submitted to Congress. The Academy shall implement its plans through contracts entered with the regional campuses.

SEC. 14. REGIONAL CAMPUSES

(a) Solicitation of Applications

As part of its plan under section 13(b), the Academy shall provide that it shall solicit applications from training organizations, partnerships, universities and other qualified entities to teach the Academy's program as regional campuses of the Academy.

(b) Establishment of Regional Campuses

The Academy shall establish as many as seven regional campuses, each located in and serving a separate region of the country.

(c) Selection of Operating Entities

The Academy shall select as operating entities for the regional campuses, and enter into contracts with, only applicants that demonstrate that they have, or have ready access to –

- (1) the qualified executive, practitioner and academic personnel, relationships with the lowest-performing public schools and their

school districts in that region, and facilities that would be needed to effectively offer the Academy's program, and

- (2) the financial support from states pursuant to subsection 18(b), and from foundations, corporations and/or other philanthropists pursuant to subsection 18(b)(2), to pay, when combined with federal funds pursuant to subsection 18(a)(2), for the costs of providing the Academy's full program to approximately 130 trainees per year.

(c) Federal Funding

The Academy shall utilize the funds provided pursuant to subsection 18(a)(2) to fund as many as seven regional campuses to assist them in paying for the cost of providing the Academy's program. These funds shall be distributed to entities outside the main campus and shall not be used for the general administrative costs of the main campus, the salaries or related expenses of main campus personnel, or for expenses of consultants and advisers providing services to the main campus.

(d) Offering of Facilities

Each regional campus shall be authorized to raise revenue by leasing its training facilities to other entities.

SEC. 15. REGIONAL CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARDS

(a) Establishment

Each regional campus established pursuant to subsection 14(b) shall have a regional campus advisory board.

(b) Responsibilities

Each regional campus advisory board shall –

1. advise the Regional Director about how the regional campus might supplement the Academy's program under section 10 to meet any special needs of the lowest-performing public schools in the region served by that campus, particularly in response to requests from the Regional Director;
2. facilitate participation by local educational agencies in that region in the regional campus program;
3. encourage foundations, corporations and other philanthropists, especially those located in that region, to contribute to the cost of the regional campus pursuant to subsection 18(b)(2)(A); and

4. facilitate the dissemination of information about the regional campus program to interested organizations and the general public, especially when requested by the Regional Director.

(c) Composition

Each advisory board shall be composed of –

1. the chief State school officer, such officer's designee, or other State official from each State participating in the regional campus's program who has primary responsibility under State law for elementary and secondary education in such State; and
2. 28 other members who are representative of the educational interests in the region served by the regional campus, as follows:
 - (A) Three state legislators, no more than two of whom may be members of the same political party;
 - (B) Three officials of local educational agencies, representing urban, rural and suburban areas, respectively;
 - (C) Three representatives of institutions of higher education and other organizations that prepare or train public school administrators, of whom at least one shall be a representative of institutions of higher education;
 - (D) Three principals of the lowest-performing public schools, representing urban, rural and suburban areas, respectively, and elementary, middle and high schools;
 - (E) Three superintendents of districts which include the kind of schools described in subsection (c)(2)(D), from rural, suburban and urban areas, respectively;
 - (F) Three teachers from the same kinds, locations and levels of schools described in subsection (c)(2)(D);
 - (G) One school social worker, psychologist, counselor, nurse, paraprofessional or other school staff member;
 - (H) One scholar or trainer who studies and teaches the process of leading transformations of the lowest-performing public schools;
 - (I) Two parents of school children in the lowest-performing public schools;
 - (J) Two representatives of educational philanthropy;
 - (K) Two representatives of business; and
 - (L) Two representatives of the general public.

(d) Selection

1. In General

For each State participating in the regional campus's program, the chief State school officer, or other official described in subsection (c)(1), and the chief executive officer of each State shall jointly select that State's members of the advisory board. In the case of a State in which the chief executive officer has the primary responsibility under State law for elementary and secondary education in the State, the chief executive officer shall consult, to the extent permitted by State law, with the State educational agency in selecting additional members of the board under (c)(2).

2. Satisfying Composition Requirements

The Director shall arrange for the selecting officials from each State to appoint members to certain categories specified by subsection (c)(2) so that the total number of members selected by all States collectively will satisfy the category requirements of that subsection. The Director shall assure that, to the maximum extent possible, each State shall be allowed to appoint the same number of members to the advisory board, provided that, if that is not mathematically possible given the number of States participating, the Director shall allow an additional member to the State(s) which have the largest number of the lowest-performing public schools.

3. Consultation with Stakeholder Organizations

In choosing individuals for membership on advisory boards, the State selecting officials shall consult with, and solicit recommendations from, education stakeholder organizations in their respective States.

e. Officers

Each advisory board shall have a Chair and Vice-Chair elected by a majority of its members for two-year terms.

f. Meetings

Each advisory board shall meet twice per year. An advisory board may meet for such additional times as a majority of its board may determine necessary to carry out the board's responsibilities under subsection (b).

SEC. 16. EVALUATIONS

(a) In General

At the completion of the first full year of providing its program at the main campus, and every year thereafter [for the next five years], the Academy shall arrange for an independent evaluation of the quality of its training program and its effectiveness in preparing trainees to be successful school transformation leaders. This evaluation shall include each regional campus as soon as it has been providing its training program for a full year.

(b) Content Of Evaluations

The evaluations conducted pursuant to subsection (a) shall address the Academy overall, as well as the main campus and each of the regional campuses separately, and shall:

(1) describe the major steps that the Academy has taken during the prior year, its significant successes, significant obstacles it encountered, the major actions it took to overcome the obstacles, the results of those actions, the current status of the program, and the major challenges facing the Academy in the coming year;

(2) report the levels of student academic achievement, especially in the core areas of reading, mathematics and science, for each school or district in which a trainee is placed, beginning with three years before the trainee began and continuing each year of the transformation process; and

(3) beginning after the third full year of operations, evaluate, if possible, the relative effectiveness in leading school transformations of trainees who have completed the program compared to those in similar schools and districts who have not taken the program, including the respective levels of student academic achievement in their schools and districts as provided in subsection (b)(2).

SEC. 17. REPORTS TO CONGRESS

(a) Annual Reports

(1) Academy

The Academy shall submit an annual report for the preceding fiscal year ending September 30 to the Committee on Education and Labor of the

House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate on or before the 15th day of May of each year. The report shall include, for the Academy overall and separately for the main campus and each regional campus, a comprehensive and detailed report of the Academy's operations, activities, financial condition, and accomplishments under this Act, including [for the first six years] the independent evaluation pursuant to section 16(a), and such recommendations as the Academy deems appropriate.

(b) Testimony

The officers and members of the Board of the Academy shall be available to testify before appropriate committees of the Congress with respect to such reports or any other matter which such committees may determine.

SEC. 18. FUNDING

(a) Authorizations

(1) Main Campus

For the purpose of carrying out this Act by fully funding the costs of establishing and operating the Academy, there are authorized to be appropriated:

- (A) \$3,000,000 for fiscal year ____ [the first year of operation];
- (B) \$24,900,000 for fiscal year ____ [the second year of operations];
- (C) \$25,500,000 for fiscal year ____ [the third year of operations];
- (D) \$26,200,000 for fiscal year ____ [the fourth year of operations]; and
- (E) \$26,900,000 for fiscal year ____ [the fifth year of operations].

(2) Regional Campuses

For the purpose of carrying out this Act by assisting the establishment and operation of as many as seven regional campuses of the Academy, there are authorized to be appropriated –

- (1) \$25,500,000 for the third fiscal year after the Academy begins operating its program, constituting 50 percent of the cost of operating two regional campuses;
- (2) \$52,400,000 for the fourth such year, constituting 50% of the cost of operating four regional campuses; and
- (3) \$94,200,000 for the fifth year, constituting 50% of the cost of operating seven regional campuses;

(b) State and Philanthropic Matching Grants

(1) States

(A) Opportunity to Participate

Every State shall be given the opportunity to have its experienced principals, superintendents and senior district officials participate in the school transformation leadership training provided by the regional campus in its region. The number of candidates eligible to be admitted from each State shall be proportional to the number of the lowest-performing public schools in that State, provided that every State shall be eligible to have trainees from at least one of its districts, regardless of how few such schools the State may have.

(B) Matching Grants

All states served by a regional campus shall collectively contribute 40 percent of the cost of operating the regional campus. For purposes of this subsection (b)(1), the cost of operating each regional campus will be deemed to be the same as the cost of operating the main campus itself listed in subsection (a)(1). Any State wishing to have its practitioners participate in the campus's training shall provide a matching grant to the campus to cover its share of the 40 percent amount that would be directly proportionate to the number of trainees it would have participating in the campus's program. Should a State elect not to make such a matching grant, its allocation of trainee positions, and correlative matching grant responsibility, shall be transferred to the other participating States in that region.

(2) Philanthropies

(A) Matching Grants

Foundations, corporations and other philanthropic entities and individuals shall [be expected to] contribute 10 percent of the cost of operating each regional campus, as defined in subsection (b)(1)(B) above.

(B) Waiver

The Secretary may waive all or part of the matching requirement in paragraph (b)(2) (A) for any fiscal year if the Secretary determines that applying it would result in serious hardship to the regional campus or its inability to carry out the Academy's program.

(c) Disbursements

The Secretary of the Treasury shall make available and disburse to the Academy at the beginning of each fiscal year, or as soon thereafter as such funds become available, all funds that have been appropriated for the Academy for the fiscal year in which the disbursement is to be made. The Academy shall promptly distribute such funds appropriated for the regional campuses pursuant to contracts entered under subsection 13(b).

(d) Availability

Funds appropriated under this section shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 19. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Act –

- (1) **ACADEMY.** – The term “Academy” means the National Education Leadership Academy authorized to be established by this Act, including the main campus and the regional campuses.
- (2) **ADVISORY BOARD.** – The term “advisory board” means any of the regional campus advisory boards.
- (3) **BOARD.** – The term “Board” means the Governing Board of the Academy.
- (4) **DEPARTMENT.** – The term “Department” means the U. S. Department of Education.
- (5) **DIRECTOR.** – The term “Director” means the Director of the National Education Leadership Academy.
- (6) **LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.** -
 - (A) **IN GENERAL.** – The term “local educational agency” means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary schools, and includes BIA schools.

(B) ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL AND DIRECTION. – The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school.

(C) BIA SCHOOLS. - The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the local educational agency receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency other than the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(7) LOWEST-PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS. – This term shall be defined by the Secretary in consultation with the Board.

(8) MAIN CAMPUS. – The term “main campus” means the central policy-making, executive, administrative and curriculum-development functions of the Academy, as well as the buildings and grounds where these functions are performed and the co-located Academy classrooms and educational facilities.

(9) MEETING. - The term “meeting” means the deliberations of at least the number of members of a governing or advisory body, or any committee thereof, required to take action on behalf of such body or committee where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of the governing or advisory body’s business, or the committee’s business, as the case may be, but only to the extent that such deliberations relate to public education.

(10) REGIONAL CAMPUS, – The term “regional campus” means the executive, administrative and educational functions of each provider of the Academy’s program in a geographical region of the country other than the main campus, as well as the buildings and grounds where these functions are performed.

(11) REGIONAL DIRECTOR. – The term “Regional Director” means the chief executive officer of each regional campus.

(12) SECRETARY. – The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education.

(13) STATE. – The term “State” means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and each of the outlying areas.

(14) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. – The term “State educational agency” means the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.

SEC. 20. REPEAL, ALTERATION OR AMENDMENT

The right to repeal, alter, or amend this Act at any time is expressly reserved.

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Revised Draft by Gary Ratner, Executive Director, Citizens for Effective Schools,
October 9, 2009