



Congressman

# RAUL M. GRIJALVA

Serving the people of Arizona's 7th District

## Success in the Middle Act

H.R. 1578



### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Of the 49.5 million students enrolled in public schools for the 2021 - 2022 school year, approximately 18 million young adolescents are enrolled in the middle grades (5th through 9th). Research and practice show that to help middle grades students achieve, they require challenging and engaging instruction; teachers and administrators who are knowledgeable and prepared to provide young adolescents with a safe and supportive learning environment; and organizational structures which promote collaboration and social equity. Neuroscience indicates the majority of middle grade students are in a critical stage of brain development that promotes productive adulthood.

According to ACT, the level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade impacts a students' college and career readiness more than academic experiences in high school. A student who falls behind in the middle grades may never recover academically. For students who live in high poverty neighborhoods, the quality of education they receive in the middle grades affects high school graduation rates, preparedness for college, and future achievement levels.

While education often remains a popular topic in policy conversations, the middle grades are often overlooked. The Success in the Middle Act aims to improve the education of middle grade students in low-performing schools so that students are prepared for success in high school and postsecondary institutions. This legislation provides grants to States and districts to create comprehensive school-wide action plans, develop rigorous curriculum, provide professional development for school personnel, and implement student supports.



### FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE BILL

5. Creates funding to support research efforts to identify best practices specific to middle level instruction.
4. Reinforces support for students when they are at a critical stage of growth and development.
3. Provides a specific focus on improving student outcomes in the largely overlooked category of middle school education.
2. Provides grants to entities that partner with states and LEAs to develop, adapt, or replicate effective models for turning around low-performing schools serving students in the middle grades.
1. Provides critical funding to improve graduation rates among at-risk student populations.

The Success in the Middle Act is endorsed by:

- All4Ed
- American Federation of Teachers
- Association for Middle-Level Education
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform
- The Education Trust

“This legislation remedies historic underfunding, invests in local solutions to improve educational outcomes, and will help equip teachers with the tools they need to prepare students for high school and beyond.” - Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva