

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 937

To authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2015

Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself and Mr. FATTAH) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fast Track to College
5 Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to increase secondary
8 school graduation rates and the percentage of students
9 who complete a recognized postsecondary credential by the
10 age of 26, including among low-income students and stu-

1 dents from other populations underrepresented in higher
2 education.

3 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

4 For purposes of this Act:

5 (1) DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM.—The term
6 “dual enrollment program” means an academic pro-
7 gram through which a secondary school student is
8 able simultaneously to earn credit toward a sec-
9 ondary school diploma and a postsecondary degree
10 or credential.

11 (2) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.—The term
12 “early college high school” means a secondary school
13 that provides a course of study that enables a stu-
14 dent to earn a secondary school diploma and either
15 an associate’s degree or one to two years of postsec-
16 ondary credit toward a postsecondary degree or cre-
17 dential.

18 (3) EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY.—The
19 term “educational service agency” has the meaning
20 given such term in section 9101(17) of the Elemen-
21 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
22 U.S.C. 7801(17)).

23 (4) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
24 ty” means a local educational agency, which may be
25 an educational service agency, in a collaborative

1 partnership with an institution of higher education.
2 Such partnership also may include other entities,
3 such as a nonprofit organization with experience in
4 youth development.

5 (5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
6 term “institution of higher education” has the
7 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
8 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

9 (6) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
10 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
11 such term in section 9101(26) of the Elementary
12 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
13 7801(26)).

14 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of Education.

16 (8) LOW-INCOME STUDENT.—The term “low-in-
17 come student” means a student described in section
18 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
19 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6313(a)(5)).

20 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; RESERVA-**
21 **TIONS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—To carry out this Act, there are
23 authorized to be appropriated \$150,000,000 for fiscal year
24 2016 and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal
25 years 2017 through 2021.

1 (b) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS.—The Sec-
2 retary shall reserve not less than 45 percent of the funds
3 appropriated under subsection (a) to support early college
4 high schools under section 5.

5 (c) DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS.—The Secretary
6 shall reserve not less than 45 percent of such funds to
7 support dual enrollment programs (other than early col-
8 lege high schools) under section 5.

9 (d) STATE GRANTS.—The Secretary shall reserve 10
10 percent of such funds, or \$10,000,000, whichever is less,
11 for grants to States under section 9.

12 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZED PROGRAM.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to
14 award 6-year grants to eligible entities seeking to establish
15 a new, or support an existing, early college high school
16 or other dual enrollment program in accordance with sec-
17 tion 6.

18 (b) GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall ensure
19 that grants are of sufficient size to enable grantees to
20 carry out all required activities and otherwise meet the
21 purposes of this Act, except that a grant under this section
22 may not exceed \$2,000,000.

23 (c) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall con-
25 tribute matching funds toward the costs of the early

1 college high school or other dual enrollment program
2 to be supported under this section, of which not less
3 than half shall be from non-Federal sources, which
4 funds shall represent not less than the following:

5 (A) Twenty percent of the grant amount
6 received in each of the first and second years of
7 the grant.

8 (B) Thirty percent in each of the third and
9 fourth years.

10 (C) Forty percent in the fifth year.

11 (D) Fifty percent in the sixth year.

12 (2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT CONTRIB-
13 UTED.—The Secretary shall allow an eligible entity
14 to satisfy the requirement of this subsection through
15 in-kind contributions.

16 (d) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible enti-
17 ty shall use a grant received under this section only to
18 supplement funds that would, in the absence of such
19 grant, be made available from non-Federal funds for sup-
20 port of the activities described in the eligible entity's appli-
21 cation under section 7, and not to supplant such funds.

22 (e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
23 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants—

24 (1) that propose to establish or support an
25 early college high school or other dual enrollment

1 program that will serve a student population of
2 which 40 percent or more are students counted
3 under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and
4 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
5 6313(a)(5)); and

6 (2) from States that provide assistance to early
7 college high schools or other dual enrollment pro-
8 grams, such as assistance to defray the costs of
9 higher education (including costs of tuition, fees,
10 and textbooks).

11 (f) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary
12 shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure that
13 grantees are from a representative cross-section of urban,
14 suburban, and rural areas.

15 **SEC. 6. USES OF FUNDS.**

16 (a) MANDATORY ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity
17 shall use grant funds received under section 5 to support
18 the activities described in its application under section 7,
19 including the following:

20 (1) PLANNING YEAR.—In the case of a new
21 early college high school or dual enrollment program,
22 during the first year of the grant—

23 (A) hiring a principal and staff, as appro-
24 priate;

1 (B) designing the curriculum and sequence
2 of courses in collaboration with (at a minimum)
3 teachers from the local educational agency and
4 faculty from the partner institution of higher
5 education;

6 (C) informing parents and the community
7 about the school or program and opportunities
8 to become actively involved in the school or pro-
9 gram;

10 (D) establishing a course articulation proc-
11 ess for defining and approving courses for sec-
12 ondary school and postsecondary credit or cre-
13 dential;

14 (E) outreach programs to ensure that sec-
15 ondary school students and their families are
16 aware of the early college high school or dual
17 enrollment program;

18 (F) liaison activities among partners in the
19 eligible entity; and

20 (G) coordinating secondary and postsec-
21 ondary support services, academic calendars,
22 and transportation.

23 (2) IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD.—During the re-
24 mainder of the grant period—

1 (A) academic and social support services,
2 including counseling;

3 (B) liaison activities among partners in the
4 eligible entity;

5 (C) data collection and use of such data
6 for student and instructional improvement and
7 program evaluation;

8 (D) outreach programs to ensure that sec-
9 ondary school students and their families are
10 aware of the early college high school or dual
11 enrollment program;

12 (E) professional development, including
13 joint professional development for secondary
14 school and faculty from the institution of higher
15 education; and

16 (F) school or program design and planning
17 team activities, including curriculum develop-
18 ment.

19 (b) ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity may
20 also use grant funds received under section 5 otherwise
21 to support the activities described in its application under
22 section 7, including—

23 (1) purchasing textbooks and equipment that
24 support the school or program’s curriculum;

(2) developing learning opportunities for students that complement classroom experiences, such as internships, career-based capstone projects, and opportunities provided under chapters 1 and 2 of subpart 2 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11 et seq.);

(3) transportation; and

(4) planning time for secondary school and educators from an institution of higher education to collaborate.

SEC. 7. APPLICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under section 5, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and including such information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(b) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—At a minimum, the application described in subsection (a) shall include a description of—

(1) the early college high school’s or other dual enrollment program’s budget;

(2) each partner in the eligible entity and its experience with early college high schools or other dual enrollment programs, key personnel from each partner and their responsibilities for the early college high school or dual enrollment program, and

1 how the eligible entity will work with secondary and
2 postsecondary teachers, other public and private en-
3 tities, community-based organizations, businesses,
4 labor organizations, and parents to ensure that stu-
5 dents will be prepared to succeed in postsecondary
6 education and employment, which may include the
7 development of an advisory board;

8 (3) how the eligible entity will target and re-
9 cruit at-risk youth, including those at risk of drop-
10 ping out of school, first generation college students,
11 and students from populations described in section
12 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the Elementary and Sec-
13 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
14 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II));

15 (4) a system of student supports including, but
16 not limited to, small group activities, tutoring, lit-
17 eracy and numeracy skill development in all aca-
18 demic disciplines, parental and community outreach
19 and engagement, extended learning time, and college
20 readiness activities, such as early college academic
21 seminars and counseling;

22 (5) in the case of an early college high school,
23 how a graduation and career plan will be developed,
24 consistent with State graduation requirements, for
25 each student and reviewed each semester;

1 (6) how parents or guardians of students in the
2 early college high school or dually enrolled students
3 will be informed of their academic performance and
4 progress and, subject to paragraph (5), involved in
5 the development of their career and graduation plan;

6 (7) coordination that will occur between the in-
7 stitution of higher education and the local edu-
8 cational agency, including regarding academic cal-
9 endars, provision of student services, curriculum de-
10 velopment, and professional development;

11 (8) how the eligible entity will ensure that
12 teachers in the early college high school or other
13 dual enrollment program receive appropriate profes-
14 sional development and other supports, including to
15 enable them to utilize effective parent and commu-
16 nity engagement strategies, and help English-lan-
17 guage learners, students with disabilities, and stu-
18 dents from diverse cultural backgrounds to succeed;

19 (9) learning opportunities for students that
20 complement classroom experiences, such as intern-
21 ships, career-based capstone projects, and opportuni-
22 ties provided under chapters 1 and 2 of subpart 2
23 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act
24 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11 et seq.);

1 (10) how policies, agreements, and courses
2 taken will ensure that postsecondary credits earned
3 will be transferable to, at a minimum, public institu-
4 tions of higher education within the State, consistent
5 with existing statewide articulation agreements;

6 (11) student assessments and other measure-
7 ments of student achievement including benchmarks
8 for student achievement;

9 (12) outreach programs to provide elementary
10 and secondary school students, especially those in
11 middle grades, and their parents, teachers, school
12 counselors, and principals information about and
13 academic preparation for the early college high
14 school or other dual enrollment program;

15 (13) how the local educational agency and insti-
16 tution of higher education will work together, as ap-
17 propriate, to collect and use data for student and in-
18 structional improvement and program evaluation;

19 (14) how the eligible entity will help students
20 meet eligibility criteria for postsecondary courses
21 and ensure that students understand how their cred-
22 its will transfer; and

23 (15) how the eligible entity will access and le-
24 verage additional resources necessary to sustain the
25 early college high school or other dual enrollment

1 program after the grant expires, including by engag-
2 ing businesses and non-profit organizations.

3 (c) ASSURANCES.—An eligible entity’s application
4 under subsection (a) shall include assurances that—

5 (1) in the case of an early college high school,
6 the majority of courses offered, including postsec-
7 ondary courses, will be offered at facilities of the in-
8 stitution of higher education;

9 (2) students will not be required to pay tuition
10 or fees for postsecondary courses;

11 (3) postsecondary credits earned will be tran-
12 scribed upon completion of the requisite course
13 work; and

14 (4) faculty teaching postsecondary courses meet
15 the normal standards for faculty established by the
16 institution of higher education.

17 (d) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the require-
18 ment of subsection (c)(1) upon a showing that it is im-
19 practical to apply due to geographic considerations.

20 **SEC. 8. PEER REVIEW.**

21 (a) PEER REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS.—The Sec-
22 retary shall establish peer review panels to review applica-
23 tions submitted pursuant to section 7 to advise the Sec-
24 retary regarding such applications.

1 (b) COMPOSITION OF PEER REVIEW PANELS.—The
2 Secretary shall ensure that each peer review panel is not
3 comprised wholly of full-time officers or employees of the
4 Federal Government and includes, at a minimum—

5 (1) experts in the establishment and adminis-
6 tration of early college high schools or other dual en-
7 rollment programs from the secondary and postsec-
8 ondary perspective;

9 (2) faculty at institutions of higher education
10 and secondary school teachers with expertise in dual
11 enrollment; and

12 (3) experts in the education of at-risk students.

13 **SEC. 9. GRANTS TO STATES.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to
15 award 5-year grants to State agencies responsible for sec-
16 ondary or postsecondary education for efforts to support
17 or establish early college high schools or other dual enroll-
18 ment programs.

19 (b) GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall ensure
20 that grants are of sufficient size to enable grantees to
21 carry out all required activities.

22 (c) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—A State shall con-
23 tribute matching funds from non-Federal sources toward
24 the costs of carrying out activities under this section,

1 which funds shall represent not less than 50 percent of
2 the grant amount.

3 (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
4 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to States that pro-
5 vide assistance to early college high schools or other dual
6 enrollment programs, such as assistance to defray the
7 costs of higher education, such as tuition, fees, and text-
8 books.

9 (e) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under this sec-
10 tion, a State agency shall submit to the Secretary an appli-
11 cation at such time, in such manner, and including such
12 information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

13 (f) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—At a minimum, the
14 application described in subsection (e) shall include—

15 (1) how the State will carry out all of the re-
16 quired State activities described in subsection (g);

17 (2) how the State will identify and eliminate
18 barriers to implementing effective early college high
19 schools and dual enrollment programs after the
20 grant expires, including by engaging businesses and
21 non-profit organizations;

22 (3) how the State will access and leverage addi-
23 tional resources necessary to sustain early college
24 high schools or other dual enrollment programs; and

1 (4) such other information as the Secretary de-
2 termines to be appropriate.

3 (g) STATE ACTIVITIES.—A State receiving a grant
4 under this section shall use such funds for—

5 (1) creating outreach programs to ensure that
6 secondary school students, their families, and com-
7 munity members are aware of early college high
8 schools and dual enrollment programs in the State;

9 (2) planning and implementing a statewide
10 strategy for expanding access to early college high
11 schools and dual enrollment programs for students
12 who are underrepresented in higher education to
13 raise statewide rates of secondary school graduation,
14 readiness for postsecondary education, and comple-
15 tion of postsecondary degrees and credentials, with
16 a focus on at-risk students, including identifying any
17 obstacles to such a strategy under State law or pol-
18 icy;

19 (3) providing technical assistance to early col-
20 lege high schools and other dual enrollment pro-
21 grams, such as brokering relationships and agree-
22 ments that forge a strong partnership between ele-
23 mentary and secondary and postsecondary partners;

24 (4) identifying policies that will improve the ef-
25 fectiveness and ensure the quality of early college

1 high schools and dual enrollment programs, such as
2 access, funding, data and quality assurance, govern-
3 ance, accountability and alignment policies;

4 (5) planning and delivering statewide training
5 and peer learning opportunities for school leaders
6 and teachers from early college high schools and
7 dual enrollment programs, which may include pro-
8 viding instructional coaches who offer on-site guid-
9 ance;

10 (6) disseminating best practices in early college
11 high schools and dual enrollment programs from
12 across the State and from other States; and

13 (7) facilitating statewide data collection, re-
14 search and evaluation, and reporting to policymakers
15 and other stakeholders.

16 **SEC. 10. REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT.**

17 (a) REPORTING BY GRANTEES.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
19 uniform guidelines for all grantees concerning infor-
20 mation such grantees annually shall report to the
21 Secretary to demonstrate a grantee’s progress to-
22 ward achieving the goals of this Act.

23 (2) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—At a minimum,
24 the report described in paragraph (1) shall include,
25 for eligible entities receiving funds under section 5,

1 for students participating in the early college high
2 school or other dual enrollment program within each
3 category of students described in section
4 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary
5 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
6 6311(h)(1)(C)(i)):

7 (A) The number of students.

8 (B) The percentage of students scoring ad-
9 vanced, proficient, basic, and below basic on the
10 assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of
11 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
12 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(3)).

13 (C) The performance of students on other
14 assessments or measurements of achievement.

15 (D) The number of secondary school cred-
16 its earned.

17 (E) The number of postsecondary credits
18 earned.

19 (F) Attendance rate, as appropriate.

20 (G) Graduation rate.

21 (H) Placement in postsecondary education
22 or advanced training, in military service, and in
23 employment.

1 (I) A description of the school or pro-
2 gram's student, parent, and community out-
3 reach and engagement.

4 (b) REPORTING BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary an-
5 nually shall compile and analyze the information described
6 in subsection (a) and shall submit a report containing such
7 analysis to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
8 and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Edu-
9 cation and Labor of the House of Representatives. The
10 report shall include identification of best practices for
11 achieving the goals of this Act.

12 (c) MONITORING VISITS.—The Secretary's designee
13 shall visit each grantee at least once for the purpose of
14 helping the grantee achieve the goals of this Act and to
15 monitor the grantee's progress toward achieving such
16 goals.

17 (d) NATIONAL EVALUATION.—Not later than 6
18 months after the date on which funds are appropriated
19 to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a con-
20 tract with an independent organization to perform an eval-
21 uation of the grants awarded under this Act. Such evalua-
22 tion shall apply rigorous procedures to obtain valid and
23 reliable data concerning participants' outcomes by social
24 and academic characteristics and monitor the progress of

1 students from secondary school to and through postsec-
2 ondary education.

3 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
4 provide technical assistance to eligible entities concerning
5 best practices in early college high schools and dual enroll-
6 ment programs and shall disseminate such best practices
7 among eligible entities and State and local educational
8 agencies.

9 **SEC. 11. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**

10 (a) EMPLOYEES.—Nothing in this Act shall be con-
11 strued to alter or otherwise affect the rights, remedies,
12 and procedures afforded to the employees of local edu-
13 cational agencies (including schools) or institutions of
14 higher education under Federal, State, or local laws (in-
15 cluding applicable regulations or court orders) or under
16 the terms of collective bargaining agreements, memoranda
17 of understanding, or other agreements between such em-
18 ployees and their employers.

19 (b) GRADUATION RATE.—A student who graduates
20 from an early college high school supported under this Act
21 in the standard number of years for graduation described
22 in the eligible entity's application shall be considered to
23 have graduated on time for purposes of section

1 1111(b)(2)(C)(6) of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
2 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(2)(C)(6)).

