

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2960

To direct the Secretary of Education to establish and carry out a grant program to make grants to eligible institutions to plan and implement programs that provide comprehensive support services and resources designed to increase transfer and graduation rates at community colleges, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2017

Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. NADLER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mrs. DAVIS of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Education to establish and carry out a grant program to make grants to eligible institutions to plan and implement programs that provide comprehensive support services and resources designed to increase transfer and graduation rates at community colleges, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Community College
3 Student Success Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT SUCCESS GRANT**
5 **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

6 From the amounts appropriated under section 10, the
7 Secretary of Education shall establish and carry out the
8 community college student success grant program to
9 award grants under sections 3 and 4, on a competitive
10 basis, to eligible institutions to plan and implement com-
11 munity college student success programs designed to in-
12 crease—

13 (1) the rate at which eligible students graduate
14 from a program of study at such eligible institution
15 within 150 percent of the normal time for gradua-
16 tion; and

17 (2) transfer rates of eligible students.

18 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO PLAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT**
19 **SUCCESS PROGRAMS.**

20 (a) **PLANNING GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—From the
21 amounts appropriated to carry out this section under sec-
22 tion 10 for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall award plan-
23 ning grants for such fiscal year, on a competitive basis,
24 to eligible institutions to develop plans for community col-
25 lege student success programs.

1 (b) DURATION.—A grant awarded under this section
2 shall be for a 1-year period.

3 (c) PEER REVIEW PROCESS; PRIORITY.—In award-
4 ing grants under this section for a fiscal year, the Sec-
5 retary shall—

6 (1) carry out a peer review process that—

7 (A) requires that each application sub-
8 mitted under subsection (d) be peer reviewed by
9 a panel of readers composed of individuals se-
10 lected by the Secretary, which shall include—

11 (i) not less than 50 percent of read-
12 ers—

13 (I) who are not employees of the
14 Federal Government; and

15 (II) who have relevant research
16 or practical experience with respect to
17 student support programs designed to
18 increase graduation rates and transfer
19 rates at public 2-year institutions of
20 higher education; and

21 (ii) to the maximum extent prac-
22 ticable, individuals who are members of
23 groups underrepresented in higher edu-
24 cation, including African Americans, His-
25 panics, Native Americans, Alaska Natives,

1 Asian Americans, and Native American
2 Pacific Islanders (including Native Hawai-
3 ians); and

4 (B) ensures that no individual assigned
5 under subparagraph (A) to review an applica-
6 tion has any conflict of interest with regard to
7 that application that may make the individual
8 unable to impartially conduct such review; and

9 (2) give priority to eligible institutions that are
10 eligible to receive funding under title III or V of the
11 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1051 et
12 seq.).

13 (d) APPLICATION.—An eligible institution desiring a
14 grant under this section shall submit an application to the
15 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing
16 such information as the Secretary may require, which shall
17 include—

18 (1) the graduation rate and transfer rate for
19 the most recent academic year for which data are
20 available for eligible students and all students, re-
21 spectively;

22 (2) an analysis of how implementing a commu-
23 nity college student success program may improve
24 the graduation rate or transfer rate for eligible stu-
25 dents; and

1 (3) an analysis of the methods the eligible insti-
2 tution has previously used to improve the graduation
3 rate or transfer rate with respect to eligible students
4 and all students, respectively.

5 (e) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution that re-
6 ceives a grant under this section shall use the grant to
7 develop a plan to implement a community college student
8 success program at the eligible institution.

9 (f) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
10 on which an eligible institution receives a grant under this
11 section, such eligible institution shall submit to the Sec-
12 retary a report that includes—

13 (1) a plan for implementing a community col-
14 lege student success program at the eligible institu-
15 tion, including—

16 (A) the ambitious outcome goals for
17 achieving significant improvements in gradua-
18 tion rates and transfer rates for eligible stu-
19 dents and all students, respectively, as such
20 rates are defined by the eligible institution, in
21 consultation with the Secretary, before the end
22 of the grant period;

23 (B) the number of such eligible students
24 who will participate in such program, including
25 how such eligible students will be identified, re-

ferred, and selected, in cases where the interest in the program is larger than the budget for the program;

(C) the demographics (including income, race, and gender) of such eligible students;

(D) based on the most recent academic year for which data are available, disaggregated by eligible students and all students—

(i) graduation rates;

(ii) transfer rates;

(iii) retention rates;

(iv) rates of completion of remedial courses for students required to complete such courses; and

(v) average number of credits attempted and average number of credits earned;

(E) an analysis of the financial needs of the eligible students described in subparagraph (B);

(F) an analysis of how the eligible institution will collaborate across departments at the institution and with external partners to implement a community college student success program, including the detailed roles and respon-

1 sibilities of each potential external partner (in-
2 cluding each investor, State or local government
3 entity, or other stakeholder);

4 (G) a description of how the eligible insti-
5 tution will effectively staff a community college
6 student success program; and

7 (H) a timeline for the implementation of
8 such program;

9 (2) a budgetary analysis that includes—

10 (A) a description of how the eligible insti-
11 tution will—

12 (i) provide non-Federal funds for such
13 program under subsection (d) of section 4;
14 and

15 (ii) meet the requirement of sub-
16 section (b)(3) of such section; and

17 (B) a description of how the eligible insti-
18 tution will continue to fund such program after
19 the end of the grant period for the grant
20 awarded to the institution under section 4;

21 (3) a description of the data system the eligible
22 institution will use to track and evaluate the
23 progress of eligible students participating in such
24 program;

1 (4) an analysis of the institutional barriers that
 2 may hinder implementing such program at such eli-
 3 gible institution; and

4 (5) such other information as the Secretary
 5 may require.

6 **SEC. 4. GRANTS TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
 7 **STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMS.**

8 (a) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—From
 9 the amounts appropriated to carry out this section under
 10 section 10 for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall award
 11 grants for such fiscal year, on a competitive basis, to eligi-
 12 ble institutions awarded a grant under section 3 to imple-
 13 ment community college student success programs.

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—

15 (2) CONSULTATION.—In awarding grants under
 16 this section for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall con-
 17 sult with the independent evaluator before finalizing
 18 which eligible institutions will receive such a grant
 19 for such fiscal year.

20 (b) REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTION.—To be eligible
 21 to receive a grant under this section, an eligible institution
 22 shall meet the following requirements:

23 (1) The eligible institution was awarded a grant
 24 under section 3 at least 1 year before such eligible

1 institution submits an application under subsection
2 (e).

3 (2) The eligible institution submits an applica-
4 tion under subsection (e).

5 (3) The eligible institution demonstrates, on the
6 date of the application described in subsection (e),
7 the availability of non-Federal funding for the
8 matching funds required under subparagraphs (A),
9 (B), and (C) of subsection (d)(1).

10 (c) DURATION.—A grant awarded under this section
11 shall be for a 5-year period.

12 (d) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
14 graph (2), an eligible institution awarded a grant
15 under this section shall contribute in cash from non-
16 Federal sources, the following:

17 (A) For the second year of the grant pe-
18 riod, an amount equal to 20 percent of the cost
19 of carrying out the community college student
20 success program at the institution for such
21 year.

22 (B) For the third year of the grant period,
23 an amount equal to 40 percent of the cost of
24 carrying out such program for such year.

1 (C) For the fourth year of the grant pe-
2 riod, an amount equal to 60 percent of the cost
3 of carrying out such program for such year.

4 (D) For the fifth year of the grant period,
5 an amount equal to 80 percent of the cost of
6 carrying out such program for such year.

7 (2) EXCEPTION.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding para-
9 graph (1), with respect to an exempt institution
10 awarded a grant under this section, for each
11 year of the grant period beginning with the sec-
12 ond year through the fifth year, the Secretary
13 shall not require the institution to make a cash
14 contribution from non-Federal sources in an
15 amount that is greater than the amount equal
16 to 5 percent of the cost of carrying out the
17 community college student success program at
18 the institution for such year.

19 (B) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this
20 paragraph:

21 (i) EXEMPT INSTITUTION.—The term
22 “exempt institution” means an eligible in-
23 stitution that is—

24 (I) a Tribal college or university;

25 or

1 (II) an institution located in the
2 Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam,
3 American Samoa, the United States
4 Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of
5 the Northern Mariana Islands, the
6 Republic of the Marshall Islands, the
7 Federated States of Micronesia, or the
8 Republic of Palau.

9 (ii) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVER-
10 SITY.—The term “Tribal college or univer-
11 sity” has the meaning given the term in
12 section 316 of the Higher Education Act
13 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c).

14 (e) APPLICATION.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution desir-
16 ing a grant under this section shall submit an appli-
17 cation to the Secretary at such time, in such man-
18 ner, and containing such information as the Sec-
19 retary may require, which shall include a copy of the
20 report described in section 3(f).

21 (2) REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE INSTITU-
22 TIONS THAT REAPPLY.—An institution that submits
23 an application under paragraph (1) that is not the
24 first application submitted by such institution under

1 such paragraph shall include the following in such
2 application:

3 (A) The number of applications such eligi-
4 ble institution has submitted under paragraph
5 (1) and the dates on which such applications
6 were submitted.

7 (B) A description of the changes the eligi-
8 ble institution has made since the most recent
9 application submitted under paragraph (1) to
10 improve the plan to implement a community
11 college student success program at such eligible
12 institution.

13 (3) REVIEW.—Not later than 60 days after re-
14 ceiving an application under this subsection, the Sec-
15 retary shall approve or deny such application.

16 (f) REQUIRED USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institu-
17 tion that receives a grant under this section shall use the
18 grant funds to—

19 (1) implement a community college student suc-
20 cess program;

21 (2) regularly review—

22 (A) data to monitor the academic progress
23 of eligible students participating in such pro-
24 gram; and

1 (B) the meeting and program participation
2 requirements described in section 9(1); and

3 (3) cover the employment of administrators for
4 the program whose sole job shall be to administer
5 the program, without regard to whether the employ-
6 ment is full-time or less than full-time.

7 (g) PERMISSIBLE USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible insti-
8 tution that receives a grant under this section may use
9 the grant to—

10 (1) establish or expand a data tracking system
11 that includes early alerts to complete the regular re-
12 views required under subsection (f)(2);

13 (2) provide eligible students participating in the
14 community college student success program for
15 which the grant is awarded with financial assistance
16 to cover the costs described in paragraph (2), (3), or
17 (8) of section 472 of the Higher Education Act of
18 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087ll);

19 (3) establish or expand career development
20 services for such students, such as career workshops
21 or career counseling;

22 (4) establish or expand tutoring services for
23 such students; and

24 (5) provide financial support for eligible stu-
25 dents participating in such program to enroll in

1 courses offered during enrollment periods that are
2 outside the fall and spring semesters (or equivalent
3 terms).

4 (h) REPORTS.—An eligible institution that receives a
5 grant under this section shall—

6 (1) not less than once for each year of the
7 grant period, submit to the Secretary an annual per-
8 formance report for such year of the grant period,
9 and when data is available, compares such year with
10 the each of the 2 years preceding the date on which
11 the grant was awarded—

12 (A) the demographics of the eligible stu-
13 dents participating in the community college
14 student success program;

15 (B) the average number of credits at-
16 tempted and average number of credits earned,
17 rate of retention, rate of degree completion, and
18 transfer rates of such eligible students;

19 (C) the graduation rate of such eligible
20 students within—

21 (i) 100 percent of the normal time for
22 graduation;

23 (ii) 150 percent of the normal time
24 for graduation; and

1 (iii) 200 percent of the normal time
2 graduation;

3 (D) an analysis of the implementation and
4 progress of such program based on the ambi-
5 tious outcome goals described in the report sub-
6 mitted by the institution under section
7 3(f)(1)(A), including challenges to and changes
8 made to such program;

9 (E) if according to the analysis under sub-
10 paragraph (D), the program is not on track to
11 meet such ambitious outcome goals, a descrip-
12 tion of the plans to adjust the program to im-
13 prove the performance of the program;

14 (F) the participation of such eligible stu-
15 dents in tutoring, career services, and meetings
16 with program advisors;

17 (G) for the report for the third year of the
18 grant period, the plan to meet the non-Federal
19 contribution requirement under subsection
20 (d)(1)(D); and

21 (H) for the report for the fourth year of
22 the grant period, a description of—

23 (i) the source of the funds to meet the
24 non-Federal contribution requirement
25 under subsection (d)(1)(D);

1 (ii) the plans to continue to fund such
2 program after the grant period ends; and

3 (iii) the plans to use this program as
4 a catalyst for institution-wide reform with
5 respect to graduation rates and transfer
6 rates for all students; and

7 (2) not later than 6 years after the date on
8 which the eligible institution received such grant,
9 submit a final report to the Secretary that includes
10 an analysis of—

11 (A) the factors that contributed to the suc-
12 cess or failure of the community college student
13 success program in meeting the ambitious out-
14 come goals described in the report submitted by
15 the institution under section 3(f)(1)(A);

16 (B) the challenges faced in attempting to
17 implement such program;

18 (C) information on how to improve such
19 program;

20 (D) whether the program has created an
21 institution-wide reform with respect to graduate
22 rates and transfer rates for all students, and if
23 so, how such reform was created; and

1 (E) how the eligible institution will con-
2 tinue to fund such program after the end of the
3 grant period.

4 **SEC. 5. EVALUATIONS.**

5 (a) INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS.—Before finalizing
6 which eligible institutions will receive grants under section
7 4 for a fiscal year, the Secretary, acting through the Di-
8 rector of the Institute of Education Sciences, shall enter
9 into a contract with an independent evaluator—

10 (1) to consult with the Secretary on which eligi-
11 ble institutions should receive the grants; and

12 (2) to use the What Works Clearinghouse
13 Standards (without reservations) to evaluate,
14 throughout the duration of the grant period of such
15 grants—

16 (A) each community college student suc-
17 cess program for which such grant is awarded,
18 including whether the program met its ambi-
19 tious outcome goals described in the report sub-
20 mitted by the institution under section
21 3(f)(1)(A);

22 (B) the average impact of community col-
23 lege student success programs on graduation
24 rates and transfer rates for eligible students;

1 (C) the variation in program impacts
2 across eligible institutions with respect to such
3 rates; and

4 (D) whether such programs lead to higher
5 graduation rates and transfer rates of eligible
6 students per dollar spent for such students by
7 such institutions compared with such rates at
8 eligible institutions without such programs.

9 (b) RESULTS OF EVALUATIONS.—The results of the
10 evaluations under subsection (a) shall be made publicly
11 available on the website of the Department of Education.

12 (c) FUNDING FOR EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary
13 may reserve not more than 15 percent of the funds appro-
14 priated under section 10 for a fiscal year to carry out this
15 section for such fiscal year.

16 **SEC. 6. OUTREACH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**

17 (a) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall conduct out-
18 reach activities to notify eligible institutions of the avail-
19 ability of grants under this Act.

20 (b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
21 provide technical assistance—

22 (1) to eligible institutions that may be inter-
23 ested in applying for grants under this Act, includ-
24 ing assistance with applications for such grants; and

1 (2) to eligible institutions awarded grants under
2 this Act, including assistance with—

3 (A) establishing ambitious outcome goals
4 described in section 3(f)(1)(A); and

5 (B) the implementation of a community
6 college student success program.

7 (c) FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR
8 EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary may reserve not more
9 than 7 percent of the funds appropriated under section
10 10 for a fiscal year for technical assistance under this sec-
11 tion for such fiscal year.

12 **SEC. 7. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

13 Not later than 1 year after the date on which the
14 Secretary receives the final evaluation results under sec-
15 tion 5 for eligible institutions that were awarded grants
16 under section 4 for the same fiscal year, the Secretary
17 shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

18 (1) the number of grants awarded under section
19 4 for such fiscal year, and the amount of such
20 grants;

21 (2) the number of grants awarded under section
22 3 to eligible institutions that received or would have
23 been eligible for the grants described in paragraph
24 (1), and the amount of such grants; and

25 (3) such final evaluation results.

1 **SEC. 8. SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.**

2 Funds awarded to an eligible institution under this
3 Act shall be used only to supplement the amount of funds
4 that would, in the absence of the Federal funds provided
5 under this Act, be made available from non-Federal
6 sources or other Federal sources to carry out the activities
7 under this Act, and not to supplant such funds.

8 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

10 (1) COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT SUCCESS
11 PROGRAM.—The term “community college student
12 success program” means a program carried out by
13 an eligible institution under which the institution
14 carries out the following:

15 (A) Provides eligible students participating
16 in such program with an amount that covers
17 the cost of tuition and fees that are not covered
18 by any Federal, State, or institutional financial
19 assistance received by the student.

20 (B) Requires eligible students participating
21 in such program to—

22 (i) be enrolled in the eligible institu-
23 tion and carry a full-time academic work-
24 load during each fall and spring semester
25 (or equivalent terms) during which the stu-
26 dent participates in such program;

1 (ii) if the eligible student is referred
2 to remedial courses or on academic proba-
3 tion, meet, on at least a weekly basis, with
4 a tutor, except that in the case of an eligi-
5 ble student who is academically struggling,
6 but who is not referred to remedial courses
7 or on academic probation, the student may
8 meet with a tutor as often as the program
9 advisor for such student requires;

10 (iii) meet with a program advisor—

11 (I) twice each month during the
12 first semester (or equivalent term) of
13 participation in such program; and

14 (II) as directed by the program
15 advisor in subsequent semesters (or
16 equivalent terms) under subparagraph
17 (C)(ii); and

18 (iv) meet with an on-campus career
19 advisor or participate in a career services
20 event once each semester (or equivalent
21 term).

22 (C) Provides a program advisor to each eli-
23 gible student participating in such program
24 who—

1 (i) provides comprehensive academic
2 and personal advising to the eligible stu-
3 dent, including—

4 (I) the creation and implementa-
5 tion of an academic plan for the stu-
6 dent to graduate from a program of
7 study at the eligible institution within
8 150 percent of the normal time for
9 graduation from such program;

10 (II) if an eligible student is re-
11 ferred to remedial courses, encour-
12 aging such student to complete such
13 courses as quickly as possible; and

14 (III) assisting the eligible student
15 with developing and achieving aca-
16 demic goals, including creating strong
17 transfer pathways that demonstrate
18 programmatic transfer for students
19 interested in transferring to a 4-year
20 institution of higher education;

21 (ii) after the eligible student partici-
22 pating in such program completes a semes-
23 ter (or equivalent term), creates for the eli-
24 gible student a needs-based advising sched-
25 ule that indicates, based on the eligible

1 student's academic performance, the fre-
2 quency with which such eligible student
3 shall be required to meet with a program
4 advisor for each subsequent semester (or
5 equivalent term) of program participation;

6 (iii) has a caseload of not more than
7 150 eligible students;

8 (iv) tracks the attendance of the eligi-
9 ble student at the meetings described in
10 clauses (ii), (ii), and (iv) of subparagraph
11 (B);

12 (v) monitors the academic progress of
13 the eligible student; and

14 (vi) provides each eligible student who
15 meets the requirements of subparagraph
16 (B), on at least a monthly basis, with fi-
17 nancial incentives, such as a transportation
18 pass or a gas card.

19 (D) Provides free tutoring and career serv-
20 ices to eligible students participating in such
21 program, and may reserve places in select
22 courses for such eligible students in order to
23 create community within cohorts of eligible stu-
24 dents.

1 (2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligi-
2 ble institution” means a public 2-year institution of
3 higher education.

4 (3) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term “eligible
5 student” means a student enrolled at an eligible in-
6 stitution who—

7 (A) on the date such eligible student would
8 begin participation in a community college stu-
9 dent success program at such eligible institu-
10 tion—

11 (i) is enrolled in a program of study
12 leading to an associate degree;

13 (ii) is enrolled at such institution and
14 carrying a full-time academic workload
15 during each fall and spring semester (or
16 equivalent terms) during which the student
17 participates in such program;

18 (iii) is—

19 (I) a first-time undergraduate
20 student; or

21 (II) a continuing or transfer stu-
22 dent with not more than 15 credits
23 and a minimum grade point average
24 of 2.0 (or its equivalent); and

1 (iv) is considered by the eligible insti-
2 tution to need no more than two remedial
3 courses;

4 (B) if the student is eligible for financial
5 aid under title IV of the Higher Education Act
6 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), has com-
7 pleted the Free Application for Federal Student
8 Aid or other common financial reporting form
9 under section 483(a) of such Act (20 U.S.C.
10 1090(a)); and

11 (C) meets any other requirements estab-
12 lished by the institution.

13 (4) FULL-TIME ACADEMIC WORKLOAD.—The
14 term “full-time academic workload”, when used with
15 respect to an semester or equivalent term, means at
16 least 12 credits (or the equivalent).

17 (5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
18 term “institution of higher education” has the
19 meaning given the term under section 101 of the
20 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

21 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
22 the Secretary of Education.

23 (7) TRANSFER RATE.—The term “transfer
24 rate”, when used with respect to students enrolled in
25 a program of study at an eligible institution, means

1 the rate at which such students transfer to a 4-year
2 institution of higher education.

3 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
5 this Act \$10,000,000,000 for fiscal years 2018 through
6 2028, to be available until expended.

○