

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 883

To modify the Federal TRIO programs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 22, 2021

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. BALDWIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To modify the Federal TRIO 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 “Educational Oppor-
5 tunity and Success Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND AUTHORIZATION OF AP-**
7 **PROPRIATIONS FOR FEDERAL TRIO PRO-**
8 **GRAMS.**

9 (a) MINIMUM GRANTS.—Section 402A(b)(3) of the
10 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–
11 11(b)(3)) is amended—

1 (1) by striking “\$200,000” and inserting
2 “\$220,000”; and

3 (2) by striking “\$170,000” and inserting
4 “\$190,000”.

5 (b) PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING GRANTS AND CON-
6 TRACTS.—Section 402A(c) of the Higher Education Act
7 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(c)) is amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (2)(A)—

9 (A) in the subparagraph heading, by strik-
10 ing “PRIOR EXPERIENCE” and inserting
11 “PRIOR SUCCESS”;

12 (B) in the first sentence, by striking “prior
13 experience of high quality service delivery” and
14 inserting “prior success in achieving high qual-
15 ity service delivery”; and

16 (C) in the second sentence—

17 (i) by striking “prior experience shall
18 not” and inserting “prior success in
19 achieving high quality service delivery shall
20 not”; and

21 (ii) by striking “shall not be given
22 prior experience consideration” and insert-
23 ing “shall not be given such consider-
24 ation”; and

1 (2) by striking paragraph (8) and inserting the
2 following:

3 “(8) REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION BY THE SEC-
4 RETARY.—

5 “(A) GUIDANCE.—Not less than 90 days
6 before the commencement of each competition
7 for a grant under this chapter, the Secretary
8 shall issue nonregulatory guidance regarding
9 the rights and responsibilities of applicants with
10 respect to the application and evaluation proc-
11 ess for programs and projects assisted under
12 this chapter, including applicant access to peer
13 review comments. The guidance shall describe
14 the procedures for the submission, processing,
15 and scoring of applications for grants under
16 this chapter, including the information de-
17 scribed in subparagraph (B).

18 “(B) TECHNICAL COMPONENTS OF APPLI-
19 CATIONS.—

20 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT AND TREAT-
21 MENT OF NONSUBSTANTIVE TECHNICAL
22 COMPONENTS OF APPLICATIONS.—With re-
23 spect to any competition for a grant under
24 this chapter, the Secretary may only estab-
25 lish voluntary page limit and formatting

1 requirements for grant applications and
2 may not reject grant applications that do
3 not meet those voluntary requirements.
4 The Secretary may suggest page limits and
5 formatting standards, (including with re-
6 spect to font size, font style, font type, line
7 spacing, paragraph justification, and page
8 margins), but may not use noncompliance
9 with these suggested requirements as a
10 basis to reject or penalize grant applica-
11 tions.

12 “(ii) IDENTIFICATION AND TREAT-
13 MENT OF TECHNICAL BUDGET ERRORS IN
14 APPLICATIONS.—

15 “(I) IN GENERAL.—With respect
16 to any competition for a grant under
17 this chapter, the Secretary may not
18 reject or penalize grant applications
19 on the basis of a typographical or
20 rounding error in a proposed budget
21 until the Secretary has given the ap-
22 plicant an opportunity for correction
23 in accordance with subclause (II).

24 “(II) NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY
25 FOR CORRECTION.—The Secretary

1 shall provide notice and identification
2 of an error described in subclause (I)
3 by email and phone to the applicant
4 before awarding grants for each com-
5 petition. During a period of not fewer
6 than 14 days, the Secretary shall
7 allow the applicant to submit a re-
8 vised application that corrects the
9 identified error.

10 “(III) TREATMENT OF REVISED
11 APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall
12 treat the revised application in the
13 same manner as a timely submitted
14 application.

15 “(IV) FAILURE TO CORRECT.—If
16 an applicant has received a notice and
17 opportunity for correction of a typo-
18 graphical or rounding error in a pro-
19 posed budget in accordance with sub-
20 clause (II) and the applicant fails to
21 correct the error and submit a revised
22 application before the deadline de-
23 scribed in that subclause, the Sec-
24 retary may reject or penalize that
25 grant application.

1 “(C) REVIEW.—

2 “(i) REQUEST FOR REVIEW.—With
3 respect to any competition for a grant
4 under this chapter, an applicant may re-
5 quest a review if the applicant—

6 “(I) has evidence that a specific
7 technical, administrative, or scoring
8 error was made by the Department,
9 an agent of the Department, or a peer
10 reviewer, with respect to the scoring
11 or processing of a submitted applica-
12 tion; and

13 “(II) has otherwise met all of the
14 requirements for submission of the
15 application.

16 “(ii) ERROR MADE BY THE DEPART-
17 MENT.—In the case of evidence of error by
18 the Department or an agent of the Depart-
19 ment, other than a peer reviewer, the Sec-
20 retary shall review any evidence submitted
21 by the applicant and provide a timely re-
22 sponse to the applicant. If the Secretary
23 determines that an error was made by the
24 Department or an agent of the Depart-
25 ment, other than a peer reviewer, the Sec-

1 retary shall correct the error and accord-
2 ingly adjust the applicant score.

3 “(iii) ERROR MADE BY A PEER RE-
4 VIEWER.—

5 “(I) IN GENERAL.—In the case
6 of evidence of error by a peer re-
7 viewer, a secondary review panel shall
8 automatically and promptly evaluate
9 the application for consideration in
10 the applicable grant competition upon
11 receipt of a request by any such appli-
12 cant. Examples of errors warranting
13 secondary review may include—

14 “(aa) points withheld for
15 criteria not required in statute,
16 regulation, or guidance governing
17 a program under this chapter or
18 the application for a grant for
19 such program; or

20 “(bb) information pertaining
21 to selection criteria that was in-
22 correctly determined to be miss-
23 ing from an application.

24 “(II) TIMELY REVIEW AND RE-
25 PLACEMENT SCORE.—The secondary

1 review panel described in subclause (I)
2 shall conduct a secondary review in a
3 timely fashion, and the score resulting
4 from the secondary review shall re-
5 place the score from the initial peer
6 review.

7 “(III) COMPOSITION OF SEC-
8 ONDARY REVIEW PANEL.—The sec-
9 ondary review panel shall be composed
10 of reviewers each of whom—

11 “(aa) did not review the ap-
12 plication in the original peer re-
13 view;

14 “(bb) is a member of the co-
15 hort of peer reviewers for the
16 grant program that is the subject
17 of such secondary review; and

18 “(cc) to the extent prac-
19 ticable, has conducted peer re-
20 views in not less than 2 previous
21 competitions for the grant pro-
22 gram that is the subject of such
23 secondary review.

24 “(IV) FINAL SCORE.—The final
25 peer review score of an application

1 subject to a secondary review under
2 this clause shall promptly be adjusted
3 appropriately using the score awarded
4 by the secondary review panel, so as
5 not to interfere with the timely award-
6 ing of grants for the applicable grant
7 competition.

8 “(iv) FINALITY.—

9 “(I) IN GENERAL.—A determina-
10 tion by the Secretary under clause (ii)
11 shall not be reviewable by any officer
12 or employee of the Department other
13 than the Secretary.

14 “(II) SCORING.—The score
15 awarded by a secondary review panel
16 under clause (iii) shall not be review-
17 able by any officer or employee of the
18 Department other than the Secretary.

19 “(v) FUNDING OF APPLICATIONS
20 WITH CERTAIN ADJUSTED SCORES.—Appli-
21 cations with scores that are adjusted up-
22 ward under clause (ii) or (iii) that equal or
23 exceed the minimum cut-off score for the
24 applicable grant competition shall be fund-
25 ed by the Secretary using general or ad-

1 ministrative funds available to the Sec-
2 retary other than those funds appropriated
3 or allocated for the programs authorized
4 by this chapter.”.

5 (c) OUTREACH.—Section 402A(d)(3) of the Higher
6 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(d)(3)) is
7 amended by adding at the end the following: “The Sec-
8 retary shall also host at least one virtual, interactive train-
9 ing using telecommunications technology to ensure that
10 interested applicants have access to technical assistance.”.

11 (d) DOCUMENTATION OF STATUS AS A LOW-INCOME
12 INDIVIDUAL.—Section 402A(e) of the Higher Education
13 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(e)) is amended—

14 (1) in paragraph (1)—

15 (A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or”
16 after the semicolon;

17 (B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the
18 period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

19 and

20 (C) by adding at the end the following:

21 “(E) documentation that the student has
22 been determined to be eligible for a Federal Pell
23 Grant under section 401; or

24 “(F) for grants authorized under section
25 402B and 402F of this chapter, documentation

1 that a student is attending a school that had a
2 percentage of enrolled students who are identi-
3 fied students (as defined in section
4 11(a)(1)(F)(i) of the Richard B. Russell Na-
5 tional School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.
6 1759a(a)(1)(F)(i))) that meets or exceeds the
7 threshold described in section 11(a)(1)(F)(viii)
8 of that Act during the school year prior to the
9 first year of the period for which such grant is
10 awarded.”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (2)—

12 (A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or”
13 after the semicolon;

14 (B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the
15 period at the end and inserting a semicolon;
16 and

17 (C) by adding at the end the following:

18 “(E) documentation that the student has
19 been determined to be eligible for a Federal Pell
20 Grant under section 401; or

21 “(F) for grants authorized under section
22 402B and 402F of this chapter, documentation
23 that a student is attending a school that had a
24 percentage of enrolled students who are identi-
25 fied students (as defined in section

1 11(a)(1)(F)(i) of the Richard B. Russell Na-
2 tional School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.
3 1759a(a)(1)(F)(i))) that meets or exceeds the
4 threshold described in section 11(a)(1)(F)(viii)
5 of that Act during the school year prior to the
6 first year of the period for which such grant is
7 awarded.”.

8 (e) OUTCOME CRITERIA.—Section 402A(f) of the
9 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(g))
10 is amended—

11 (1) in paragraph (1)—

12 (A) in the paragraph heading, by striking
13 “PRIOR EXPERIENCE” and inserting “PRIOR
14 SUCCESS”;

15 (B) by striking “January 1, 2009” and in-
16 serting “the date of enactment of the Edu-
17 cational Opportunity and Success Act of 2021”;
18 and

19 (C) by striking “prior experience of” and
20 inserting “prior success in achieving”; and

21 (2) in paragraph (3)—

22 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

23 (i) in clause (iv), by striking “that will
24 make such students eligible for programs
25 such as the Academic Competitiveness

1 Grants Program” and inserting “that in-
2 cludes at least 4 years of mathematics, 3
3 years of science, and 2 years of a foreign
4 language”;

5 (ii) by redesignating clauses (v) and
6 (vi) as clauses (vi) and (vii), respectively;
7 and

8 (iii) inserting after clause (iv), the fol-
9 lowing:

10 “(v) the completion of financial aid
11 applications, including the Free Applica-
12 tion for Federal Student Aid described in
13 section 483(a) and college admissions ap-
14 plications”;

15 (B) in subparagraph (B)—

16 (i) in the matter preceding clause (i),
17 by inserting “except in the case of pro-
18 grams that are specifically designed for
19 veterans,” after “402C”;

20 (ii) in clause (v), by striking “that will
21 make such students eligible for programs
22 such as the Academic Competitiveness
23 Grants Program” and inserting “that in-
24 cludes at least 4 years of mathematics, 3

1 years of science, and 2 years of a foreign
2 language”;

3 (iii) by redesignating clauses (vi) and
4 (vii) as clauses (vii) and (viii), respectively;
5 and

6 (iv) inserting after clause (v), the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(vi) the completion of financial aid
9 applications, including the Free Applica-
10 tion for Federal Student Aid described in
11 section 483(a) and college admissions ap-
12 plications;”;

13 (C) by redesignating subparagraphs (C)
14 through (E) as subparagraphs (D) through (F),
15 respectively;

16 (D) by inserting after subparagraph (B)
17 the following:

18 “(C) For programs authorized under sec-
19 tion 402C that are specifically designed for vet-
20 erans, the extent to which the eligible entity
21 met or exceeded the entity’s objectives for such
22 program regarding—

23 “(i) the delivery of service to a total
24 number of students served by the program,

1 as agreed upon by the entity and the Sec-
2 retary for the period of the program;

3 “(ii) such students’ academic perform-
4 ance as measured by standardized tests;

5 “(iii) the retention and completion of
6 participants in the program;

7 “(iv) the provision of assistance to
8 students served by the program in com-
9 pleting financial aid applications, including
10 the Free Application for Federal Student
11 Aid described in section 483(a) and college
12 admission applications;

13 “(v) the enrollment of such students
14 in an institution of higher education; and

15 “(vi) to the extent practicable, the
16 postsecondary completion of such stu-
17 dents;”;

18 (E) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated
19 by subparagraph (C), by striking clause (ii) and
20 inserting the following:

21 “(ii)(I) in the case of an entity that is
22 an institution of higher education offering
23 a baccalaureate degree, the extent to which
24 the entity met or exceeded the entity’s ob-
25 jectives regarding the percentage of such

1 students' completion of a baccalaureate de-
2 gree at any baccalaureate granting institu-
3 tion within 6 years of initial enrollment in
4 the project; or

5 “(II) in the case of an entity that is
6 an institution of higher education that does
7 not offer a baccalaureate degree, the extent
8 to which such students met or exceeded—

9 “(aa) the entity's objective re-
10 garding the transfer of such students
11 to institutions of higher education
12 that offer baccalaureate degrees, re-
13 gardless of whether the transferring
14 student completes a degree or certifi-
15 cate; and

16 “(bb) the entity's objective re-
17 garding the completion of a degree or
18 certificate by such students at the in-
19 stitution or any accredited institution
20 within 4 years of initial enrollment in
21 the project;”;

22 (F) by amending subparagraph (E), as re-
23 designated by subparagraph (C), to read as fol-
24 lows:

1 “(E) For programs authorized under sec-
2 tion 402E, the extent to which the entity met
3 or exceeded—

4 “(i) the entity’s objective regarding
5 the delivery of service to a total number of
6 students served by the program, as agreed
7 upon by the entity and the Secretary for
8 the period;

9 “(ii) the entity’s objective regarding
10 the provision of appropriate scholarly and
11 research activities for the students served
12 by the program;

13 “(iii) the entity’s objective regarding
14 the acceptance and enrollment of such stu-
15 dents in graduate programs within 2 years
16 of receiving the baccalaureate degree;

17 “(iv) the entity’s objective regarding
18 the continued enrollment of such students
19 in graduate study; and

20 “(v) the entity’s objective regarding
21 the attainment of doctoral degrees by
22 former program participants within 10
23 years of receiving the baccalaureate de-
24 gree.”; and

1 (G) in subparagraph (F), as redesignated
2 by subparagraph (C)—

3 (i) in clause (i), by inserting “within
4 2 years of participation in the program”
5 after “such diploma or equivalent”; and

6 (ii) in clause (ii), by inserting “or re-
7 enrollment” after “the enrollment”.

8 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
9 402A(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
10 1070a–11(g)) is amended to read as follows:

11 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
12 purpose of making grants and contracts under this chap-
13 ter, there are authorized to be appropriated
14 \$1,100,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 and such sums as
15 may be necessary for each of the five succeeding fiscal
16 years. Of the amount appropriated under this chapter, the
17 Secretary may use no more than 1 percent of such amount
18 to obtain additional qualified readers and additional staff
19 to review applications, to increase the level of oversight
20 monitoring, to support impact studies, program assess-
21 ments, and reviews, and to provide technical assistance to
22 potential applicants and current grantees.”.

23 (g) DEFINITIONS.—Section 402A(h) of the Higher
24 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(h)) is

1 amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(4) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.—The term
4 ‘low-income individual’ means—

5 “(A) an individual from a family whose ad-
6 justable gross income for the preceding year did
7 not exceed 150 percent of an amount equal to
8 the poverty level determined by using criteria of
9 poverty established by the Bureau of the Cen-
10 sus;

11 “(B) an individual from a family whose ad-
12 justable gross income, as reported on the indi-
13 vidual’s most recently completed Free Applica-
14 tion for Federal Student Aid, did not exceed
15 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty
16 level determined by using criteria of poverty es-
17 tablished by the Bureau of the Census for that
18 year;

19 “(C) an individual who has been deter-
20 mined to be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant
21 under section 401; or

22 “(D) for grants authorized under section
23 402B and 402F of this chapter, a student who
24 is attending a school that had a percentage of
25 enrolled students who are identified students

1 (as defined in section 11(a)(1)(F)(i) of the
2 Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act
3 (42 U.S.C. 1759a(a)(1)(F)(i))) that meets or
4 exceeds the threshold described in section
5 11(a)(1)(F)(viii) of that Act during the school
6 year prior to the first year of the period for
7 which such grant is awarded.”.

8 **SEC. 3. UPWARD BOUND.**

9 Section 402C(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
10 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–13(f)) is amended—

- 11 (1) by striking “\$60” and inserting “\$90”;
- 12 (2) by striking “\$300” and inserting “\$450”;
- 13 (3) by striking “\$40” and inserting “\$60”; and
- 14 (4) by adding at the end the following: “Adults
15 participating in a project that is specifically designed
16 for veterans under this section may be paid stipends
17 not in excess of \$100 per month during the year.”

18 **SEC. 4. POSTBACCALAUREATE ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

19 **AUTHORITY.**

20 Section 402E of the Higher Education Act of 1965
21 (20 USC 1070a–15) is amended—

- 22 (1) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “summer
23 internships” and inserting “internships or faculty-
24 led research experiences”;

1 (2) in subsection (d)(4), by striking “summer
2 research internships” and inserting “research intern-
3 ships or faculty-led research experiences”; and

4 (3) in subsection (f)(1), by striking “\$2,800”
5 and inserting “\$4,000”.

○