

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1409

To direct the Secretary of Education to carry out a grant program for skills-for-success courses for all first-year students enrolled at certain institutions of higher education.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 18, 2025

Mrs. FOUSHEE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Education to carry out a grant program for skills-for-success courses for all first-year students enrolled at certain institutions of higher education.

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 “College Thriving Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED; APPLICATION RE-**
6 **QUIREMENTS.**

7 (a) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From the
8 amounts available under section 5, the Secretary of Edu-

1 cation shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligi-
2 ble institutions to carry out skills-for-success courses for
3 all first-year students enrolled at such institutions.

4 (b) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
5 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible institu-
6 tions in which at least 50 percent of all students enrolled
7 during the most recent academic year were eligible to re-
8 ceive a Federal Pell Grant under section 401 of the Higher
9 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a) for the award
10 year applicable to such academic year.

11 (c) GRANT PERIOD; MINIMUM GRANT AMOUNT.—

12 (1) GRANT PERIOD.—A grant awarded to an el-
13 igible institution under this Act shall be for a 5-year
14 grant period.

15 (2) GRANT AMOUNT.—A grant awarded to an
16 eligible institution under this Act shall be awarded
17 in such an amount as determined necessary by the
18 Secretary for the institution to carry out the activi-
19 ties described in section 3.

20 (d) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible to
21 receive a grant under this Act, an eligible institution shall
22 submit an application at such time, and in such manner,
23 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
24 quire, which shall include a

25 (1) description of—

1 (A) the skills-for-success course that the
 2 institution will develop and implement with the
 3 grant; and

4 (B) the activities the institution will carry
 5 out under each phase described in section 3(b);
 6 and

7 (2) a request for a specific grant amount, and
 8 a justification for such amount.

9 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall,
 10 upon request, provide technical assistance to eligible insti-
 11 tutions in applying for a grant under this Act. In pro-
 12 viding such technical assistance, the Secretary shall
 13 prioritize eligible institutions described in subsection (b).

14 **SEC. 3. USES OF FUNDS; REPORT.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible institution receiving
 16 a grant under this section shall develop and implement
 17 a skills-for-success course by carrying out the activities
 18 listed in each of the 4 phases described in subsection (b).

19 (b) PHASES FOR USES OF FUNDS.—

20 (1) PREPARATION PHASE.—During the first
 21 year of the grant period, the eligible institution shall
 22 use such grant to develop the skills-for-success
 23 course and carry out the necessary preparation ac-
 24 tivities, which may include—

1 (A) the promotion of relationship building
2 among students who have similar dates of en-
3 rollment;

4 (B) identifying and training instructional
5 staff;

6 (C) obtaining support from faculty, staff,
7 or institution administration for the curricular
8 adaptation;

9 (D) developing infrastructure for imple-
10 mentation, including obtaining necessary course
11 and syllabus approvals;

12 (E) determining how student registration
13 will be handled;

14 (F) establishing a course evaluation model;
15 and

16 (G) designating appropriate classroom
17 space.

18 (2) PILOT PHASE.—During the second year of
19 the grant period, the eligible institution shall use
20 such grant to implement—

21 (A) a pilot skills-for-success course; and

22 (B) a pilot of methods for evaluating the
23 course that includes an evaluation of the impact
24 of such course on student behavior and other
25 impacts, such as observation and solicitation of

1 feedback from course instructors, students, and
2 identified campus community leaders.

3 (3) IMPLEMENTATION.—During the third,
4 fourth, and fifth years of the grant program, the eli-
5 gible institution shall use such grant to—

6 (A) fully implement the skills-for-success
7 course that—

8 (i) is made available for each first-
9 year student enrolled at the institution, at
10 the beginning of such students' first term
11 of enrollment at such institution, to the ex-
12 tent practicable; and

13 (ii) incorporates the improvements
14 identified—

15 (I) in the case of the third year
16 of the grant program, during the pilot
17 skills-for-success course; or

18 (II) in the case of the fourth and
19 fifth years of the grant program, dur-
20 ing the evaluation of the course dur-
21 ing the preceding grant year; and

22 (B) evaluate the full implementation of
23 such course using the methods identified as
24 being most effective for such an evaluation—

1 (i) in the case of the third year of the
2 grant program, during the pilot skills-for-
3 success course; or

4 (ii) in the case of the fourth and fifth
5 years of the grant program, during the
6 preceding grant year.

7 (c) REPORT.—Each eligible institution that receives
8 a grant under this Act shall submit to the Secretary a
9 report upon the completion of the 5-year grant period,
10 which shall include—

11 (1) an evaluation of the pilot skills-for-success
12 course, and each of the evaluations completed pursu-
13 ant to subsection (b)(3)(B); and

14 (2) a description of how such grant was used
15 during each year of the grant period.

16 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

17 In this Act:

18 (1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligi-
19 ble institution” has the meaning given the term “in-
20 stitution of higher education” in section 101(a) of
21 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
22 1001(a)) and section 102(a)(1)(B) of such Act (20
23 U.S.C.1002(a)(1)(B)).

24 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
25 the Secretary of Education.

1 (3) SKILLS-FOR-SUCCESS COURSE.—The term
2 “skills-for-success course” means a course offered by
3 an eligible institution for first-year students (includ-
4 ing transfer students) at the beginning of such stu-
5 dents’ first term of enrollment at such institution
6 that—

7 (A) has a low student-to-teacher ratio;

8 (B) is not graded or is pass-fail; and

9 (C) provides skills for success in college,
10 and includes each of the following topics:

11 (i) Development of connections with
12 campus partners (academic advisors) or
13 engagement with campus resources (cam-
14 pus mental health counselors).

15 (ii) Mental wellbeing.

16 (iii) Time management skills.

17 (iv) Planning and organization skills.

18 (v) Coping with stress and setbacks.

19 (vi) Managing conflict and difference.

20 (vii) Goal setting.

21 (viii) Building and maintaining
22 healthy interpersonal relationships.

23 (ix) Self-care and compassion.

1 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000
3 to carry out this Act, which shall remain available until
4 expended.

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