

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3994

To improve data collection related to student parents pursuing higher education, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 12, 2025

Ms. ROSS (for herself, Mrs. MCBATH, and Mr. BACON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

---

## A BILL

To improve data collection related to student parents pursuing higher education, 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,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Understanding Stu-  
5       dent Parent Outcomes Act of 2025”.

6       **SEC. 2. DATA ON STUDENT PARENTS PURSUING HIGHER**  
7       **EDUCATION.**

8       (a) IPEDS DATA ELEMENTS.—The Commissioner of  
9       Education Statistics shall carry out the following:

1           (1)(A) To ensure consistency of the data col-  
2           lected pursuant to paragraph (B), establish a com-  
3           mon definition of the term “parenting student” that  
4           covers any student who identifies as a parent or  
5           caregiver of a dependent child, in consultation with  
6           groups that include—

7                   (i) students who are parents or caregivers  
8                   of dependent children;

9                   (ii) experts in data collection related to  
10                  such students;

11                  (iii) support staff at institutions of higher  
12                  education for such students;

13                  (iv) financial aid administrators at institu-  
14                  tions of higher education; and

15                  (v) research staff at institutions of higher  
16                  education.

17           (B)(i) Not later than 2 years after the date of  
18           the enactment of this Act, develop data elements re-  
19           lated to parenting students (as such term is defined  
20           pursuant to subparagraph (A)) attending institu-  
21           tions of higher education for the surveys conducted  
22           as a part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education  
23           Data System (IPEDS) or any other Federal postsec-  
24           ondary institution data collection effort, to collect  
25           data related to such parenting students that shall be

1       disaggregated in accordance with clause (ii), and  
2       which includes data elements on—

3               (I) the number of parenting students;

4               (II) the enrollment, retention, and comple-  
5       tion rates of parenting students;

6               (III) the average individual net price  
7       charged to parenting students by institutions of  
8       higher education (as determined based on the  
9       calculation of the individual net price of an in-  
10      stitution of higher education for a student  
11      under section 132(h)(2) of the Higher Edu-  
12      cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a(h)(2)));

13              (IV) the marital status of such students  
14      (reported in aggregate by marital status cat-  
15      egories);

16              (V) the number of such students who are  
17      employed for all or part of the academic year  
18      while enrolled;

19              (VI) the median income of such students,  
20      and the number of such students in each in-  
21      come category (determined in accordance with  
22      section 132(i)(6) of the Higher Education Act  
23      of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a(i)(6)));

1 (VII) the number of such students who are  
2 enrolled in an associate, baccalaureate, or grad-  
3 uate degree program, or a certificate program;

4 (VIII) the number of such students who  
5 are enrolled full-time, part-time, or less than  
6 part-time;

7 (IX) the number of such students who are  
8 Federal Pell grant recipients;

9 (X) the number of such students who use  
10 campus-based childcare services;

11 (XI) the number and age of dependent  
12 children of such students;

13 (XII) the disability status of dependent  
14 children of such students; and

15 (XIII) the transfer status of such students  
16 (without regard to whether such students were  
17 admitted as a transfer student or not).

18 (ii) Any data collected using the data elements  
19 developed pursuant to clause (i) shall be  
20 disaggregated—

21 (I) by students who identify as a parent of  
22 a dependent child; and

23 (II) by students who identify as a caregiver  
24 of a dependent child.

1           (2) Not later than 2 years after the date of en-  
2           actment of this Act, include the experts described in  
3           paragraph (1)(A)(ii) in the technical and scientific  
4           peer-review groups and scientific program advisory  
5           committees authorized under section 114(g) of the  
6           Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C.  
7           9514(g)) to advise, on a continuous basis, the Com-  
8           missioner on best practices related to data collection  
9           on parenting students (as such term is defined pur-  
10          suant to paragraph (1)(A)).

11          (3) Beginning with academic year 2026–2027  
12          and annually thereafter—

13                (A) collect information on the data ele-  
14                ments described in paragraph (1)(B) with re-  
15                spect to, at a minimum, the institutions of  
16                higher education required to complete, pursuant  
17                to section 487(a)(17) of the Higher Education  
18                Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(17)), the sur-  
19                veys described in paragraph (1)(B); and

20                (B) disaggregate the information col-  
21                lected—

22                       (i) by race and ethnicity; and

23                       (ii) by gender.

24          (b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of  
25          Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Edu-

1 cation Statistics, shall provide technical assistance to  
2 States and institutions of higher education related to de-  
3 veloping and carrying out State and institutional data col-  
4 lection mechanisms for data on the parental status of stu-  
5 dents collected in accordance with subsection (a), includ-  
6 ing—

7           (1) how to leverage existing systems, surveys,  
8           and other data collection mechanisms to collect and  
9           report such data, and examples and best practices  
10          related to data collection and privacy;

11          (2) integration and reporting of such data with  
12          State information systems, including statewide longi-  
13          tudinal data systems;

14          (3) how to account for data elements that  
15          change over time; and

16          (4) recommendations of best practices to insti-  
17          tutions of higher education related to communicating  
18          with students about data use and privacy, including  
19          how data will be used to help students who are par-  
20          ents or caregivers of dependent children.

21 **SEC. 3. STUDY ON IMPROVING STUDENT PARENT OUT-**  
22 **COMES.**

23          (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Education shall con-  
24          duct a study of a demographically and geographically rep-  
25          resentative sample of institutions of higher education (as

1 determined by the Secretary) on best practices of institu-  
2 tions of higher education that improve outcomes for stu-  
3 dents attending institutions of higher education who are  
4 parents or caregivers of dependent children. Such study  
5 shall include qualitative and quantitative research on—

6           (1) the enrollment, persistence, and retention of  
7       students attending institutions of higher education  
8       who are parents or caregivers of dependent children,  
9       disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, income, and  
10      the type of program in which such students are en-  
11      rolled (such as an associate, baccalaureate, or grad-  
12      uate degree program, or a certificate program);

13          (2) the effects of the availability of campus-  
14      based childcare services on such outcomes of stu-  
15      dents who are parents or caregivers of dependent  
16      children, including a comparison of students whose  
17      children are served by the campus-based childcare  
18      services with students whose children are not served  
19      by campus-based childcare services;

20          (3) enrollment trends of students who are par-  
21      ents or caregivers of dependent children to attend  
22      certain institutions or types of institutions, and  
23      whether such trends and preferences are based on  
24      the availability of institutional support services for  
25      such students, such as campus-based childcare, stu-

1       dent parent centers, and grants under the Child  
2       Care Access Means Parents in School Program  
3       under subpart 7 of part A of title IV of the Higher  
4       Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e);

5               (4) the percentage of children served by cam-  
6       pus-based childcare services who are the children of  
7       students, compared to the percentage of such chil-  
8       dren who are children of faculty, staff, and other  
9       community members, disaggregated by—

10              (A) race, ethnicity, gender, employment or  
11              student status (including faculty, staff, commu-  
12              nity member, and student status), and family  
13              income of the parent of such children; and

14              (B) only with respect to students who are  
15              parents of such children, the type of program in  
16              which the student is enrolled (such as an asso-  
17              ciate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree pro-  
18              gram, or a certificate program); and

19               (5) the strategies used by institutions of higher  
20       education for integration of on-campus services for  
21       students who are parents or caregivers of dependent  
22       children with other State and institution-provided  
23       services, such as the supplemental nutrition assist-  
24       ance program established under the Food and Nutri-  
25       tion Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the pro-

1       gram of block grants for States for temporary as-  
2       sistance for needy families established under part A  
3       of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601  
4       et seq.), the special supplemental nutrition program  
5       for women, infants, and children under the Child  
6       Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), workforce  
7       programs including adult education and literacy ac-  
8       tivities (as defined in section 203 of the Workforce  
9       Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3272)),  
10      and Head Start and Early Head Start programs  
11      carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C.  
12      9831 et seq.).

13      (b) REPORT AND DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS.—  
14      Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment  
15      of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall report the  
16      findings of the study conducted under subsection (a) to  
17      Congress, and make such findings publicly available. Such  
18      findings shall include information on the best practices  
19      identified by the Secretary to be most effective at improv-  
20      ing outcomes for students attending institutions of higher  
21      education who are parents or caregivers of dependent chil-  
22      dren.

23      **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

24      In this Act:

1           (1) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The  
2       term “institution of higher education” has the  
3       meaning given the term section 102 of the Higher  
4       Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

5           (2) STATE.—The term “State” has the mean-  
6       ing given the term in section 103 of the Higher  
7       Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

○