

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7117

To increase rates of college completion and reduce college costs by accelerating time to degree, aligning secondary and postsecondary education, and improving postsecondary credit transfer.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 15, 2026

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

A BILL

To increase rates of college completion and reduce college costs by accelerating time to degree, aligning secondary and postsecondary education, and improving postsecondary credit transfer.

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 and
5 Through College Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ACCELERATING TIME TO DEGREE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part A of title IV of the Higher
3 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) is amend-
4 ed—

5 (1) by redesignating subparts 5, 6, and 7, as
6 subparts 6, 7, and 8, respectively; and

7 (2) by inserting after subpart 4 the following:

8 **“Subpart 5—Accelerating Time to Degree**

9 **“SEC. 416A. PURPOSE.**

10 “The purpose of this subpart is to increase rates of
11 college completion and reduce college costs by accelerating
12 time to degree, aligning secondary and postsecondary edu-
13 cation, and improving postsecondary credit transfer.

14 **“SEC. 416B. DEFINITIONS.**

15 “In this subpart:

16 “(1) ADVANCED COURSEWORK.—The term ‘ad-
17 vanced coursework’ means coursework designed for
18 students to earn postsecondary credit upon its suc-
19 cessful completion while still in high school, such as
20 coursework associated with Advanced Placement,
21 International Baccalaureate, a dual or concurrent
22 enrollment program, and early college high school
23 programs.

24 “(2) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.—
25 The term ‘career and technical education’ has the
26 meaning given the term in section 3 of the Carl D.

1 Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of
2 2006.

3 “(3) DUAL OR CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT
4 PROGRAM.—The term ‘dual or concurrent enrollment
5 program’ has the meaning given the term in section
6 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
7 Act of 1965.

8 “(4) EARLY COLLEGE FAST TRACK PATHWAY.—
9 The term ‘early college fast track pathway’ means a
10 sequence of dual or concurrent enrollment program
11 courses, Advanced Placement courses, International
12 Baccalaureate courses, or other advanced
13 coursework or assessments approved by the eligible
14 entity taken at any point during high school that—

15 “(A) when taken together, constitute a
16 typical first year of study toward an associate
17 degree or baccalaureate degree, or, in the case
18 of postsecondary credit in career and technical
19 education earned through dual or concurrent
20 enrollment program course sequences, the first
21 year of study toward a recognized postsec-
22 ondary credential for a high-skill, high-wage, or
23 in-demand industry sector or occupation; and

24 “(B) if completed successfully, results in
25 credit that—

1 “(i) is equivalent to the academic
2 workload of not less than 2 semesters of
3 full-time postsecondary enrollment;

4 “(ii) satisfies requirements for the
5 State’s regular high school diploma; and

6 “(iii) is a part of the statewide articu-
7 lation agreements described in clauses (iv)
8 and (v) of section 416C(f)(2)(D), except
9 that a pathway designed for earning post-
10 secondary credit in career and technical
11 education through a dual or concurrent en-
12 rollment program leading to a recognized
13 postsecondary credential may be part of an
14 articulation agreement that includes some,
15 but not all, public institutions of higher
16 education in the State.

17 “(5) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.—The
18 term ‘early college high school’ has the meaning
19 given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary
20 and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

21 “(6) EARLY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION FAST
22 TRACK PATHWAY.—The term ‘early high school
23 graduation fast track pathway’ means a scholarship
24 provided to a student who—

1 “(A) graduates high school early consistent
2 with a State’s early high school graduation pol-
3 icy;

4 “(B) does not require remedial coursework
5 in postsecondary education consistent with a
6 State’s postsecondary course placement stand-
7 ards described in section 416C(f)(2)(D)(iii);
8 and

9 “(C) attends any public 2-year or 4-year
10 institution of higher education that is a part of
11 the eligible entity.

12 “(7) EARLY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION POL-
13 ICY.—The term ‘early high school graduation policy’
14 means a statewide policy adopted by all local edu-
15 cational agencies in a State that—

16 “(A) allows students the opportunity to
17 earn a regular high school diploma in not more
18 than 3 years;

19 “(B) is based in whole or in part on stu-
20 dent performance on valid and reliable assess-
21 ments aligned with the challenging State aca-
22 demic standards required under section
23 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary
24 Education Act of 1965, which may include a

1 nationally recognized high school academic as-
2 sessment;

3 “(C) may permit students to earn required
4 credit hours for a regular high school diploma
5 through a demonstration of competency; and

6 “(D) includes support for students to en-
7 sure a successful matriculation to postsecondary
8 education.

9 “(8) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
10 tity’ means a partnership that, with respect to a
11 State—

12 “(A) shall include—

13 “(i) the State educational agency;

14 “(ii) either—

15 “(I) the State public higher edu-
16 cation system inclusive of all 2-year
17 and 4-year public institutions of high-
18 er education in the State; or

19 “(II) a consortium of the State’s
20 public higher education institutions or
21 systems that, together, is inclusive of
22 all 2-year and 4-year public institu-
23 tions of higher education in the State;
24 and

1 “(iii) 1 or more local educational
2 agencies, including at least 1 high-need
3 local educational agency located in the
4 State; and

5 “(B) may include—

6 “(i) a consortium of entities described
7 in subparagraph (A) from different States;

8 “(ii) 1 or more public or nonprofit
9 private institutions of higher education;
10 and

11 “(iii) 1 or more businesses, nonprofit
12 organizations, State workforce agencies, or
13 State workforce development boards estab-
14 lished under section 101 of the Workforce
15 Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
16 U.S.C. 3111).

17 “(9) EVIDENCE-BASED.—The term ‘evidence-
18 based’ has the meaning given the term in section
19 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
20 Act of 1965.

21 “(10) FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STU-
22 DENT.—The term ‘first-generation college student’
23 means—

24 “(A) an individual both of whose parents
25 did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or

1 “(B) in the case of any individual who reg-
2 ularly resided with and received support from
3 only 1 parent, an individual whose only such
4 parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

5 “(11) GOVERNOR.—The term ‘Governor’ means
6 the chief executive officer of a State.

7 “(12) HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
8 CY.—The term ‘high-need local educational agency’
9 means a local educational agency—

10 “(A) that serves not fewer than 10,000
11 children from families with incomes below the
12 poverty line;

13 “(B) for which not less than 20 percent of
14 the children served by the agency are from fam-
15 ilies with incomes below the poverty line;

16 “(C) that is in the highest quartile of local
17 educational agencies in the State, based on stu-
18 dent poverty; or

19 “(D) for which not less than 75 percent of
20 the children served by the agency are histori-
21 cally underrepresented students.

22 “(13) HIGH SCHOOL.—The term ‘high school’
23 has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of
24 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
25 1965.

1 “(14) HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED
2 STUDENT.—The term ‘historically underrepresented
3 student’ means—

4 “(A) a student, or prospective student, at
5 an institution of higher education who is at risk
6 of educational failure or otherwise in need of
7 special assistance and support; and

8 “(B) may include an adult learner, work-
9 ing student, part-time student, student from a
10 low-income background, student of color, Native
11 youth, single parent (including a single preg-
12 nant woman), student who is a homeless child
13 or youth, youth who is in, or has aged out of,
14 the foster care system, first-generation college
15 student, and student with a disability.

16 “(15) IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCU-
17 PATION.—The term ‘in-demand industry sector or
18 occupation’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
19 tion 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
20 Act.

21 “(16) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
22 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
23 meaning given the term in section 101(a).

24 “(17) MIDDLE GRADES.—The term ‘middle
25 grades’ has the meaning given the term in section

1 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
2 Act of 1965.

3 “(18) **NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HIGH SCHOOL**
4 **ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT.**—The term ‘nationally rec-
5 ognized high school academic assessment’ means an
6 assessment of high school students’ knowledge and
7 skills that is administered in multiple States and is
8 recognized by institutions of higher education in
9 those or other States for the purposes of entrance or
10 placement into courses in postsecondary education
11 or training programs.

12 “(19) **PARENT.**—The term ‘parent’ has the
13 meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Ele-
14 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

15 “(20) **RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDEN-**
16 **TIAL.**—The term ‘recognized postsecondary creden-
17 tial’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of
18 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

19 “(21) **REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.**—The
20 term ‘regular high school diploma’ has the meaning
21 given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary
22 and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

23 “(22) **STATE.**—The term ‘State’ means each of
24 the 50 States of the United States, the Common-
25 wealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia,

1 Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin
2 Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern
3 Mariana Islands.

4 “(23) SUBGROUP OF STUDENTS.—The term
5 ‘subgroup of students’ means—

6 “(A) economically disadvantaged students;

7 “(B) students from each major racial and
8 ethnic group;

9 “(C) children with disabilities, as defined
10 in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabil-
11 ities Education Act;

12 “(D) English learners, as defined in sec-
13 tion 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary
14 Education Act of 1965;

15 “(E) students disaggregated by gender;

16 “(F) migratory children, as described in
17 section 1309(3) of the Elementary and Sec-
18 ondary Education Act of 1965;

19 “(G) homeless children and youths, as de-
20 fined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento
21 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);

22 “(H) students who are in foster care or are
23 aging out of the foster care system; and

24 “(I) students with a parent who is a mem-
25 ber of the Armed Forces (as defined in section

1 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code) on
2 active duty (as defined in section 101(d) of
3 such title).

4 “(24) WORK-BASED LEARNING.—The term
5 ‘work-based learning’ has the meaning given the
6 term in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and
7 Technical Education Act of 2006.

8 **“SEC. 416C. COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO STATES.**

9 “(a) RESERVATIONS.—From the total amount appro-
10 priated under section 416I for a fiscal year, the Secretary
11 shall reserve—

12 “(1) 2 percent to conduct the evaluation de-
13 scribed under section 416F; and

14 “(2) 2 percent for technical assistance and dis-
15 semination, which may include—

16 “(A) providing, directly or through grants,
17 contracts, or cooperative agreements, technical
18 assistance on using evidence-based practices to
19 improve the outcomes of activities funded under
20 this subpart; and

21 “(B) disseminating information on evi-
22 dence-based practices that are successful in im-
23 proving the quality of activities funded under
24 this subpart.

25 “(b) GRANTS.—

1 “(1) AWARDS.—From the total amount of
2 funds available under section 416I for a fiscal year
3 and not reserved under subsection (a), the Secretary
4 shall award grants on a competitive basis to eligible
5 entities to implement activities described under sec-
6 tion 416D.

7 “(2) LIMITATION.—A State may not receive
8 (whether individually or as part of a consortium) a
9 grant under this subpart more than once.

10 “(c) GRANT DURATION.—Grants awarded under this
11 subpart shall be for a period of 5 years.

12 “(d) DIVERSITY OF PROJECTS.—In awarding grants
13 under this subpart, the Secretary shall ensure that, to the
14 extent practicable, grants are distributed among eligible
15 entities that will serve geographically diverse areas, includ-
16 ing urban, suburban, and rural areas.

17 “(e) PRIORITIES.—In awarding grants under this
18 subpart, the Secretary shall give priority to applications
19 that—

20 “(1) demonstrate experience in the successful
21 adoption or implementation of policies and programs
22 described within the application requirements under
23 subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subsection (f)(2) and
24 uses of funds for evidence-based practices under sec-
25 tion 416D;

1 “(2) prioritize implementation of at least 1
2 early college fast track pathway in multiple high-
3 need local educational agencies at the beginning of
4 the grant period;

5 “(3) propose to develop multiple early college
6 fast track pathways, including an early college fast
7 track pathway that includes career and technical
8 education and work-based learning aligned with
9 high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors
10 or occupations;

11 “(4) propose to provide a larger award size in
12 its early high school graduation fast track pathway
13 relative to the size of the maximum Federal Pell
14 Grant award under subpart 1;

15 “(5) propose to expand access to advanced
16 coursework for students who are not eligible for the
17 early college fast track pathway or early high school
18 graduation fast track pathway; and

19 “(6) use school quality or student success indi-
20 cators to hold high schools accountable, consistent
21 with section 1111(c)(4)(B)(v) of the Elementary and
22 Secondary Education Act of 1965, that measure ac-
23 cess to and completion of advanced coursework, dual
24 or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college

1 high school programs or postsecondary enrollment,
2 remediation, or first-year credit attainment.

3 “(f) APPLICATION.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to receive a grant
5 under subsection (b) for any fiscal year, the Gov-
6 ernor of a State shall submit an application to the
7 Secretary, at such time, in such manner, and con-
8 taining such information as the Secretary may rea-
9 sonably require.

10 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted
11 by a Governor under this subsection shall include
12 the following:

13 “(A) The vision of the eligible entity for
14 aligning high school and higher education.

15 “(B) Signatures from the Governor, chief
16 State school officer, and State higher education
17 executive officer.

18 “(C) Evidence for each State within the el-
19 igible entity demonstrating adoption of—

20 “(i) an early high school graduation
21 policy; and

22 “(ii) uniform statewide criteria for the
23 receipt of postsecondary, nonelective credit
24 at all public institutions of higher edu-
25 cation in the eligible entity based on per-

1 formance on Advanced Placement and
2 International Baccalaureate course exami-
3 nations, and, at the discretion of the eligi-
4 ble entity, other assessments.

5 “(D) A description of how the eligible enti-
6 ty will, not later than 2 years after the date of
7 the initial receipt of funds under this section,
8 implement policies and activities to align high
9 school education with postsecondary education
10 in each State within the eligible entity, which
11 shall include—

12 “(i) updating State requirements for a
13 student to receive a regular high school di-
14 ploma, including students who graduate
15 high school early consistent with subpara-
16 graph (C), to align with the challenging
17 State academic standards and entrance re-
18 quirements for credit-bearing coursework
19 as described in section 1111(b)(1)(D) of
20 the Elementary and Secondary Education
21 Act of 1965, which may include alignment
22 with entrance requirements for credit-bear-
23 ing coursework at the State’s system of 4-
24 year institutions of higher education;

1 “(ii) verification of the alignment de-
2 scribed in clause (i) that is signified by the
3 signature of the Governor of the State,
4 chief State school officer, and State higher
5 education executive officer;

6 “(iii) developing statewide standards
7 for placement in postsecondary remedial
8 coursework based on multiple indicators,
9 which may include grade point average,
10 college preparatory high school courses
11 completed, and performance assessments;

12 “(iv) developing a formal, universal
13 statewide articulation agreement among all
14 public institutions of higher education or
15 systems in each State within the eligible
16 entity in which all local educational agen-
17 cies within each State within the eligible
18 entity may participate that guarantees—

19 “(I) students who earn postsec-
20 ondary credit as part of an early col-
21 lege fast track pathway are able to
22 transfer such credit to—

23 “(aa) any public institution
24 of higher education in the State,
25 and that such credits will count

1 toward meeting specific degree or
2 certificate requirements; and

3 “(bb) any private nonprofit
4 institution of higher education or
5 public institution of higher edu-
6 cation located in another State
7 that chooses to participate in the
8 articulation agreement;

9 “(II) all relevant credits are rec-
10 ognized throughout the public system
11 of higher education in the State and
12 count as credits earned for both a reg-
13 ular high school diploma and for a de-
14 gree or certificate program at a public
15 institution of higher education in the
16 State and at any private nonprofit in-
17 stitution of higher education or public
18 institution of higher education located
19 in another State that chooses to par-
20 ticipate; and

21 “(III) if a student earns an asso-
22 ciate’s degree as part of an early col-
23 lege fast track pathway, such associ-
24 ate’s degree, awarded by the partici-
25 pating institution of higher education

1 in the State, shall be fully acceptable
2 in transfer and credited as the first 2
3 years of a related baccalaureate pro-
4 gram at a public institution of higher
5 education in such State; and

6 “(v) developing a formal, universal
7 statewide articulation agreement among all
8 public institutions of higher education in
9 each State within the eligible entity to fa-
10 cilitate the seamless transfer of credit
11 earned in the early college fast track path-
12 way among such institutions of higher edu-
13 cation, including between 2-year and 4-
14 year public institutions of higher education
15 and private nonprofit institutions of higher
16 education if such private nonprofit institu-
17 tions of higher education choose to partici-
18 pate, which may include—

19 “(I) common course numbering;

20 “(II) a general education core
21 curriculum; and

22 “(III) management systems re-
23 garding course equivalency, transfer
24 of credit, and articulation.

1 “(E) A description of how the eligible enti-
2 ty will provide students with the opportunity to
3 choose an early college fast track pathway or an
4 early high school graduation fast track path-
5 way, including—

6 “(i) the criteria that will be used to
7 designate students as eligible to participate
8 in the early college fast track pathway
9 prior to the conclusion of grade 11,
10 which—

11 “(I) may be based in part on stu-
12 dent performance on valid and reliable
13 assessments aligned with the chal-
14 lenging State academic standards re-
15 quired under section 1111(b)(1) of
16 the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
17 cation Act of 1965, which may include
18 a nationally recognized high school
19 academic assessment, and in part on
20 other indicators consistent with the
21 statewide standards for placement in
22 postsecondary remedial coursework
23 under subparagraph (D)(iii);

24 “(II) if met, shall signify that the
25 student will not require remedial

1 coursework consistent with the place-
2 ment standards developed under sub-
3 paragraph (D)(iii); and

4 “(III) shall include students who
5 meet the requirements of the State’s
6 early high school graduation policy;

7 “(ii) how the eligible entity will dis-
8 seminate information to all students and
9 particularly subgroups of students, stu-
10 dents who would be first-generation college
11 students, and, as applicable, other histori-
12 cally underrepresented students in the mid-
13 dle grades and in grades 9, 10, and 11,
14 served by the eligible entity, including their
15 parents, about the opportunity to partici-
16 pate in an early college fast track pathway
17 or an early high school graduation fast
18 track pathway, including—

19 “(I) the requirements students
20 must meet to participate in each fast
21 track pathway consistent with the
22 State’s early high school graduation
23 policy and eligibility criteria described
24 in clause (i);

1 “(II) information regarding the
2 transferability of credits from ad-
3 vanced coursework offered in the early
4 college fast track pathway, including
5 the State’s criteria for the receipt of
6 postsecondary credit based on per-
7 formance on Advanced Placement and
8 International Baccalaureate course ex-
9 aminations described in subparagraph
10 (C)(ii), which institutions of higher
11 education participate in the articula-
12 tion agreements described under
13 clauses (iv) and (v) of subparagraph
14 (D), and the performance standards
15 students must meet in order for credit
16 from advanced coursework to transfer
17 successfully;

18 “(III) information on the scholar-
19 ships included within the early high
20 school graduation fast track pathway,
21 including the size of the scholarship
22 and the institutions of higher edu-
23 cation at which the scholarships may
24 be used; and

1 “(IV) information regarding re-
2 sources and supports available to stu-
3 dents to prepare them to participate
4 and succeed in a fast track pathway;

5 “(iii) how the eligible entity will pro-
6 vide each student served by the eligible en-
7 tity with the opportunity to be assessed
8 prior to the conclusion of grade 11 to de-
9 termine whether the student meets—

10 “(I) the eligibility criteria de-
11 scribed in clause (i) to participate in
12 an early college fast track pathway;
13 and

14 “(II) the requirements of the
15 State’s early high school graduation
16 policy so that a student may partici-
17 pate in an early high school gradua-
18 tion fast track pathway; and

19 “(iv) how the eligible entity will notify
20 each student, including the student’s par-
21 ents, who—

22 “(I) meets the eligibility criteria
23 described under clause (i) no later
24 than the beginning of grade 12 about
25 the opportunity for the student to

1 participate in an early college fast
2 track pathway for the remainder of
3 the student’s enrollment in high
4 school; and

5 “(II) meets the requirements of
6 the early high school graduation policy
7 about the opportunity to graduate
8 high school early and receive a schol-
9 arship as part of an early high school
10 graduation fast track pathway.

11 “(F) A description of how the eligible enti-
12 ty will implement the early college fast track
13 pathway and early high school graduation fast
14 track pathway in all local educational agencies
15 within each State within the eligible entity, in-
16 cluding—

17 “(i) the timeline and plan to provide,
18 by the end of the grant period, all students
19 in the State who meet the eligibility cri-
20 teria described under subparagraph (E)(i)
21 the opportunity to participate in an early
22 college fast track pathway, which may in-
23 clude online coursework coordinated by the
24 State;

1 “(ii) the timeline and plan to provide
2 all students in the State who meet the re-
3 quirements for its early high school grad-
4 uation policy the opportunity to receive a
5 scholarship through an early high school
6 graduation fast track pathway; and

7 “(iii) annual goals for participation in
8 fast track pathways among subgroups of
9 students such that, if the goals are met—

10 “(I) significant progress will be
11 made toward improving equity in stu-
12 dent eligibility and participation in
13 the early high school graduation path-
14 way across the local educational agen-
15 cies within each State within the eligi-
16 ble entity;

17 “(II) significant progress will be
18 made toward improving equity in ac-
19 cess to advanced coursework and early
20 college fast track pathways across the
21 local educational agencies within each
22 State in the eligible entity; and

23 “(III) the composition of stu-
24 dents participating in fast track path-
25 ways will be demographically similar

1 to each State, as a whole, within the
2 eligible entity by the end of the grant
3 period.

4 “(G) A description of how the eligible enti-
5 ty consulted with stakeholders in development
6 of its application and how the eligible entity will
7 continue to engage, collaborate, and solicit feed-
8 back with stakeholders to improve implementa-
9 tion of the application requirements described
10 in this subsection and uses of funds described
11 in section 416D, including—

12 “(i) members of the State legislature
13 and State board of education (if the State
14 has a State board of education);

15 “(ii) the State higher education gov-
16 erning or coordinating entity (if the State
17 has such an entity);

18 “(iii) the State entity that coordinates
19 early childhood, elementary, secondary,
20 and postsecondary education (if the State
21 has such an entity);

22 “(iv) local educational agencies, in-
23 cluding those located in rural areas and
24 high-need local education agencies;

1 “(v) representatives of Indian Tribes
2 located in the State;

3 “(vi) charter school leaders (if the
4 State has charter schools);

5 “(vii) civil rights organizations in the
6 State;

7 “(viii) business leaders or their rep-
8 resentatives in the State;

9 “(ix) teachers, principals, and other
10 school leaders; and

11 “(x) parents and students.

12 “(H) Assurances that the eligible entity
13 will—

14 “(i) allow students who choose to par-
15 ticipate in an early college fast track path-
16 way the opportunity to do so at no cost to
17 students and parents, including that such
18 students and their parents shall not be re-
19 quired to pay the cost of related tuition,
20 fees (including examination fees), books,
21 and supplies necessary to successfully com-
22 plete the early college fast track pathway;

23 “(ii) comply with the supplement, not
24 supplant and maintenance of effort re-

1 quirements described in sections 416G and
2 416H; and

3 “(iii) use not less than half of the
4 grant funds for purposes described under
5 subsections (a)(2) and (b) of section 416D
6 to support subgroups of students, students
7 who would be first-generation college stu-
8 dents, and, as applicable, other historically
9 underrepresented students.

10 “(g) REPORTING.—Each eligible entity receiving a
11 grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary a
12 report on an annual basis that includes, for each State
13 within the eligible entity—

14 “(1) information on the progress of the eligible
15 entity in establishing the policies and completing the
16 required activities as specified in subparagraphs (C)
17 and (D) of subsection (f)(2) to align high school
18 education with postsecondary education;

19 “(2) the number and percentage of local edu-
20 cational agencies and schools in the State offering
21 an early high school graduation fast track pathway
22 and each early college fast track pathway consistent
23 with its timelines and plans as specified in clauses
24 (i) and (ii) of subsection (f)(2)(F), progress against
25 the goals established by the eligible entity for demo-

1 graphically diverse student participation in fast
2 track pathways specified in subsection (f)(2)(F)(iii),
3 and evidence demonstrating how the eligible entity
4 certified each such pathway meets all requirements
5 of this subpart;

6 “(3) the number and percentage of students in
7 the State, including for each subgroup of students,
8 who—

9 “(A) are eligible to participate in an early
10 college fast track pathway;

11 “(B) participate in an early college fast
12 track pathway; and

13 “(C) successfully complete an early college
14 fast track pathway;

15 “(4) the number and percentage of students in
16 the State, including for each subgroup of students,
17 who—

18 “(A) are eligible to participate in an early
19 high school graduation fast track pathway; and

20 “(B) participate in an early high school
21 graduation fast track pathway;

22 “(5) the average scholarship award amount for
23 students, including for each subgroup of students, in
24 the State who participate in an early high school
25 graduation fast track pathway; and

1 “(6) any additional information as the Sec-
 2 retary may reasonably require to ensure compliance
 3 with the requirements of this subpart and to effec-
 4 tively evaluate, monitor, and improve grant imple-
 5 mentation.

6 **“SEC. 416D. USE OF FUNDS.**

7 “(a) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Each eligible entity
 8 that receives a grant under section 416C(b) for a fiscal
 9 year shall—

10 “(1) use funds for activities to implement the
 11 alignment requirements pursuant to section
 12 416C(f)(2)(D) for a period of time not to exceed the
 13 first 2 fiscal years for which the grant is provided;
 14 and

15 “(2) use funds to support statewide implemen-
 16 tation of early college fast track pathways and early
 17 high school graduation fast track pathways con-
 18 sistent with the timeline, plan, and goals specified in
 19 section 416C(f)(2)(F), including—

20 “(A) expanding advanced coursework to in-
 21 crease the availability of early college fast track
 22 pathways, which may include—

23 “(i) tuition, fees (including examina-
 24 tion fees associated with Advanced Place-
 25 ment, International Baccalaureate, and

1 similar examinations), books, and supplies
2 for eligible students;

3 “(ii) creating or expanding statewide
4 systems to provide each of the advanced
5 courses in the early college fast track path-
6 ways online; and

7 “(iii) establishing or expanding early
8 college high schools;

9 “(B) programs and activities to improve
10 student preparation for, and participation in,
11 an early college fast track pathway or early
12 high school graduation fast track pathway, es-
13 pecially among subgroups of students, students
14 who would be first-generation college students,
15 and, as applicable, other historically underrep-
16 resented students, which may include—

17 “(i) use of data from evidence-based
18 early assessment programs or evidence-
19 based early warning indicator systems;

20 “(ii) enhanced advising or counseling
21 activities, such as providing course-taking
22 and financial aid guidance as early as the
23 middle grades; and

24 “(iii) other evidence-based services as
25 described by the eligible entity; and

1 “(C) outreach and communications with
2 students and parents, particularly historically
3 underrepresented students, to build awareness
4 of early college fast track pathways and early
5 high school graduation fast track pathways.

6 “(b) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—To support effective
7 statewide implementation of fast track pathways con-
8 sistent with the timeline, plan, and goals specified in sec-
9 tion 416C(f)(2)(F), each eligible entity that receives a
10 grant under section 416C(b) for a fiscal year may use
11 funds to—

12 “(1) offer students who graduate high school
13 early scholarships and support for matriculating to
14 postsecondary education as part of an early high
15 school graduation fast track pathway;

16 “(2) provide training, professional development,
17 or recruitment for faculty who teach courses that
18 are included in an early college fast track pathway;

19 “(3) provide students with transportation to
20 and from advanced courses in an early college fast
21 track pathway;

22 “(4) convene secondary and postsecondary edu-
23 cation and workforce leaders in the State and other
24 stakeholders to coordinate and monitor grant imple-
25 mentation; and

1 “(5) provide incentives for local educational
2 agencies and institutions of higher education to en-
3 courage student participation in early college fast
4 track pathways and early high school graduation
5 fast track pathways.

6 **“SEC. 416E. FEDERAL PELL GRANT AWARDS.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the require-
8 ment under subsections (a)(1) and (d) of section 484 that
9 a student not be enrolled in an elementary school or sec-
10 ondary school to be eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant
11 under subpart 1, for the award years beginning on July
12 1, 2026, the Secretary shall, in each State within an eligi-
13 ble entity awarded a grant under this subpart, award high
14 school students who meet the eligibility requirements de-
15 scribed in section 416C(f)(2)(E) and participate in an
16 early college fast track pathway, a Federal Pell Grant
17 based on the determination of the student aid index for
18 such student.

19 “(b) TWO SEMESTER CAP WAIVER.—For a period
20 not to exceed 2 semesters (or the equivalent of 2 semesters
21 for students who are not enrolled full time, consistent with
22 regulations promulgated by the Secretary described under
23 section 401(d)(5)), Federal Pell Grants awarded to eligible
24 students under subsection (a) shall not count toward the

1 12-semester eligibility period for Federal Pell Grants de-
2 scribed under section 401(d)(5).

3 “(c) AMOUNT OF PELL GRANT.—Notwithstanding
4 paragraphs (3) and (5) of section 401(b) and section 472,
5 the amount of the Federal Pell Grant received under sub-
6 section (a) shall not exceed the cost of tuition, fees (ex-
7 cluding fees associated with Advanced Placement, Inter-
8 national Baccalaureate, and similar examinations), books,
9 and supplies.

10 “(d) APPLICABILITY.—The Secretary shall continue
11 awarding Federal Pell Grants to students pursuant to this
12 section in a State whose grant under this subpart has ex-
13 pired based upon the eligible entity’s continued compliance
14 with the requirements of this subpart as determined by
15 the Secretary.

16 **“SEC. 416F. EVALUATION.**

17 “The Secretary, in partnership with the Director of
18 the Institute of Education Sciences, shall contract with a
19 third party to conduct an independent evaluation not later
20 than September 30, 2028, and preceded by interim re-
21 ports, of the policies and services provided under this sub-
22 part, including at a minimum, the impact of such policies
23 and services on outcomes for all students and subgroups
24 of students with regard to each of the following:

1 “(1) Enrollment in and completion of advanced
2 coursework during high school, including the number
3 of courses students take and the number of credits
4 students earn.

5 “(2) Postsecondary enrollment, remediation,
6 first-year credit attainment, and persistence.

7 “(3) The rate at which credits transfer from
8 advanced coursework in high school, including dual
9 or concurrent enrollment programs, and public insti-
10 tutions of higher education and between such insti-
11 tutions.

12 “(4) Postsecondary degree attainment, includ-
13 ing completion of an associate’s degree, bacca-
14 laureate degree, or recognized postsecondary creden-
15 tial, and the time it takes students to earn a degree.

16 “(5) The cost of a postsecondary degree, by de-
17 gree type, for participating students in an early col-
18 lege fast track pathway or an early high school grad-
19 uation fast track pathway.

20 **“SEC. 416G. SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.**

21 “Funds made available under this subpart shall be
22 used to supplement, and not supplant, non-Federal funds
23 that would otherwise be used for activities authorized
24 under this subpart.

1 **“SEC. 416H. MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.**

2 “(a) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT REQUIRED.—A
3 State that receives assistance under this subpart shall pro-
4 vide for institutions of higher education and local edu-
5 cational agencies in such State for any academic year be-
6 ginning on or after July 1, 2026, an amount that is equal
7 to or greater than the average amount provided for ad-
8 vanced coursework by such State to such institutions of
9 higher education and local educational agencies for ad-
10 vanced coursework during the 2 most recent preceding
11 academic years for which satisfactory data are available.

12 “(b) ADJUSTMENTS FOR BIENNIAL APPROPRIA-
13 TIONS.—The Secretary shall take into consideration any
14 adjustments to the calculations under subsection (a) that
15 may be required to accurately reflect funding levels in
16 States with biennial appropriation cycles.

17 “(c) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the require-
18 ments of subsection (a) for not more than 2 consecutive
19 years, if the Secretary determines that such a waiver
20 would be equitable due to exceptional or uncontrollable cir-
21 cumstances, such as a natural disaster or a precipitous
22 and unforeseen decline in the financial resources of a
23 State or State educational agency, as appropriate.

24 “(d) VIOLATION OF MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—
25 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary
26 shall withhold from any State that violates subsection (a)

1 and does not receive a waiver pursuant to subsection (c)
2 any amount that would otherwise be available to the State
3 under this subpart until such State has made significant
4 efforts to correct such violation.

5 **“SEC. 416I. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

6 “There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
7 this subpart such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year
8 2026 and each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.”.

9 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amend-
10 ments made by this section, shall take effect on the later
11 of the date of enactment of this Act or July 1, 2026.

○