

Fast Track To and Through College Act

Sponsored by

Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH) & Todd Young (R-IN)

Each year, an estimated 850,000 high school students are academically prepared to begin college level coursework. When students demonstrate this proficiency, they should have the option to pursue a “fast track” to college early. Having access to early college opportunities increases college completion rates and can reduce overall college costs. This bill would create a competitive grant program for states to create a comprehensive early college strategy that aligns secondary and postsecondary course work, improves postsecondary credit transfer, and allows federal Pell Grants to cover dual-enrollment costs for low-income students enrolled in a fast track program under the bill.

States would be given funding priority if they can demonstrate that they have existing policies to encourage early college completion, commit to develop multiple fast track pathways that include career and technical education programs, and prioritize fast track access to historically underrepresented students. Fast track grant funds could be used toward the development and expansion of the fast track pathways, to cover student costs for obtaining college credit, for faculty professional development and outreach.

States that receive a fast track to college grant would be required to develop:

- High school graduation policies that allow students to complete their secondary course work prior to twelfth grade;
- Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual-enrollment credit recognition policies that apply at all in-state public colleges to ensure college-level course work taken in high school counts toward a college degree;
- Credit transfer agreements for introductory college courses that apply at all in-state public colleges to ensure college credits follow students between institutions; and
- Strategies for increasing equity in access to advanced course work in high school

This bill has been endorsed by:

Advance CTE, Alliance for Excellent Education, Austin Community College District, Bard College, Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH), Digital Ready, Third Way, EdAllies, Education Reform Now, Empower Schools, Highland Community College, Jobs for the Future (JFF), Kentucky Community & Technical College System, KnowledgeWorks, Learn to Earn Dayton, Linked Learning Alliance, Mesalands Community College, Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL), Middle College National Consortium, Modern States Education Alliance, National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, National Association of Secondary School Principals, N2College®PreK12-Adult Funding Prep, Ohio Early College Association, The Bridge of Southern New Mexico, and Workforce Career Readiness