To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to create evidence-based student success programs designed to increase participation, retention, and completion rates of high-need students.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to create evidence-based student success programs designed to increase participation, retention, and completion rates of high-need students.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Postsecondary Student Success Act of 2024”.


SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this Act to support evidence-based participation, retention, and completion activities designed to ensure the postsecondary success of high-need students.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMPLETION RATE.—The term “completion rate” means—

(A) the percentage of students from an initial cohort enrolled at an entity that is a 2-year institution who have graduated from the institution or transferred to a 4-year institution of higher education; or

(B) the percentage of students from an initial cohort enrolled at an entity in the State that is a 4-year institution who have graduated from the institution.

(2) DUAL OR CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAM.—The term “dual or concurrent enrollment program” has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(3) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.—The term “early college high school” has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).
(4) Eligible entity.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a public institution of higher education;

(B) a partnership between a nonprofit educational organization and an institution of higher education; or

(C) a consortium of institutions of higher education.

(5) Eligible Indian entity.—The term “eligible Indian entity” means the entity responsible for the governance, operation, or control of a Tribal College or University.

(6) Evidence-based.—The term “evidence-based” has the meaning given the term in section 8101(21)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(21)(A)).

(7) Evidence tiers.—

(A) Evidence tier 1 reform or practice.—The term “evidence tier 1 reform or practice” means a reform or practice that prior research suggests has promise for the purpose of successfully improving student achievement or attainment for high-need students.
(B) Evidence Tier 2 Reform or Practice.—The term “evidence tier 2 reform or practice” means a reform or practice described in subparagraph (A), or other reform or practice meeting similar criteria, that measures impact and cost effectiveness of student success activities, and, through rigorous evaluation (including through the use of existing administrative data, as applicable), has been found to be successfully implemented.

(C) Evidence Tier 3 Reform or Practice.—The term “evidence tier 3 reform or practice” means a reform or practice described in subparagraph (B), or other reform or practice meeting similar criteria, that has been found to produce sizable, important impacts on student success and—

(i) determining whether such impacts can be successfully reproduced and sustained over time; and

(ii) identifying the conditions in which such reform or practice is most effective.

(8) First Generation College Student.—The term “first generation college student” has the meaning given the term in section 402A(h) of the
Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11(h)).

(9) **HIGH-NEED STUDENT.**—The term “high-need student” means—

(A) a student from low-income background;

(B) a first generation college student;

(C) a caregiver student;

(D) a student with a disability;

(E) a student who stopped out before completing;

(F) a reentering justice-impacted student;

or

(G) a military-connected student.

(10) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—

The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(11) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education.

(12) **TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.**—The term “Tribal College or University” has the meaning given the term in section 316(b)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(3)).
SEC. 4. RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR ELIGIBLE INDIAN ENTITIES.

From the total amount appropriated to carry out this Act for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve 2 percent for grants to eligible Indian entities to increase participation, retention, and completion rates of high-need students.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF POSTSECONDARY STUDENT SUCCESS COMPETITIVE GRANTS.

(a) Grant Authorization.—For each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030, the Secretary shall award, on a competitive basis, grants to eligible entities to provide student services to increase participation, retention, and completion rates of high-need students.

(b) Notification and Application.—An eligible entity or eligible Indian entity desiring a grant under this Act shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing the information required under subsection (c).

(c) Content of Application.—An application submitted under this section shall include the following:

(1) A plan to increase, with respect to all students enrolled at the eligible entity or Tribal College or University, attainment and completion rates or graduation rates, including—
(A) a description of the evidence-based reform or practice that would be used and whether the reform or practice would be an evidence tier 1 reform or practice, evidence tier 2 reform or practice, or evidence tier 3 reform or practice; and

(B) a particular focus on serving high-need students through student services and collaboration among 2-year programs, 4-year programs, and workforce systems.

(2) Annual benchmarks for student outcomes with respect to the evidence-based reform or practice that would be used.

(3) A plan to evaluate the evidence-based reform or practice that would be used.

(4) Rates of enrolled students who received a Federal Pell Grant under subpart 1 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et seq.).

(5) Demographics of enrolled students, including high-need students.

(6) A description of how the eligible entity or eligible Indian entity will, directly or in collaboration with other institutions of higher education or non-profit organizations, use the grant funds to imple-
ment one or more of the following evidence-based reforms and practices:

(A) Providing comprehensive academic, career, and student services, which may include mentoring, advising, or case management services.

(B) Providing accelerated learning opportunities, which may include dual or concurrent enrollment programs and early college high school programs.

(C) Reforming course scheduling, or credit-awarding policies.

(D) Improving transfer pathways between the eligible entity, or Tribal College or University, and other institutions of higher education.

(7) A description of how the evidence-based reform or practice will be sustained once the grant expires.

(d) Evidence-based Student Success Programs.—From the total amount appropriated to carry out this Act for a fiscal year and not reserved under section 4, the Secretary shall reserve not less than 20 percent to award grants to eligible entities with applications that propose to include evidence-based reforms and practices—
(1) at least 1 of which is an evidence tier 3 reform or practice; and

(2) the rest of which are evidence tier 1 reforms or practices or evidence tier 2 reforms or practices.

(c) REQUIRED USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity or eligible Indian entity that receives a grant under this Act shall use the grant funds to carry out the plans submitted under subsection (c) and for evidence-based reforms and practices for improving participation, retention, and completion rates of students that may include the following:

(1) Student services to support retention, completion, and success, which may include—

(A) faculty and peer counseling;

(B) use of real-time data on student progress;

(C) improving transfer student success; and

(D) incentives for students to re-enroll or stay on track.

(2) Direct student support services, including a combination of—

(A) tutoring, academic supports, and enrichment services; and

(B) emergency financial assistance.
(3) Efforts to prepare students for a career, which may include—

(A) career coaching, career counseling and planning services, and efforts to lower student to advisor ratios;

(B) networking and work-based learning opportunities to support the development of skills and professional relationships;

(C) utilizing career pathways; and

(D) boosting experiences necessary to obtain and succeed in high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as described in section 135(b)(3) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2355(b)(3)).

(4) Efforts to recruit and retain faculty and other instructional staff.

(f) PERMISSIVE USE OF FUNDS.—From the total amount appropriated to carry out this Act for a fiscal year and not reserved under section 4 or subsection (d), the Secretary may set aside—

(1) not more than 5 percent for administration, capacity building, research, evaluation, and reporting; and
(2) not more than 2 percent for technical assistance to eligible entities and eligible Indian entities.

(g) Evaluations.—

(1) In general.—For the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the evidence-based reforms and practices carried out by eligible entities and eligible Indian entities pursuant to a grant under this Act, the Secretary shall make grants to or enter into contracts with 1 or more organizations to—

(A) evaluate the effectiveness of such evidence-based reforms and practices; and

(B) disseminate information on the impact of such evidence-based reforms and practices in increasing completion and retention activities of students, as well as other appropriate measures.

(2) Issues to be evaluated.—The evaluations required under paragraph (1) shall measure the effectiveness of the evidence-based reforms and practices carried out by eligible entities and eligible Indian entities pursuant to a grant under this subsection in—

(A) whether such entity implemented the plans, and carried out the activities, described

in subsection (c); and
(B) comparing the completion and retention rates of students who participated in such reforms and practices with the rates of students of similar backgrounds who did not participate in such reforms and practices.

(3) RESULTS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a final report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

(h) GRANT LIMIT.—An eligible entity that has branch campus may only receive a grant under this Act for 1 campus of the entity at a time.