Access to advanced courses, including eighth grade Algebra, advanced placement (AP), international baccalaureate (IB), and dual-enrollment programs, plays a critical role in students’ future success in college and careers. As years of research demonstrate, however, under-served students, particularly students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, experience inequitable access to advanced coursework. Myriad obstacles, including resource inequities, educator bias, racialized tracking, and more, prevent these students from accessing these vital learning opportunities; often, these students either attend schools that do not offer these opportunities, or are denied access to these courses in schools that offer them. While 1 in 10 students in schools in the US are enrolled in AP classes, just over 1 in 20 low-income, Black, and Native American students are enrolled in AP courses, while 1 in 50 English learners, and fewer than 1 in 50 students with disabilities are enrolled in AP courses. Also, 1 in 10 White students, 1 in 15 Latino students, and 1 in 20 Black students participate in dual-enrollment programs.

The Advanced Coursework Equity Act would establish a competitive grant program for states and districts to increase the enrollment and performance of underrepresented students in advanced courses.

- To be eligible for a grant, a state must form agreements with at least 50% of LEAs in the state, representing at least 50% of the students in the state, to receive subgrants and fulfill the program requirements, which include:
  - Establishing a three-year goal, and intermediate annual targets for bridging inequities in advanced coursework participation and performance
  - Specifying the equitable enrollment mechanism that the LEA will utilize for its advanced courses and programs such as open enrollment and universal screening

- Grants can be used for a variety of purposes, including:
  - Implementing open enrollment or universal screening for all advanced courses
  - Expanding enrollment in advanced courses, including by launching new courses
  - Purchasing curriculum materials and covering exam fees of students from low-income backgrounds
  - Provide direct services, such as tutoring, to students from under-represented groups to enable those students to thrive academically in advanced courses and programs
  - Training or hiring teachers to teach advanced courses
  - Strengthening or developing a positive school climate through teacher training and professional development
  - Implement programs and activities to improve student preparation for, and participation in, postsecondary STEM pathways

Annual reporting requirements and a required evaluation at the end of the three-year cycle


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