

H.R. 6328/S. 3279

ADVANCED COURSEWORK EQUITY ACT

[U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Congressman Joaquin Castro (D-TX)]

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, underserved 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

Endorsing organizations: EdTrust, All4Ed, College Board, Advance CTE, National Association for Gifted Children, Latinos for Education, National Center for Learning Disabilities, SPAN Parent Advocacy Network, TeachPlus, National Rural Education Association, UnidosUS, Intercultural Development Research Association, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, National Urban League, National Educators Association, E3 Alliance, American Federation of Teachers.

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