

Aim Higher

Access | Affordability | Completion

FACT SHEET: The Jumpstart on College Act

While the percentage of individuals enrolling in college is higher than ever before, traditionally underserved students continue to access college at lower rates than their peers. The prospect of paying for college and succeeding in rigorous courses can be daunting, particularly for students who would be the first in their families to attend a postsecondary institution. Dual enrollment and early college high school programs are one part of the solution to increasing access to higher education, tackling college costs, and improving graduation rates – particularly for the students who need the most help. These programs allow high school juniors and seniors to enroll in college courses and earn credits upon course completion at low or no cost, simultaneously promoting a college-going culture and reducing costs families face.

Using federal data, [Jobs for the Future](#) reports that high school students in dual enrollment programs are more likely to graduate high school than the national average. Additionally, almost all students at early college high schools earn free college credit before the end of senior year, including 30 percent who graduate high school with a degree or credential. Given that at least 2 out of 3 early college high school students are students of color, nearly 3 out of 5 are low-income, and almost half are first are the first in their families to [enroll in college](#), expanding these programs can help close gaps in college enrollment.

The *Jumpstart on College Act* would improve student access to college, increase affordability, and lead to higher degree completion rates by expanding dual enrollment and early college programs. Specifically, this bill would:

- Invest \$250 million in year one – with more in subsequent years – to support dual enrollment and early college high schools that primarily serve low-income students;
- Create a competitive grant program for colleges and universities to partner with school districts to support the development of these programs;
- Provide financial support to states in order to develop and implement a state-wide strategy for increasing access to dual enrollment programs for underrepresented students;
- Improve college affordability by ensuring students pay nothing to earn college credit while in high school and allowing students to get a jumpstart on college; and
- Improve the likelihood of degree and credential attainment.