

Aim Higher

Access | Affordability | Completion

Remedial Education Improvement Act

Each year millions of students across the nation enter college without the prerequisite skills necessary to complete college classes. In response, colleges and universities developed remedial education programs to provide the skills needed to succeed and progress toward a degree. Although necessary, remediation makes college take longer and more costly, increasing student debt load and lessening the chances of degree completion. In the 2013-2014 school year, remedial education cost students and their families approximately [\\$1.3 billion](#) in out of pocket expenses.

In [2010](#), 29 percent of students entering public four-year colleges and 51 percent of students entering public two-year colleges were required to take remedial coursework during their college experience. This impacted a disproportionate number of students of color, recipients of Pell, and first generation college students. Of students in remedial education, only [50 percent](#) will ever complete a credit-bearing course. Far fewer students ever make it to graduation; in [2011](#), first-time full-time bachelor degree seeking students who took remedial education courses were **74 percent more likely to drop out of college**. That same year, first-time full-time associate degree seeking students who took a remedial education course were 12 percent more likely to drop out of college. It is estimated only [15 percent](#) of the students who take remedial classes at a community college will receive a credential on time.

Our nation's current system of remediation in higher education is failing working families by increasing the cost of college and, all too often, leaving students without a meaningful degree. The Remedial Education Improvement Act would provide competitive grants to a geographically diverse set of colleges and universities of various sizes to develop or improve remedial education based on five models that have shown success during small-scale implementation. Aside from implementing evidence-based models to improve remediation, students in programs funded under this grant may also use federal student aid dollars to support up to two years of remediation, removing another barrier to on-time completion for remedial students. The legislation would also require evaluation of program effectiveness in order to determine the best systems of support that lead to college degree completion. The five program models outlined in the Act include:

- **Aligning Coursework:** requires partnerships between colleges or universities, and local educational or state educational agencies to develop courses to prepare and support students before requiring remedial coursework at college. Funds can also be used to provide early assessments to students on their college readiness and intervene before the students enter college.
- **Accelerated Coursework:** courses are revised to allow either short, intensive remediation or enrollment in more than one sequential course per term.
- **Modular Instruction:** focuses remediation on specific skills needed to be successful in college coursework and provides targeted interventions rather than course sequences.
- **Co-requisite Enrollment:** provides concurrent classes that are offered to support students while enrolled in credit-bearing courses.
- **Systemic Reform:** enables colleges and universities to implement comprehensive, integrated, evidence-based support programs across the institution that enable students enrolled in remedial education to reach completion and graduation.