

## **GO TO HIGH SCHOOL, GO TO COLLEGE ACT OF 2015**

### *EARLY COLLEGE STUDENTS HAVE GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO ENROLL IN AND GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE*

More than 300 early college high schools across the country have improved college readiness and college completion rates of low-income students who have traditionally been underrepresented in postsecondary education. These schools provide students the opportunity to simultaneously pursue a high school diploma while earning college credits up to an associate's degree, tuition-free. A 2013 American Institutes for Research evaluation of early college high schools found significant increases in college enrollment and completion among early college students. Specifically, the study found that 81 percent of early college students enrolled in college, compared with 72 percent of comparison students. During the evaluation period, 25 percent of early college students earned an associate's degree, as compared with only 5 percent of comparison students.

### *FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE TO ALLOW STUDENTS TO EARN MEANINGFUL COLLEGE CREDIT DURING HIGH SCHOOL*

Expanding access to early college high schools will increase college completion rates and ultimately reduce the time and cost of earning a college degree. Growth of early colleges has been stifled by rising tuition costs that are unaffordable for students and too great to be assumed by sponsoring high school and college partners. The federal government should allow greater flexibility within the need-based Pell grant program to increase opportunities for students to earn college credits and degrees.

## **THE GO TO HIGH SCHOOL, GO TO COLLEGE ACT OF 2015**

This bipartisan, bicameral proposal offered by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Mark Warner (D-VA), along with Representatives Marcia Fudge (D-OH) and Chris Gibson (R-NY) would improve secondary and postsecondary outcomes for students and maximize the efficiency of federal student aid.

The *Go to High School, Go to College Act* would allow Pell grant funding for eligible students to be used for transferable college credits, including core general education requirements, that students complete in an early college program offered by an accredited Institution of Higher Education.

To ensure the effectiveness of the program, and in order to avoid penalizing students, early colleges would be reimbursed for the cost of tuition and fees on behalf of eligible students retroactively, based on college credits completed up to an associate's degree or four semesters of college coursework.

This proposal would allow tuition-free early colleges to be sustained and scaled nationally to serve more students, thereby increasing college access and helping more low-income students afford and complete college degrees. Higher college completion rates and reduced time to earn a degree would ultimately save money within the Pell grant program.