

Advanced Coursework Equity Act

- August 2020 U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX) introduced the *Advanced Coursework Equity Act*.
- There were no co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. In the Senate, the co-sponsors were Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Tina Smith (D-MN).
- The Act authorized \$800 million in grants of up to \$60 million to be allocated over 3 years to address equity gaps in enrollment and performance in advanced programs and courses by:
 - Implementing equitable enrollment mechanisms, such as universal screening, for advanced courses and programs;
 - Expanding enrollment in advanced courses and programs, including by launching new courses; and
 - Purchasing curriculum and materials for advanced courses and covering exam fees of low-income students, training or hiring teachers to teach advanced courses.
- The legislation has the support of groups such as AASA – The School Superintendents Association, the Association for the Gifted, Council for Exceptional Children, The Education Trust, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association for Gifted Children, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Black Child Development Institute, National Center for Learning Disabilities, National College Attainment Network, National Education Association, and UnidosUS.

The Need:

- The *Advanced Coursework Equity Act* establishes an \$800 million competitive grant program for states and school districts to bridge gaps in access to advanced coursework.
- Some minority children living in poverty who are performing at the same level as their gifted peers are 250% less likely to be identified for and served in gifted programs.
- Such discrepancies can lead to excellence gaps. These gaps widen inequality, rob students of their intellectual dignity, and cause serious cultural and economic damage due to lost talent.
- The *Advanced Coursework Equity Act* helps address these issues by supporting evidence-based interventions such as universal screening and expanded offering of advanced courses.
- We need to continue to grow Congressional support to garner more co-sponsors for the *Advanced Coursework Equity Act* when it is reintroduced in 2021. It is vital that all legislators who support gifted co-sponsor this legislation.

Additional Context:

- During the Trump Administration, Congress approved over \$4 billion in new U.S. Department of Education spending. With COVID, the need is even greater in 2021.
- There is a not a specific date for the *Advanced Coursework Equity Act* to be reintroduced in 2021.