

The Next Generation High Schools Act

A high school diploma is the gateway to success and the ultimate goal of a K–12 education. A high-quality education prepares all students to enter postsecondary institutions and the workforce ready to think critically, solve complex problems, lead, and inspire. Unfortunately, the promise of a high-quality education is not realized by many of the nation’s youth, especially students of color and students from low-income families. One-fifth of all students and nearly one-third of all students of color fail to graduate from high school on time, if at all. Unless high schools are able to graduate their students at higher rates, nearly 12 million students will likely drop out over the next decade, resulting in a loss to the nation of \$1.5 trillion.

- If the nation had raised the graduation rate for the Class of 2013 to 90 percent, 610,000 additional or “new” graduates would be contributing to today’s local economies.
- These new graduates would likely earn as much as \$157 billion in additional lifetime earnings.
- The additional spending and investments from this single class of new graduates would likely be enough to support as many as 62,000 new jobs.
- For the Class of 2013, if the graduation rate for students of color had risen to 90 percent, these new graduates would have seen their earnings rise by \$2.5 billion annually and would likely generate as many as 25,700 new jobs.

The **Next Generation High Schools Act** would help high schools that enroll traditionally underserved students in the development and implementation of comprehensive, evidenced-based reform. Specifically, the legislation would create a competitive high school redesign program to increase the number and percentage of students who graduate from high school ready for college and a career by:

- developing and implementing comprehensive high school redesign models and strategies that personalize education for students and connect their learning to real-world experiences;
- increasing the number and percentage of students who graduate from high school college- and career-ready with the ability to use knowledge to solve complex problems, think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and develop academic mindsets;
- increasing student readiness to pursue postsecondary degrees in science-, technology-, engineering-, and math, particularly for student groups historically underrepresented in these fields;
- providing students with opportunities to earn college-level credit and postsecondary credentials while in high school;
- supporting the provision and sequencing of coursework that integrates rigorous academics with career-based learning and real world workplace experiences in an effort to provide students with increased opportunities to have career related experiences, develop career-related competencies and earn industry-recognized credentials;
- reducing the need for remediation at the postsecondary level and increase postsecondary enrollment, persistence and completion;
- establishing an early warning indicator and intervention system;
- implementing supports and reform in feeder middle schools; and
- authorizing \$300 million to fund the initial implementation of these reform efforts.