



NACAC Applauds Passage of the FY 2026 Labor-HHS-Education Funding Bill

NACAC welcomes the passage of the FY 2026 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education funding legislation, which preserves level funding for critical federal education programs and provides much-needed stability for students, counselors, and institutions nationwide. After more than a year of uncertainty this legislation represents an important step toward maintaining a federal commitment to college access and affordability.

By rejecting proposed cuts and sustaining funding for programs that support students from low-income backgrounds, first-generation students, and students of color, Congress has reinforced the role of federal education investments in expanding postsecondary opportunity. Level funding for Pell Grants, TRIO, GEAR UP, campus-based aid, work-study, basic needs supports, and Minority-Serving Institutions ensures that colleges and universities can continue serving students who rely most on these programs to enroll, persist, and complete their education. Together, these investments provide the stable federal foundation institutions rely on to support students and advance equitable access to postsecondary education nationwide.

The legislation also affirms congressional oversight of federal education programs and provides greater clarity and continuity for institutions administering them. While the bill does not fully resolve ongoing concerns about efforts to weaken federal education infrastructure, it establishes guardrails that help protect program integrity and reduce disruption for students and campuses.

This outcome reflects sustained advocacy from NACAC members and partners across the country who engaged lawmakers, shared on-the-ground realities, and reinforced the importance of stable federal investment in postsecondary education. NACAC is grateful for the leadership and persistence of its members and will continue to advocate for policies that protect access, affordability, and opportunity for all students.

NACAC encourages members to stay engaged by exploring additional insights on NACAC's advocacy priorities and sharing stories that illustrate the real-world impact of these federal investments on students and communities. Member voices remain essential to informing policymakers and strengthening efforts to protect access, affordability, and opportunity in postsecondary education. Learn more and take action at: <https://www.nacacnet.org/advocacy/take-action/>.