

The College for All Act of 2021 by Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Pramila Jayapal

"Bernie has put forward a plan that would make public colleges and universities free for families whose income is below \$125,000. It's a good idea, and after consideration, I am proud to add it to my platform."

—Joe Biden in March 2020

More than a half century ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Higher Education Act of 1965 at his alma mater, Southwest Texas State College. As Johnson declared, "I want you to go back and say to your children and to your grandchildren, and those who come after you and follow you—tell them that we have made a promise to them. Tell them that the truth is here for them to seek. And tell them that we have opened the road and we have pulled the gates down and the way is open, and we expect them to travel it."

Modeled after the Biden campaign's Plan for Education Beyond High School, the College for All Act represents the most substantial expansion of higher education since the Great Society and opens up the dream of a college degree to millions of children in working families across the United States. It would make transformative, unprecedented investments in higher education, the largest in the modern history of the United States. It would allow students in families who earn less than \$125,000 a year to attend college without fear of being saddled with student loan debt.

College for All would allow students to attend tuition and debt-free public colleges and universities. It would also allow students to attend tuition and debt-free public and private, non-profit Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs).

College for All would double the maximum Pell Grant award and make it a first-dollar program so students can cover living expenses. It would offer a \$10 billion federal grant to states to address equity gaps at under-funded institutions. It would triple TRIO funding and double GEAR UP funding.

College for All would be paid for with a modest financial transactions tax that raises up to \$2.4 trillion over the next decade. It would generate hundreds of billions of dollars for the economy. And most of all, it would provide a clear path into economic security and the American middle class.

TUITION-FREE COLLEGE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

1. Provides tuition-free community colleges for all students.
2. Provides tuition-free public four-year colleges and universities for students in families who earn less than \$125,000 a year.
3. Provides tuition-free private, non-profit Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) for students in families who earn less than \$125,000 a year.

FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP

1. Federal government covers 75% of the costs of eliminating tuition and fees at public institutions while states cover the remaining 25% of the costs.
2. Provides an automatic stabilizer so the federal share increases to 90% during economic crises.
3. Encourages states to sustain and expand existing tuition-free “College Promise” programs, especially for last-dollar programs.

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

Maintenance of effort provision for states: Maintain operating, instructional, need-based financial aid expenditures at a level that is equal to or exceeds the level of such support for award year.

Ban on using funds to pay administrative salaries, construction of sports stadiums and other non-academic buildings, and merit-based student financial aid.

DOUBLES MAXIMUM PELL AWARD TO \$13K AND STUDENTS CAN USE PELL GRANTS TO COVER LIVING EXPENSES TO ENSURE DEBT-FREE COLLEGE

1. Doubles the maximum Pell Grant award: \$6,495 to \$12,990 for the 2021-2022 school year.

This new increase in funding will only be eligible for students who attend public and private, non-profit institutions.

2. Treats Pell Grants as a first-dollar program so students can use their Pell Grants to cover living and non-tuition expenses

3. Ties Pell Grants to annual inflation adjustments

4. Increases Pell Grants lifetime eligibility from twelve full-time semesters to 7.5 years

5. Permits Pell Grant eligibility for Dreamer students

6. Funds Pell Grants as a mandatory program

7. Stops taxing Pell Grants as income.

\$10 BILLION EQUITY GRANT TO UNDERFUNDED INSTITUTIONS

\$10 billion federal grant to states to address equity gaps at under-funded public colleges and universities and private, non-profit Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs).

Institutions are required to use the grant to invest in academic advisors, mental health counselors, and tutors, reform remedial education, and reduce class sizes.

TRIPLES FEDERAL TRIO FUNDING

Triples Federal TRIO funding from \$1.097 billion in FY21 to \$3 billion in FY22 to serve an additional 1.4 million low-income students, students with disabilities, and first-generation college students in their pursuit of a higher education.

DOUBLES GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (GEAR UP) FUNDING

Doubles GEAR UP funding from \$368 million in FY21 to \$736 million in FY22 to allow at least an additional 530,000 students from low-income schools to participate in the program.

PAID FOR WITH A TAX ON WALL STREET SPECULATION

Imposes a small Wall Street speculation tax of just 0.5% on stock trades (that's just 50 cents for every \$100 worth of stock), a 0.1% fee on bonds, and a 0.005% fee on derivatives. This would raise up to \$2.4 trillion over the next decade. Thirteen years ago, the middle class bailed out Wall Street during their time of need. Now, it is Wall Street's turn to rebuild the struggling middle class by paying a modest financial transactions tax to make sure that everyone in America who wants to get a higher education can do so without going into debt.