

Date of Hearing: June 24, 2014

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Das Williams, Chair

SB 1023 (Liu) – As Amended: June 19, 2014

SENATE VOTE: 37-0

SUBJECT: Community colleges: foster youth.

SUMMARY: Authorizes the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to enter into agreements with up to 10 community college districts to establish the Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support (CAFYES) program in order to provide additional funds for services in support of postsecondary education for foster youth. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Permits the CCCCCO to establish agreements with up to 10 community college districts to create the CAFYES program to provide additional funding and support to community college students who are or were formerly in foster care.
- 2) Specifies that funding for the CAFYES program will be separate and apart from the funding provided under existing cooperative agencies resources for education programs established under the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012, as specified, which includes such programs as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS).
- 3) Requires the CAFYES program to provide outreach and recruitment, service coordination, counseling, book and supply grants, tutoring, independent living and financial literacy skills support, frequent in-person contact, career guidance, transfer counseling, child care and transportation assistance, and referrals to health services, mental health services, housing assistance, and other related services.
- 4) Requires interested community college districts to apply to the CCC Board of Governors (BOG) and provide information that includes the estimated number of foster youth who will be served and the extent of cooperation between the local county child welfare agency (CWA), the county probation department, local educational opportunity and services programs, and the school districts to ensure that services provided to eligible youth are coordinated with, and do not supplant, other services provided by the county and state.
- 5) Specifies that if more than 10 community college districts apply for the program the BOG shall give priority to the districts with the higher number of eligible students.
- 6) Requires students to comply with all of the following eligibility requirements in order to participate in the program:
  - a) Be a current or former foster youth in California whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth's 16th birthday; and,
  - b) Be no older than 25 years of age at the commencement of any academic year in which he or she participates in the program.

- 7) Requires the BOG to adopt regulations that authorize the director of the Community College Extended EOPS to accept students who are enrolled for at least nine units into this program.
- 8) Requires the BOG to adopt regulations to implement the CAFYES program, in consultation with the Department of Social Services (DSS), and requires DSS, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the Chief Probation Officers of California, and other advocates, to consult with the CCCCO to ensure that the CAFYES program and services are coordinated with, and do not supplant, other services provided by the county and state.
- 9) Requires the BOG to provide a report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the California Child Welfare Council by March 31, 2018, and every two years thereafter, describing its efforts to serve students who are current and former foster youth, specifies that the report shall include, but not be limited to the following: a) recommendations on whether and how the program can be expanded to all 72 community college districts and 112 campuses; and, b) a review on a campus-by-campus basis of the enrollment, retention, transfer, and completion rates of foster youth.
- 10) Provides that the CAFYES program may only be operative if funds have been appropriated in the budget, as specified.
- 11) Authorizes the BOG to authorize the CCC Chancellor to designate up to 2% of the funds allocated for program administration and up to 3% of the funds allocated for program development and program accountability.
- 12) States the intent of the Legislature that any student who participates in the CAFYES program shall also participate in the Student Success and Support Program, as specified.
- 13) Makes various legislative declarations and findings, including, but not limited to the following: a) there are 57,000 children and youth in California's foster care system who have been removed from their biological families due to maltreatment and placed into the care and custody of the State of California; b) by age 21, 45% of former foster youth will graduate from high school, as compared to 80% of Californians of the same age; and, c) by age 26, 4.4% of foster youth will receive a 2-year degree and 3.8% will earn a 4-year degree, rates significantly below the same-age population in California.

#### EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes EOPS to increase the enrollment of students who are affected by language, social and economic disadvantages, improve the delivery of programs and services to the disadvantaged, and increase the number of students who successfully complete their chosen educational objectives, are placed into career employment, and transfer to four-year institutions; and, specifies that EOPS is to supplement the regular educational programs of the community college (Education Code § 69640 - § 69656).
- 2) Specifies that a student must meet the following to be eligible for EOPS: a) be a resident of California; b) be enrolled full-time (12 units); the EOPS director is authorized to allow up to 10% of EOPS students to be enrolled in nine units; c) not have completed more than 70 units of degree applicable credit coursework; d) qualify to receive a BOG fee waiver (low-

income); and, e) be educationally disadvantaged as determined by the EOPS director (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, § 56220).

- 3) Declares that in order for a student to remain eligible for EOPS, a student must apply for financial aid, maintain academic progress, and complete and meet an educational plan and responsibility agreement (5 CCR § 56222).
- 4) Establishes the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012, which applies to all community college students, for the purpose of increasing student access and success by providing effective core matriculation services, including orientation, assessment and placement, counseling and other education planning services and academic interventions. Community colleges have the responsibility to provide student services and support, including orientation, assessment, counseling and education planning, referral to specialized support services, and evaluation of each student's progress and referral to appropriate interventions. Students have the responsibility to identify an academic and career goal, declare a specific course of study, be diligent in class attendance and completion of assigned coursework, and complete courses and maintain academic progress toward an educational goal (EC § 78210 - § 78219 and 5 CCR § 55500 - § 55534).
- 5) Authorizes the CCCCO, in cooperation with DSS and the California Employment Development Department, to enter into agreements with community college districts that have established cooperative agencies resources for education (CARE) programs. Existing law also specifies that the CARE program is to provide additional funds for support services that are to include at a minimum child care and transportation allowances, books and supplies, counseling, and other related services; authorizes community college districts to apply for funds by providing specific information such as how many students will be served and the level of cooperation with other agencies serving the students; and, specifies that participants in CARE must be at least 18 years of age, be a single head-of-household, be receiving public assistance, and desire to complete his or her high school education or pursue a job-related curriculum. The BOG is required to adopt guidelines and be responsible for the administration of funds for the CARE program (EC § 79150 - § 79155).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the following cost factors are associated with this measure:

- 1) Foster youth services: Approximately \$2 million from the General Fund (GF) annually to provide the services described, depending on the distribution of eligible participants and the level of participation by the community college districts; and,
- 2) Administration: Approximately \$175,000 from the GF to the CCCCO to establish the program and develop guidelines in coordination with specified groups. Ongoing costs will likely be significantly less, once the programs are operational and staff is primarily responsible for only the reporting requirements.

**COMMENTS:** Double-referral. This measure passed out of the Assembly Human Services Committee on June 17, 2014 by a vote of 7-0.

**Background.** According to the Stuart Foundation's 2013 report entitled, "At Great Risk – California Foster Youth and the Path from High School to College," independent of such risk

factors as having a disability, California youth in foster care are less likely to complete high school, enroll in a community college, or persist in community college once enrolled. The report finds that, "Foster youth's low rate of high school completion clearly contributes to their lower rates of community college enrollment and persistence."

Need for the bill. According to the author, underlying the Student Success Act (as described above), is a belief that all students benefit from engaging in the behaviors identified in the task force report. However, a report issued in October 2013 by the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning found that students in foster care have unique characteristics that justify their identification as a separate at-risk student subgroup. As such, requirements for full-time enrollment are a significant barrier to students who are current or former foster youth.

The author states, "SB 1023 is needed to provide an additional layer of support that meets the unique needs of foster youth to enable those students to meet the requirements of the Student Success Act. SB 1023 creates under the umbrella of EOPS an additional component that is similar in concept to existing Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program for single parents receiving public assistance. In addition to establishing support services that are specific to current and former foster youth, SB 1023 authorizes these students to participate with a minimum of 9 units rather than the full load of 12 units, at the discretion of the EOPS director. This is consistent with existing options related to students participating in Disabled Student Programs and Services, and does not affect a student's eligibility for financial aid."

Existing resources for community college foster youth. According to the CCCCCO, in November 2006, the CCCCCO launched the unfunded Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) through the colleges' financial aid offices to identify and provide priority services to foster youth and former foster youth. The FYSI asked colleges to designate a point of contact for their current and former foster youth.

The FYSI has expressed goals of improving outcomes for current and former foster youth by improving all of the following: a) access to student and academic support services and resources; b) term to term retention and year to year persistence and academic success; c) enhanced academic performance; d) completion of certificate and degree programs; and, e) transfer rates to baccalaureate programs. The FYSI called for each college to have one or more designated FYSI liaison(s) to help identify youth from foster care and connect them with campus resources in order to plan for and navigate admissions and registration, assessment services and counseling, applications for financial aid, and to take advantage of other student and academic support services.

According to the CCCCCO, they have identified and are currently providing support to more than 10,000 former foster youth annually.

The Chafee Education Training Voucher program (ETV), provides up to \$5,000 annually to current and former foster youth to assist in covering educationally related costs. The ETV is administered by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) under a memorandum of understanding with DSS. The program is funded by both federal and state dollars for a combined total in 2013-14 of nearly \$11 million. To note: in 2013-14, the ETV served approximately 3,350 current and former foster youth out of 17,761 eligible applications at all educational segments in the state.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees  
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Jeanice Warden / HIGHER ED. / (916) 319-3960