

Date of Hearing: April 11, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 1245 (McCarty) – As Amended March 28, 2023

SUBJECT: Community colleges: childcare providers: course fee waivers

SUMMARY: Requires a community college district to provide a fee waiver for students who are employed as a childcare provider for courses related to early childhood education or courses offered in an approved educational program leading to an associate degree or an associate degree for transfer. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Authorizes a fee waiver for students employed as childcare providers enrolled in the following courses:
 - a) Early Childhood Education courses including but not limited to:
 - i) Child Growth and Development;
 - ii) Child, Family, and Community;
 - iii) Introduction to Curriculum;
 - iv) Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children;
 - v) Observation and Assessment;
 - vi) Health, Safety, and Nutrition in Early Childhood Education;
 - vii) Teaching in a Diverse Society; and,
 - viii) Practicum;
 - b) Courses offered in approved educational programs leading to an associate degree or an associate degree for transfer; and,
 - c) Coursework approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) that leads to one of the Child Development Permits offered by the Commission.
- 2) Defines childcare provider as any of the following:
 - a) A licensed childcare provider;
 - b) An employee of a licensed childcare provider;
 - c) A childcare program employee working for a school district; or
 - d) An individual who is represented by the Child Care Providers United- California bargaining unit.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Community Colleges (CCC) under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. The CCC shall be comprised of community college districts (Education Code (EDC) Section 70900).
- 2) Authorizes the governing board of each community college district to charge each student \$46 per unit per semester. Exempts the following from paying the prescribed fee:
 - a) Students enrolled in specific public benefit non-credit programs; and,
 - b) Students enrolled in or receiving benefits from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF), the Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or a general assistance program;
 - c) Students who demonstrate eligibility according to income standards established by regulations of the CCC Board of Governors;
 - d) Students who demonstrates financial need according to the methodology set forth in federal law or by regulations for determining the exempted family contribution of students seeking financial aid;
 - e) Homeless or formerly homeless youth, as defined;
 - f) Students who were the dependent or surviving spouse of any member of the California National Guard who died or was permanently disabled while in the line of duty or while in active service of the state;
 - g) Students who were the dependent or surviving spouse of a California firefighter or law enforcement officer killed in the performance of their duties or who died as a result of performing duties related to law enforcement or fire suppression;
 - h) Students who were the dependent of a California resident who was killed or who died as a result of injuries sustained in the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks;
 - i) Any child of any veteran of the United States military who has a service-connected disability, was killed in service, or has died of a service-connected disability; and,
 - j) The child of a recipient or the recipient of a Congressional Medal of Honor
 - k) The spouse or dependent of doctors, nurses, and first responders who died from COVID-19 during the California COVID-19 state of emergency and were employed or contracted to provide medical services (EDC Section 76300, 68120, 68120.3 and 66025.3).

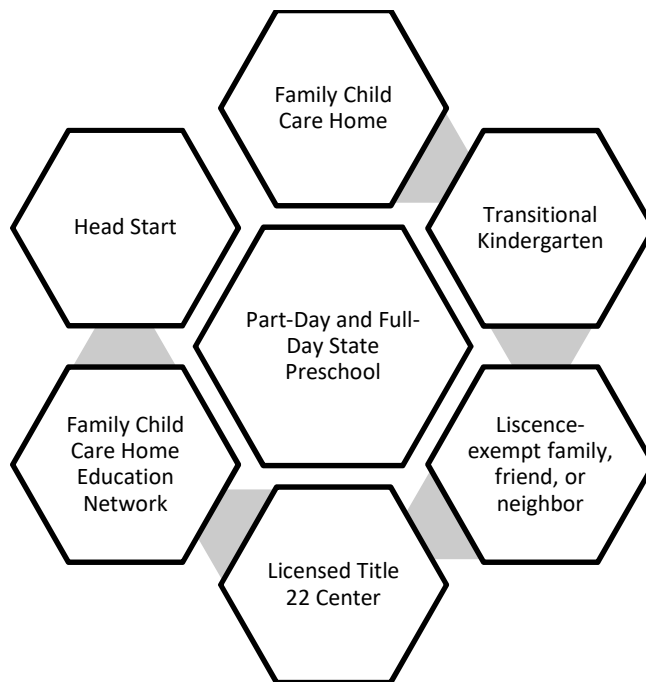
FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: *Background on early childhood education.* A prodigious amount of research has been conducted in the last decade regarding the positive impacts early childhood education (ECE) has on children under the age of five across all social spectrums. A December 2021 presentation by Georgia Family Connection Partnerships examined data from 22 experimental studies conducted between 1960 and 2016 and found that children who participated in high-quality early education had lower rates of criminal justice involvement, higher likelihoods of

completing high school, fewer chronic diseases, and a higher likelihood of pursuing higher education opportunities. According to an Educational Researcher 2017 peer review journal article titled, “Impacts of Early Childhood Education on Medium-and Long-Term Educational Outcomes”, data suggests that classroom-based ECE programs for children under the age of five can lead to significant and substantial decreases in special education placement and increases in graduation rates. Therefore, investing in ECE programming is an avenue for reducing societal educational and economic burdens and inequities.

In light of research heralding the economic and societal benefits of early education, Governor Newsom has made sizeable investments in ECE since assuming office in 2019. In his first budget, the Governor focused funding on ensuring access to high-quality, affordable child care and early learning programs for all families. Investments included expanding universal full-day kindergarten and universal preschool to all four-year-olds by 2026. To align policy with budgetary investments, Governor Newsom released the *Master Plan for Early Learning and Care: California for all Kids* (Master Plan) in December 2020. In his press statement, the Governor highlighted the plan as “a strong research-based roadmap for building a comprehensive and equitable early learning and care system over the next decade”.

A 2021 survey conducted by the United States Census Bureau identified that there are 2.2 million children under the age of five residing in California and according to the Legislative Analyst’s Office, California provides funding for 713,000 children to access ECE programs. California relies on a labyrinth of programs to administer quality ECE programs beyond the ECE slots funded by the State budget.



While there are a plethora of programs, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) serve as the two primary state agencies that oversee, regulate, provide licensure, and funding to: Child Care Centers, Family Homes Centers, State Preschools, and Federal Head Start programs throughout the state. CDSS utilizes the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 for licensing and monitoring, and the California Department of Education uses the California Code of Regulations, Title 5 to govern State

Preschools. These regulations set the terms for licensing and specifically dictate how a program is run from the type of approved facilities to staff and teacher qualifications.

Need for the measure. As stated by the author, “childcare providers are critical to our COVID recovery and to families, especially mothers, trying to bounce back and return to the workplace. Childcare providers often turn to community colleges for their professional development needs for ease and affordability. However, there is a portion of childcare providers that may have an income disqualifying them from a community college tuition waiver, but still do not make enough to attend. All childcare providers should be eligible for free community college to ensure we have an educated, well-paid, and retained workforce so that every child gets the highest quality of care.”

Early childhood education workforce. The early childhood education workforce is comprised of supervisors, teachers, and teacher aides who work collaboratively to provide quality educational experiences to children. The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California, Berkeley (Center), published a brief in February 2023, comparing lead teachers in ECE programs throughout the State. The key findings of the brief included that virtually all lead teachers in ECE programs are 40 years or older and are likely to be women of color or immigrant women. In 2020, the Center published ECE workforce profiles for each state and California had 116,800 early childhood teachers for 2,877,174 children under the age of five or 24 children for every teacher. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic anecdotal data from providers and parents who struggled to obtain childcare, suggested there was a workforce shortage of qualified ECE teachers and staff. In a blog post in July 2022, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) found that the childcare service sector has yet to recover from jobs lost during the pandemic.

The aforementioned Master Plan on ECE contains four overarching goals each with strategies for improving ECE throughout the state. One of the strategies includes promoting school readiness by expanding preschool for all three-year-old children experiencing poverty and providing universal preschool for all four-year-old children. By dramatically expanding access to quality preschool, demands for a highly skilled and competent workforce will indubitably increase. According to the Employment Development Department, by 2028, there will be 233,350 available jobs in ECE for workers to fill. By providing tuition waivers for CCC students who are ECE employees, AB 1245 (McCarty) fulfills two of the strategies listed in the *Master Plan for Early Learning and Care: California for all Kids*, by improving pathways to higher education for ECE workers and providing financial support for ECE workforce development. Establishing a workforce pipeline to increase the number of qualified ECE teachers and administrators is essential, not only to recovering with equity from the pandemic, but to achieve the aforementioned goals in the Master Plan. AB 1245 (McCarty) seeks to provide funding in the form of tuition waivers to not only retain ECE workers, but to provide a path to establish more qualified ECE workers to meet the impending workforce demand.

In the California Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission report on early childhood education, published in April 2019, it was recommended that in order to provide quality ECE, the ECE workforce must have the skills and support to nurture and educate the diverse population of California. Additionally, the National Institute for Early Education Research identified that a bachelor’s degree in ECE for preschool teachers as one of the national quality standard for providing high-quality preschool to three- and four-year-olds. In California, the current minimal educational standards for ECE workers depends upon the regulations which authorize the program to operate.

Title of Teacher	Title 5 – State Preschool	Title 22- All other forms of childcare
Aides and Assistances	<p>Child Development Assistant Permits: Complete 6 semester units of ECE course work.</p> <p>Child Development Associate Teacher Permit: Have at least 50 days of experience in an educational setting in a child care facility and complete a minimum of 12 semester units of coursework in ECE.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Possess a Child Development Associate Credential.</p>	<p>Under 18 – Be a high school graduate or participate in an occupational program conducted by an accredited high school or college.</p> <p>Aides under the supervision of a fully qualified teacher: Complete 6 postsecondary semester units in early childhood education or child development.</p>
Teachers	<p>Child Development Teacher Permit: Option 1 – Complete 24 semester units of coursework in early childhood education and child development, complete 16 semester units in general education, and complete 175 days of experience in an instructional capacity in a child care and development program.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Option 2 – Complete an associate degree or higher in ECE and complete three semester units of supervised field experience in a licensed care center.</p> <p>Child Development Master Teacher Permit: Option 1 – Complete 24 semester units of coursework in ECE, complete 16 semester units in general education, complete 6 additional units in ECE courses, 2 additional semester units of adult supervision coursework, and complete 350 days of experience in a licensed care center setting.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Option 2– Complete a bachelor’s degree or higher, complete 12 units of ECE course work,</p>	<p>Option 1 - 12 postsecondary semester units in ECE and at least 6 months of work experience in a licensed care center;</p> <p>OR,</p> <p>Option 2 - A current and valid Child Development Associate Credential; and at least 6 months of work experience in a licensed care center.</p> <p>Additional Training: 16 hours of health and safety training.</p>

	<p>and complete three semester units of supervised field experience in a licensed care center.</p>	
<p>Supervisors</p>	<p>Child Development Site Supervisor Permit:</p> <p>Option 1 – Complete 24 semester units of course work in ECE; complete an associate’s degree or 60-semester units, complete 6 additional units of coursework in administration or supervision of child care and development programs, 2 additional semester units of adult supervision coursework, and 350 days of experience in an instructional capacity in a child care and development program.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Option 2 – Bachelor’s degree or higher, complete 12 units of ECE course work, and complete 3 semester units of supervised field experience in a licensed care center.</p> <p>Child Development Program Director Permit :</p> <p>Option 1 – Same as Child Development Site Supervisor except requires a bachelor’s degree and one year of site supervisor experience.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Option 2 – Complete a master’s degree or higher in ECE, human development, or a closely related field.</p>	<p>Director:</p> <p>Option 1 – A high school diploma or GED equivalent, 4 years of experience in a licensed child care center, and 15 ECE units;</p> <p>OR,</p> <p>Option 2 – An associate degree with a major or emphasis in ECE, at least two years of teaching experience in a licensed child care center, and at least 3 units in administration or staff relations;</p> <p>OR,</p> <p>Option 3 – Bachelor’s degree with a major or emphasis in ECE, at least one year of teaching experience in a licensed child care center, and at least 3 units in administration or staff relations.</p> <p>Additional Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 hours of health and safety training.

As part of the Master Plan on ECE, the State has identified a need to align the standards of Title 22 and Title 5, including the qualification requirement of teachers. With the State expanding State Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten and the Master Plan identifying, “preschool programs with the highest impact on school readiness all have lead teachers with a bachelor’s degree and specialized training in early learning and care,” it is possible the State will consider a bachelor’s degree as the new minimum standard for programs offering childcare for three- and four-year-olds. If the elevation of minimum educational requirements increases to a bachelors degree, having an established tuition waiver to provide an avenue to a bdegree for ECE workers would provide a career ladder for workers to begin in infant care and progress to working as preschool teachers as their education progresses. AB 1245 (McCarty) provides a ladder in which

ECE workers can retain employment while progressing in their education to meet the educational requirements to advance in their careers.

Need for an ECE employee waiver. According to the *2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index* by the Center, California is one of the four states who do not offer scholarship programs to those pursuing ECE. While California may not have a scholarship program designated specifically to the ECE workforce, the State has made significant progress in reducing tuition costs for CCC students. AB 19 (Santiago), Chapter 735, Statutes of 2017, and SB 183 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 54, Statutes of 2022, established the California College Promise, which provides tuition waivers to first-time and returning CCC students who enroll in at least 12 units for two academic years. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the program provided tuition-free community college to 33,218 college students. ECE workers would be required to enroll full-time or take at least 12 units in order to qualify for the California College Promise tuition waiver. With their work schedules, the majority of ECE workers would be ineligible. AB 1245 would open a career pathway free of the financial burden for ECE workers, who seek to continue their education.

Additionally, the CCC offers the California College Promise Grant (CCPG), formally the Board of Governors' Tuition Waiver, which provides waivers to low-income students. According to the *2019 Community College Promise Grant and Special Programs Manual* produced by the CCC Chancellor's Office, students must demonstrate a financial need or be enrolled in specified social services programs to qualify for the CCPG. Furthermore, to remain qualified students must meet academic and progress standards by maintaining a 2.0 GPA and completing at least 50% of their semester coursework. This program provided tuition-free community college to 689,360 students. The *2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index*, found the median income for a childcare worker was roughly \$26,000 a year in 2019, and therefore, most ECE workers do not meet the CCPG income requirements of \$18,090.00. AB 1245 (McCarty) would provide a tuition waiver for ECE workers that is otherwise not available to them unless they were to quit their place of employment and enroll full-time at the CCC.

Arguments in support. "The California Catholic Conference is pleased to support AB 1245 (McCarty), as amended on 3/28/23, which expands the community college tuition waiver to apply to all active childcare professionals at enrollment, regardless of income. Current law waives the fee for qualifying students pursuing educational goals in California Community Colleges based on income. Existing law also allows childcare providers to take courses related to professional development using grants provided by AB 212 (Aroner, 2000). However, some childcare providers do not qualify for a tuition waiver and want to further their education beyond a few classes. AB 1245 expands the community college tuition waiver to apply to all active childcare professionals at enrollment, regardless of income."

Committee comments. Since 2000, California has provided funding through AB 212 (Aroner), Chapter 547, Statute of 2000, for professional development for ECE workers. The purpose of the bill was to provide funding for professional development in an effort to mitigate the difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. In 2019, a workgroup was established to evaluate improvements and offer principles for strengthening the ECE workforce system of support. The workgroup suggested a fee waiver for professionals aspiring to be in the ECE workforce beyond the funding provided in AB 212 (Aroner) and the current funds should be expanded to provide educational stipends for ECE teachers to move up the California ECE career ladder. AB 1245 (McCarty) will provide tuition fee waivers for ECE workers who seek to attend the CCC, which appears to be aligned with the AB 212 (Aroner) workgroup recommendations. However, AB

1245 (McCarty) does not guarantee that the ECE workers will pursue degrees that align with the requirements to move into more advanced positions in the ECE workforce.

AB 1245 (McCarty) permits ECE employees to enroll in any course that would matriculate to an associate degree or an associate degree for transfer and therefore, the bill does not guarantee an increase in qualified ECE workforce teachers but rather provides an avenue for ECE workers to obtain an education that could move them beyond the ECE workforce. In the State's history of offering tuition fee waivers, the State has never provided a fee waiver for a specific industry but has rather elected to provide fee waivers based on financial need. If the State is deciding to set a precedence by providing a fee waiver for a specific industry with the inspired outcome of increasing and retaining qualified ECE employees, then perhaps guardrails should be included to ensure the waivers produce qualified ECE workers who remain in the workforce for years to come. *The author may wish to reduce the scope of the tuition waiver to courses for associate degrees for transfer and associate degrees in ECE in order to align the bill in print with the author's intentions to increase a qualified workforce by creating an educational pipeline is realized.*

Previous Legislation.

- 1) AB 1073 (Berman), held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee, would have established the Early Childhood Education Workforce Waiver, a California Community College (CCC) fee waiver, available to students enrolled in early childhood education courses if the enrolled student meets specified qualifications including declaring a major related to early childhood education.
- 2) AB 2346 (Berman), held in Assembly Higher Education Committee due to the COVID – 19 pandemic, would have established the Early Childhood Education Workforce Waiver, a California Community College (CCC) fee waiver, available to students enrolled in early childhood education courses if the enrolled student meets specified qualifications including declaring a major related to early childhood education.
- 3) SB 77 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 53, Statutes of 2019, authorizes community colleges to use California College Promise funding to waive tuition fees for two academic years for first-time students, and would require the utilization of evidence-based assessments and placement practices at the community college to be in compliance with the requirements for assessment instruments applicable under the Student Equity and Achievement program.
- 4) AB 19 (Santiago), Chapter 734, Statutes of 2017, establishes, under the administration of the Chancellor of the CCC, the California College Promise Program which provides a tuition waiver for first-time, California residents who maintain a course load of 12 units or more, regardless of economic status. Provides the tuition waiver for one academic year for all qualifying students who attend participating CCC, as specified.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Association of University Women - California
California Catholic Conference

Student Senate for California Community Colleges

Opposition

None on file.

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