An act to amend Sections 66025.9, 79220, 79222, and 79225 of the Education Code, relating to community colleges, public postsecondary education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SB 958, as amended, Leyva. Community colleges—Public postsecondary education: support services for foster youth: Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program.

(1) Existing law establishes the California State University, the California Community Colleges, and the University of California as the 3 segments of public postsecondary education in this state. Existing law requires the California State University and each community college district, and requests the University of California, with respect to each campus in their respective jurisdictions that administers a priority enrollment system, to grant priority in that system to certain foster youth or former foster youth whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth’s 16th birthday.

This bill would extend this requirement and request for enrollment priority for certain foster youth or former foster youth to those whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth’s 13th birthday. To the extent that the bill would impose duties on community college districts, it would constitute a state-mandated local program.

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(2) Existing law, the Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program, authorizes the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office to enter into agreements with up to 20 community college districts to provide additional funds for services in support of postsecondary education for foster youth. Existing law provides that these services include, when appropriate, but are not necessarily limited to, outreach and recruitment, consultation and eligibility verification, consultation and referrals for students deemed ineligible, 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.

This bill would authorize the program to provide all of these services, as well as direct financial support, to enrolled students who meet all eligibility requirements but whose courses have not yet commenced, and who have completed required matriculation activities as described, if those services are deemed necessary to enable the student to be successful upon the commencement of the academic term.

(3) Existing law requires a student participant in the Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program to 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.

This bill would instead require a student participant in the program to be a current or former foster youth in California whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth’s 13th birthday.

(4) Existing law requires the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, in consultation with the State Department of Social Services, to adopt regulations for the program and to be responsible for the administration of funds for the program.

This bill would further require regulations adopted by the board of governors to ensure that program application and enrollment processes implemented by community college districts are streamlined, do not impose barriers to entry, and allow programs to exercise professional judgment to waive any income criteria specified in the regulations as a condition of eligibility, as specified.
(5) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.


The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 66025.9 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66025.9. (a) The California State University and each community college district shall, and the University of California is requested to, with respect to each campus in their respective jurisdictions that administers a priority enrollment system, grant priority in that system for registration for enrollment to a foster youth, former foster youth, homeless youth, or former homeless youth.

(b) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Foster youth and former foster youth” means a person in California whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth’s 16th birthday and who is no older than 25 years of age at the commencement of the academic year.

(2) “Homeless youth and former homeless youth” means a student under 25 years of age, who has been verified, in the case of a former homeless youth, at any time during the 24 months immediately preceding the receipt of the youth’s application for admission by a postsecondary educational institution that is a qualifying institution pursuant to Section 69432.7, as a homeless child or youth, as defined in subsection (2) of Section 725 of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(2)), by at least one of the following:

(i) A homeless services provider, as that term is defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) (e) of Section 103577 of the Health and Safety Code.
(ii) The director of a federal TRIO program or Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs program, or a designee of that director.

(iii) A financial aid administrator for an institution of higher education.

(iv) A homeless and foster student liaison designated pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 67003.5.

(c) For purposes of this section, a student who is verified as a homeless youth as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) shall retain that status for a period of six years from the date of admission to the postsecondary educational institution.

SECTION 1.

SEC. 2. Section 79220 of the Education Code is amended to read:

79220. (a) The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office may enter into agreements with up to 20 community college districts to provide additional funds for services in support of postsecondary education for foster youth. This program shall be known as the Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program, and shall expand the number of students participating in the Community College Extended Opportunity Programs and Services and shall not displace other students. The funding provided under this article shall be separate and apart from the funding provided under existing cooperative agencies resources for education programs pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 79150). In addition to the delivery of Student Success and Support Program services, as described in Section 78212, services shall include, when appropriate, but not necessarily be limited to, outreach and recruitment, consultation and eligibility verification, consultation and referrals for students deemed ineligible, 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.

(b) The program may provide all services specified in subdivision (a), as well as direct financial support, to enrolled students who meet all eligibility requirements but whose courses have not yet commenced, and who have completed required
matriculation activities as described in paragraph (2) of subdivision
(a) of Section 78212, if those services are necessary to enable the
student to be successful upon the commencement of the academic
term.
(c) As used in this article, “program” means the Cooperating
Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program as may be
established under subdivision (a).

SEC. 3. Section 79222 of the Education Code is amended to
read:
79222. A student participant in the program shall meet both
of the following requirements:
(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 13th birthday.
(b) Be no older than 25 years of age at the commencement of
any academic year in which the student participates in the program.

SEC. 4. Section 79225 of the Education Code is amended to
read:
79225. (a) The board of governors, in consultation with the
State Department of Social Services, shall adopt regulations for
the program. The board of governors shall be responsible for the
administration of funds for the program. To the extent possible,
the State Department of Social Services, in consultation with the
County Welfare Directors Association of California, the Chief
Probation Officers of California, and other advocates, shall consult
with the chancellor’s office to ensure that services provided under
this article to eligible youths are coordinated with, and do not
supplant, other services provided by the county and state.
(b) Regulations adopted by the board of governors shall ensure
that program application and enrollment processes implemented
by community college districts are streamlined and do not impose
barriers to entry. These regulations shall allow programs to exercise
professional judgment to waive any income criteria specified in
the regulations as a condition of eligibility, provided that
income-eligible students have first priority.

SEC. 5. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that
this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to
local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made
pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.