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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SB 958, as introduced, Leyva. Community colleges: support services for foster youth: Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program.

(1) 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.
(2) 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.

(3) 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.


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

SECTION 1. 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 pursuant to 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 defined 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. 2. 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 16th 13th birthday.

(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.

SEC. 3. 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.