
THIRD READING

Bill No: SB 860
Author: Beall (D), et al.
Amended: 5/13/20
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 6-0, 5/12/20
AYES: Leyva, Wilk, Chang, Durazo, McGuire, Pan
NO VOTE RECORDED: Glazer

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

SUBJECT: Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program: postsecondary
education financial aid applications

SOURCE: John Burton Advocates for Youth

DIGEST: This bill modifies elements of the Foster Youth Services (FYS) Coordinating Program relative to ensuring program participants complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), and the reporting of information about the completion of those financial aid applications.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

FYS Coordinating Programs

- 1) Authorizes a county office of education, or a consortium of county offices of education, to operate an education-based FYS Coordinating Program to provide educational support for students who are in foster care. (Education Code § 42921)
- 2) Requires each FYS Coordinating Program, as a condition of receiving funds for that purpose, to develop and implement a FYS coordinating plan for purposes

of establishing guiding principles and protocols to provide supports for students who are in foster care. (EC § 42921)

- 3) Requires each FYS coordinating plan to include:
 - a) A description of how the program will establish ongoing collaboration with local educational agencies (LEAs), county child welfare agencies, and county probation departments, to determine the proper educational placement of the foster youth.
 - b) Policies and procedures to ensure educational placement for a foster youth is not delayed.
 - c) A description of how the program will facilitate coordination with local postsecondary educational institutions to ensure foster youth meet admission requirements and access programs that support their matriculation needs.
 - d) Policies and procedures for LEAs, county welfare agencies, and county probation departments to share all relevant educational information for foster youth to ensure the court has updated and accurate information as it makes decisions regarding foster youth.
- 4) Requires each FYS Program, as a condition of receiving funds, to report the following to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI):
 - a) Recommendations regarding the effectiveness and continuation of the FYS Coordinating Program.
 - b) Aggregate educational outcome data for each county in which there were at least 15 students in foster care who attended school in the county, with information on the following indicators:
 - i) The number of students in foster care who attended school in the county.
 - ii) The academic achievement of the students in foster care, as determined by quantitative and qualitative data.
 - iii) The number of students in foster care who were suspended or expelled.
 - iv) The number of students in foster care who were placed in a juvenile hall, camp, ranch or other county-operated juvenile detention facility.
 - v) The truancy rates, attendance rates, and dropout rates for students in foster care.

- vi) The number of students in foster care participating in FYS Coordinating Programs who successfully transition to postsecondary education.
 - vii) The amount of funds allocated and spent by each FYS Coordinating Program in the previous two fiscal years.
 - c) A discussion of the meaning and implications of the indicators.
 - d) Information about how the program has supported the development and implementation of new policies, practices, and programs aimed at improving the educational outcomes of students in foster care.
 - e) Information about how the program has improved coordination of services between LEAs and county agencies, including the types of services provided to students in foster care. (EC § 42923)
- 5) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to collaborate with the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and the Chancellor of the California State University to identify indicators that can be used to track access to postsecondary education for students in foster care participating in a FYS Coordinating Program. (EC § 42923)

FAFSA and CADAA

- 6) Requires submission of a FAFSA or CADAA as a condition of being eligible for various forms of student financial aid. (EC § 69433)
- 7) Authorizes a community college to waive some or all of the fees for first-time community college students who are enrolled full time, and who complete and submit either a FAFSA or CADAA. (EC § 76396.3)
- 8) Requires submission of a FAFSA or CADAA as a condition of being eligible for the Middle Class Scholarship Program. (EC § 70022)
- 9) Requires submission of a FAFSA as a condition of waiving mandatory systemwide tuition or fees. (EC § 66025.3, § 69000)

This bill modifies elements of the FYS Coordinating Program relative to ensuring program participants complete the FAFSA or CADAA, and the reporting of information about the completion of those financial aid applications. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Expands the components of the required FYS coordinating plan to also include a description of how the program will coordinate efforts to ensure, to the extent

possible, completion of the FAFSA or the CADAA for foster youth students who are in grade 12.

- 2) Expands the indicators that must be included in each FYS Coordinating Program's report to the SPI to also include the number and percentage of students in foster care who successfully complete a FAFSA or CADAA while in grade 12.

Comments

- 1) *Need for the bill.* According to the author, "Financial aid is critical for success in higher education, but currently just 40 percent of foster youth received the Pell Grant and only 11 percent received the Cal Grant, despite virtually all meeting income eligibility requirements. One of the primary barriers that foster youth students face is that many do not complete the FAFSA. The low rate of financial aid attainment speaks to the fact that foster youth are not receiving the support they need to complete the required steps necessary to receive most forms of financial aid. The FYS Coordinating Programs, housed within each county's office of education, are the obvious entity to facilitate this coordination. [These programs] interface with school districts, child welfare and probation agencies, and community partners to coordinate educational support services for foster youth in their county. Further, they are tasked with coordinating support for college matriculation for foster youth. This bill will clarify that FAFSA completion is a specified element of this responsibility."
- 2) *Why is the FAFSA or CADAA so important?* The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for federal student aid, and the FAFSA and CADAA are used to determine eligibility for state aid such as the Cal Grant or California College Promise Grant, as well as for various student support programs. Community college students do not need to submit a FAFSA or CADAA to receive a California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the Board of Governors waiver). However, community college students do need to submit a FAFSA or CADAA to be eligible for various student support programs. A recent study showed that half of the foster youth students who received a Promise Grant were not eligible for a student support program specifically for foster youth (NextUp) merely for a lack of submitting a FAFSA or CADAA.
[<https://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Charting-the-Course-Final.pdf>]

While FYS Coordinating Programs are required to coordinate with local postsecondary educational institutions to ensure foster youth meet admission requirements and access programs that support their matriculation needs, there

is no requirement that programs coordinate with other entities to ensure foster youth complete the FAFSA or CADAA. This bill requires the coordinating plan to also include a description of how the program will coordinate efforts to ensure completion of the FAFSA or the CADAA for foster youth students who are in grade 12.

- 3) *Indicators of access to postsecondary education.* Existing law requires the CDE to work with the California Community Colleges and California State University to identify indicators that can be used to track access to postsecondary education for students in foster care who participate in the FYS Coordinating Program. According to the CDE, FYS Coordinating Programs have been asked to provide this data point to the CDE for the past two years (for purposes of inclusion in CDE's biennial report on the coordinating program). This bill adds information on FAFSA or CADAA completion to the list of indicators to be tracked.
- 4) *FYS Coordinating Program report.* Existing law requires the SPI to report to the Legislature specified information on the FYS Coordinating Program, by July 1 of each even-numbered year. According to the CDE, the 2020 report is in the approval process. It appears that the most recent report available on the CDE's website is from the 2012-13 school year.
[<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/lrlegreport2014.asp>]

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 958 (Leyva, 2020) would have 1) expanded eligibility for priority enrollment and for a program of support for current and former foster youth at California Community Colleges; 2) clarified that the program may provide direct financial assistance to students prior to the beginning of an academic term; and 3) required regulations to allow the waiving of income criteria for students who were employed prior to enrollment. The author is not proceeding with SB 958 because it is not related to COVID-19 nor does the proposed change to statute absolutely need to occur this year.

AB 1617 (Reyes, 2019) would have required students to complete a FAFSA, or opt-out from doing so, as a condition of graduation from high school. AB 1617 was not heard.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 6/3/20)

John Burton Advocates for Youth (source)

AdvancED Consulting, LLC
Alameda County CASA
Alliance for Children's Rights
Beyond Emancipation
Bill Wilson Center
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Faculty Association
California Federation of Teachers
California School Boards Association
California State University, Monterey Bay, College Support Programs
California Student Aid Commission
California Teachers Association
California Youth Connection
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
Children's Law Center of California
Children's Law Offices
County Welfare Directors Association of California
Creative Alternatives East Bay
Education Trust-West
Excite Credit Union
First Place for Youth
First STAR
Foster Care Counts
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Modesto Junior College Student Success
Moreno Valley College, Grants and Student Equity Initiatives
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
National Center for Youth Law
Norco College, Special Funded Programs
One Day, INC.
Reedley College, NextUp & Extended Opportunity Programs and Services
Rio Hondo College
Riverside Community College District, Foster Youth Support Network
Santa Rosa Junior College, Student Financial Services
Silicon Valley Leadership Group Skyline College, Guardian Scholars Program
STAR Vista, Transitional Youth Services
Swipe Out Hunger
Tipping Point Community
UNITE-LA
Unity Care

Walden Family Services
Wesley House
Youth Law Center

OPPOSITION: (Verified 6/3/20)

None received

Prepared by: Lynn Lorber / ED. /
6/9/20 14:08:09

**** **END** ****