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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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## AB 1829 (Fong) - Community colleges: CalWORKs Recipients Education Program: services

**Version:** June 8, 2026

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** June 22, 2026

**Policy Vote:** ED. 7 - 0

**Mandate:** Yes

**Consultant:** Lenin Del Castillo

**Bill Summary:** This bill allows the California Community Colleges (CCCs) to use funds appropriated for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Education (CalWORKs) Recipients Education Program (REP) for direct aid designed to meet ongoing basic needs services and resources. This bill also allows CCCs to waive the requirement for employers to contribute 25 percent of the wage for workstudy positions funded by the program if the number of on-campus and off-campus workstudy positions will not decrease.

**Fiscal Impact:** The Chancellor's Office indicates that CalWORKs REPs at community colleges throughout the state have accumulated significant funds in the low tens of millions of dollars statewide due to restrictions under current law. This bill would allow them to use these Proposition 98 funds on existing CalWORKs REP students for direct aid to meet basic needs services and resources. However, this could potentially lead to future, unknown cost pressures to the extent that program funds become fully subscribed.

**Background:** Existing law establishes the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program within the CCC system. The law requires to the extent that funding is provided in the annual Budget Act, a CCC to receive funding for educational services provided to CalWORKs recipients based on the number of CalWORKs recipients enrolled at the CCC and the scope and number of programs that the college plans to offer to assist CalWORKs recipients obtain employment.

Existing law authorizes, to the extent that funding is provided in the annual Budget Act, a CCC to use funding received for curriculum development and design for CalWORKs recipients for all of the following purposes:

1. To develop or redesign vocational curricula for CalWORKs recipients so that courses may be offered as part of a short-term intensive program.
2. To link CalWORKs courses to job placement through work experience and internships.
3. To redesign basic education and English as a second language courses so that they may be integrated into vocational training programs.
4. To expand the use of telecommunications in providing the new curricula to CalWORKs recipients.

Existing law requires, to the extent that funding is provided in the annual Budget Act, a community college district (CCD) to receive funding for purposes of providing special services to CalWORKs recipients, to assist CalWORKs recipient students and those students transitioning off CalWORKs in achieving long-term self-sufficiency through coordinated student services offered at a CCC.

**Proposed Law:** This bill allows CCCs to use funds appropriated for the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program for direct aid designed to meet basic needs services and resources, which includes, but is not limited to, housing, food, clothing, feminine hygiene, diapers, technology, childcare services and resources, and mental health services and resources.

This bill allows CCCs to waive the requirement for employers to contribute 25 percent of the wage for workstudy positions for workstudy funded by the program if the number of on-campus and off-campus workstudy positions will not decrease.

This bill requires that special services provided through the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program assist CalWORKs recipient students and those students transitioning off CalWORKs in achieving economic mobility, in addition to long-term self-sufficiency.

**Related Legislation:** AB 363 (Bryan, 2025) would have expanded participation in the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program and required CCDs to waive the requirement for employers to contribute 25 percent of the wage for workstudy positions funded by the program. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

**Staff Comments:** CalWORKs is the state's primary cash assistance program and implements the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. It provides eligible low-income families with cash grants and supportive services aimed at helping them to secure education, training, and employment. Established in 2014, the CalWORKs Education Program provides education, training, support services, and job opportunities to individuals receiving CalWORKs services from the county. CalWORKs program funds must assist CalWORKs recipient students and those students transitioning off of CalWORKs in achieving long-term self-sufficiency through coordinated student services offered at a community college, such as subsidized childcare and workstudy. The CalWORKs Recipients Education Program was funded at \$63.6 million in 2024-25, \$55.6 million of which was Proposition 98 General Fund and the remaining \$8 million in federal TANF funds. However, only \$4.9 million was spent on direct student support and all of it was with federal funds. The Chancellor's Office indicates that colleges are unable to use state funding for this program for direct aid without it being explicitly authorized in statute. This bill would allow community colleges to use Proposition 98 funds on existing CalWORKs REP students.

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