

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2766 (Ahrens) – As Amended April 8, 2026

Policy Committee:	Higher Education	Vote:	9 - 0
	Human Services		6 - 0

Urgency: No                      State Mandated Local Program: Yes                      Reimbursable: Yes

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires housing priority at a campus of the California Community College (CCC)s for foster youth and homeless youth students and expands existing priority housing provisions for foster youth and homeless youth students at a campus of the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC). The bill also expands the definition of foster youth attending a postsecondary education institution.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

Minor and absorbable costs to the UC, CSU, and CCC.

**COMMENTS:**

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

AB 2766 removes key structural barriers that prevent vulnerable students from enrolling, persisting, and completing their postsecondary education. As someone who has experience with homelessness and the foster care system, I understand how difficult it can be to complete college without stable, secure housing. I also understand the transformative power of a college degree, and the vast potential for expanded opportunity it can create. This bill takes several simple yet impactful steps to promote academic success for former and current foster youth and students experiencing homelessness, providing crucial support to vulnerable individuals and promoting upward mobility.

2) **Background.** Several programs exist to provide temporary and transitional housing to the homeless community and homeless youth, typically administered by a state agency, such as the California Department of Social Services or the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). For example, the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Grant Program, administered by HCD, provides grants to cities, counties, and continuums of care with flexible funding to address homelessness, with a requirement that a grantee spend 10% of its allocation on services for homeless youth.

California receives funding under the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youths program, which provides grants to states to ensure homeless children and youth receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Each state then must provide subgrants,

awarded on a competitive basis, to K-12 local educational agencies (LEAs) for facilitation of enrollment, attendance, and success in school for homeless students, which may include addressing transportation, immunization, documentation, or guardianship needs. LEAs collaborate with other local agencies (such as a county social services agency) to ensure homeless students receive these comprehensive supports and services. According to the California Department of Education (CDE), there were 286,854 homeless youth and 29,815 foster youth in public schools in the 2023-24 school year. However, there is not adequate data available to determine how many of these students matriculate to a campus of the CCC, CSU, or UC. However, according to data available from the CCC Chancellor's Office, it appears CCC students identifying as foster youth and homeless youth make up less than 2% and 1.3% of the total student population, respectively.

To support the transition for both foster youth and homeless youth to higher education, existing law requests the campuses of the CCCs and requires campuses of the CSU and UC to provide priority housing for foster youth and homeless youth. Each campus must also develop a plan to ensure that current and former foster youth and homeless youth can access housing resources as needed during and between academic terms. This bill requires campuses of the CCC to provide priority housing to these students and expands the resources and assistance provided to eligible students.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 2768 (Ahrens), of the current legislative session, requires a postsecondary educational institution to defer the unpaid portion of enrollment fees and costs for foster youth or former foster youth until the student has received an initial disbursement of financial aid. AB 2768 is pending hearing in this committee.

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