UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No: SB 1421
Author: McGuire (D)
Amended: 8/13/26
Vote: 21

SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE: 4-0, 4/20/26
AYES: Becker, Niello, Laird, Weber Pierson
NO VOTE RECORDED: Pérez

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 5/14/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

SENATE FLOOR: 33-0, 5/22/26
AYES: Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Ochoa Bogh, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NO VOTE RECORDED: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Becker, Hurtado, Niello, Padilla, Stern

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 8/27/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: California Child and Family Service Review System: nonminor dependents

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Child and Family Service Review System (CFSR) to track how many nonminor dependents (NMDs) are using benefits designed to reduce poverty.

Assembly Amendments make technical and clarifying changes.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Creates the California Child and Family Service Review System to review the child protective services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, family support, and independent living facilities in every county. (Welfare and Institutions Code [WIC] 10601.2)

2) Requires the California Health and Human Services Agency to convene a workgroup comprised of representatives of the Judicial Council, the State Department of Social Services (CDSS), the State Department of Health Care Services, the State Department of Education, the State Department of Justice, any other state departments or agencies the California Health and Human Services Agency deems necessary, the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the California State Association of Counties, the Chief Probation Officers of California, the California Youth Connection, and representatives of California tribes, interested child advocacy organizations, researchers, and foster parent organizations. The workgroup is required to establish a work plan by which child and family service reviews shall be conducted. The work plan should consider any existing federal program improvement plans entered into by the state pursuant to federal regulations, the outcome indicators to be measured, compliance thresholds for each indicator, timelines for implementation, county review cycles, uniform processes, procedures and review instruments to be used, a corrective action process, and any funding or staffing increases needed. (WIC 10601.2 (c))

3) Requires CDSS to provide information to the Assembly and Senate Budget Committees and appropriate legislative policy committees annually, beginning with the 2002–03 fiscal year on the following:

   a) CDSS's progress in planning for the federal child and family service review and the findings of that review.

   b) CDSS's progress in implementing the California child and family service reviews, including, but not limited to, the timelines for implementation, the process to be used, and any funding or staffing increases needed at the state or local level to implement the requirements of the program.

   c) The findings and recommendations for child welfare system improvements identified in county self-assessments and county system improvement plans, including information on common statutory, regulatory, or fiscal barriers

identified as inhibiting system improvements, any recommendations to overcome those barriers, and, as applicable, information regarding the allocation and use of the moneys provided to counties. (WIC 10601.2 (f))

This bill:

1) Requires the California Child and Family Service Review System to include data measures related to utilization of programs for nonminor dependents that are designed to reduce poverty.

2) Provides that these data measures include, but are not limited to, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and enrolment in postsecondary education and vocational education.

3) Provides that CDSS may consider feedback from relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to, researchers, county representatives, advocates, and individuals with lived experience, in determining which additional relevant data to include.

4) Requires CDSS, at least once every five years, to conduct a comprehensive review of county performance measures based on the data collected.

Background

Author's Statement. According to the author, "SB 1421 builds on California's existing obligation to track outcomes for young people in the state's child welfare system by addressing gaps in how outcomes for nonminor dependents are measured. Federal and state oversight mechanisms were largely designed prior to the expansion of foster care to age 21, and current review processes do not consistently capture outcomes for this population. SB 1421 will require the inclusion of utilization data measures within the California Child and Family Service Review System related to nonminor dependents' use of resources such as the Foster Youth Tax Credit and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and requires the State Department of Social Services to conduct a comprehensive review of county performance on these measures every five years. Connection to these supports is crucial to education access and economic stability, and we owe it to every youth in extended foster care to ensure they have the best opportunity for upward mobility as they transition into adulthood."

California Child and Family Service Review System and California Child Welfare Indicators Project. The California Child and Family Service Review System was created by AB 636 (Chapter 92, Statues 2001) to require CDSS to establish a new system to review all county child welfare systems, and to ensure compliance with

federal regulations for the receipt of federal foster care funds. The system replaced the former oversight mechanism and created a continuous quality improvement model that requires review of all county child welfare systems, including child protective services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, family support, and independent living facilities and is managed by county child welfare departments. County probation departments, Native American tribes, service recipients, and other relevant county departments are also expected to contribute to the review. Other relevant government entities and non-profit providers are allowed to participate.

The California Child and Family Service Review System consists of five components:

- County Self-Assessment – an assessment completed every five years by the county in coordination with their local community partners to "determine effectiveness of current practice, programs and resources across the continuum of child welfare and probation placement services and identifies areas for targeted system improvement."

- Peer Review – allows counties to share qualitative feedback about their programs and share best practices.

- System Improvement Plan – an agreement between the county and state created every five years about improvements they will make.

- Annual System Improvement Plan Progress Report – a progress report created by county child welfare departments and their stakeholders about the effectiveness of strategies agreed to in the System Improvement Plan

- Quarterly Data Reports – Outcome-based data reports created by CDSS quarterly focused on core safety, permanency and well-being measures. The data is extracted from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and provides qualitative data that helps inform the other reports that are a part of the entire review system.

AB 636 also requires CDSS to provide annual data updates to the Assembly and Senate Budget Committees. The California Child Welfare Indicators Project was created out of that requirement. The project is a collaborative effort between CDSS and the University of California at Berkley and is housed in the School of Social Welfare. According to CDSS, the website reports the child outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being as well as numerous other important longitudinal systemic outcome measures. The website also provides counties with

the opportunity to analyze data and to identify areas that are either performing well or need improvement. It provides data on outcomes for foster youth, placement rates, documented mistreatment and many of the other points of data counties track.

This system was largely created prior to the expansion of foster care to age 21. This bill seeks to fill these gaps by adding data measures related to utilization of programs for nonminor dependents that are designed to reduce poverty.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 1907 (Pellerin, Chapter 944, Statutes of 2024) requires, subject to an appropriation, the California Child and Family Services Review System to include data from the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment tool.

AB 636 (Steinberg, Chapter 678, Statutes of 2001) requires CDSS to establish, by July 1, 2003, a Child and Family Service Review System in order to review all county child welfare systems, and to ensure compliance with federal regulations for the receipt of federal foster care funds.

AB 403 (Stone, Chapter 773, Statutes of 2015) initiated continuum of care reform and created Child and Family Teams.

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

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

1) CDSS estimates General Fund (GF) costs of $185,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2027-28 and ongoing GF costs of $181,000 annually for one position related to data collection activities.

2) CDSS estimates GF county costs of $3.7 million GF in FY 2027-28 and $2.6 million GF annually thereafter related to additional data measure requirements. These costs include:

   a) Ongoing county administrative costs of $1.3 million annually to collect the required data on NMDs and incorporate the data into system's county self-assessments, system improvement plans, and comprehensive reviews.

   b) Ongoing additional contract costs of $200,000 annually to update the existing California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP) contract with the University of California, Berkeley to include the required data.

c) One-time automation costs of $1.1 million in FY 2027-28 to update the Child Welfare System – California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES) to include the required data fields on program usage by NMDs.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/27/26)

3rd Street Youth Center & Clinic
Allies for Every Child
Cal Poly Humboldt Elite Scholars Program
California Alliance of Caregivers
Children Youth & Family Collaborative
Creative Alternatives
Foster & Kinship Care Education, Woodland Community College
John Burton Advocates for Youth
Ohlone College Nextup
Orange County United Way
Public Counsel
Redwood Community Action Agency - Youth Services Bureau
Rio Hondo College
Safe Place for Youth
San Francisco State Gsp Program
Santa Ana College Gsp
The Community College Foundation
United Friends of the Children

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/27/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 8/27/26
AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo,

Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO VOTE RECORDED: Bauer-Kahan, McKinnor

Prepared by: Heather Hopkins / HUM. S. / (916) 651-1524
11/16/26 10:20:08

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