

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

# ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 271 (Reyes) – As Amended May 23, 2025

Policy Committee:	Higher Education	Vote:	10 - 0
	Human Services		7 - 0

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

## SUMMARY:

This bill requires each California State University (CSU) and California Community College (CCC), and requests each University of California (UC) basic needs center, financial aid office, and childcare development center to refer students with dependent children to local resource and referral agencies, and each other, so the students are connected with and informed of existing childcare services, resources, and financial aid available to students with dependent children.

## FISCAL EFFECT:

One-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs of unknown, but potentially significant amount, possibly in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars for the CCCs, collectively statewide, to update policies and procedures for Basic Needs Centers and Financial Aid Offices. If each college spends between \$1,000 and \$2,000 to comply with the requirements of this bill, then total costs statewide would be between \$116,000 and \$232,000. However, since this bill codifies what is already common practice at many campuses, costs may be lower.

Minor and absorbable costs to each campus of the CSU and UC to provide training, if needed, to basic needs, financial aid office, and childcare center staff and provide the appropriation information to student parents.

## COMMENTS:

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

While juggling the demands of parents and earning their degrees, student parents should not be further delayed by communication gaps on their campuses. SB 271 bridges gaps, ensuring student parents are connected to the resources they need rather than being left in the dark about relevant services. This bill is a step towards making all student parents feel welcomed, supported, and cared for by fostering an environment where their needs are intentionally met.

### 2) **Background. *Students with Dependent Children.*** While federal regulations allow financial aid administrators to adjust a student's cost of attendance (COA) calculation to account for expenses incurred for dependent care, many institutions do not fully utilize this flexibility. As a result, many student parents do not receive a similar proportion of financial aid relative to their overall expenses as their non-parenting peers. According to California Competes,

California educates approximately 400,000 student parents at institutions of higher education, with the majority attending as first-generation college goers and students of color.

***Resources for Student Parents.*** Existing law establishes the position of a basic needs coordinator at each CSU, UC, and CCC campus along with basic needs centers where basic needs services and resources, such as food, housing, clothing, feminine hygiene, diapers, technology, childcare, and mental health services, and staff are made available to students. Additionally, part of the responsibilities of basic needs centers is to connect students to their respective financial aid office to ensure that students are receiving all available financial aid. However, according to Early Edge California, cosponsors of the bill:

Many student parents seeking support in various offices on campus are not informed of the full scope of services available. It is critical that these offices work in tandem to ensure student parents are made aware of the full spectrum of services and support available to them.

For example, Cal Grant recipients may receive an additional grant award specifically for students with dependent children (\$6,000 for Cal Grant A and B recipients and \$4,000 for Cal Grant C recipients), however, if a basic needs center is not informing student parents of this additional aid available they may not pursue it. Similarly, student parents may not be aware of the full scope of subsidized childcare available to them, whether from on-campus childcare development centers or from other subsidized childcare providers within their region. This bill expands the definition of childcare services and resources, as it relates to basic needs services, and centers to include providing information on affordable childcare options on or near campus, and information regarding local resources and referral agencies for support in applying to state and federal childcare subsidies and programs. Likewise, the bill requires each campus's financial aid office to provide information to student parents regarding childcare development centers and childcare offices.

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