
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: SB 1068
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Version: March 31, 2016
Urgency: No
Consultant: Lynn Lorber
Hearing Date: April 13, 2016
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Homeless children and youth: local educational agency liaisons: training materials

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Department of Education to provide specified informational and training materials to local educational agency (LEA) liaisons for homeless youth, and adopt policies and practices to ensure that liaisons for homeless youth participate in professional development and other technical assistance programs.

BACKGROUND

Existing federal law, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act:

- 1) Defines “homeless children and youths” as children and youths who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youths who, among other situations, are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations. (United States Code, Title 42, § 11431, et seq.)
- 2) Requires state educational agencies to ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free public education as is provided to other children and youth. States are required to review and undertake steps to revise any laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth. (42, USC § 11431, et seq.)
- 3) Requires each LEA to designate a staff person as a liaison for homeless children and youth, and carry out specific duties, such as ensuring immediate enrollment, access to educational opportunities offered to other students, referrals to appropriate services, and providing notice of the rights of homeless youth. (42, USC § 11432)
- 4) Effective July 1, 2016, as amended by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, requires state educational agencies to develop professional development opportunities for LEA liaisons other school personnel who provide services to

homeless youth to improve the identification of homeless youth and heighten awareness of, and capacity to respond to, specific needs in the education of homeless youth. (42, USC § 11432)

- 5) Establishes general rights for homeless children and youth as follows:
 - a) The choice of schools the youth is eligible to attend.
 - b) No homeless youth shall be required to attend a separate school.
 - c) Homeless youth shall be provided comparable services, including transportation services, educational services, and meals through school meal programs.
 - d) Homeless youth should not be stigmatized by school personnel. (42, USC § 11432)
- 6) Existing federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act:
 - a) Requires the state plan to describe how the state education agency will provide support to local educational agencies (LEA), and requires the LEA plan to describe the services that will be provided to support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless youth.
 - b) Requires states to report disaggregated achievement and graduation data for homeless youth.
 - c) Increases dedicated funding for LEAs for services to homeless youth. (United States Code, Title 20)

Existing state law:

- 1) Requires an LEA liaison for homeless youth to ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in schools within the liaison's LEA that provide services. (Education Code § 48852.5)
- 2) Requires LEAs to allow a student who is homeless to remain in his or her school of origin through the duration in homelessness, and imposes requirements related to the transition between grade levels. (EC § 48852.7)
- 3) Establish homeless youth as a subgroup for purposes of, among other things, accountability, local control and accountability plans, renewal of charter schools, advice and assistance by the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, and intervention by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (EC § 52052, § 476607.3, § 52060, § 52066, § 52071, § 52071.5, § 52072, § 52072.5)

ANALYSIS

This bill requires the California Department of Education to provide specified informational and training materials to LEA liaisons for homeless youth, and adopt

policies and practices to ensure that liaisons for homeless youth participate in professional development and other technical assistance programs. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide informational materials to local educational agency (LEA) liaisons for homeless children and youth regarding the educational rights of homeless children and youth under state and federal law, updates and changes to state and federal law regarding the rights of homeless students, the responsibilities of LEA liaisons relating to homeless children and youth, and the resources available to schools to assist homeless children and youth.
- 2) Requires the CDE to adopt policies and practices to ensure that LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth participate in professional development and other technical assistance programs that are deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.
- 3) Requires the CDE to provide training materials to LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth to assist liaisons with providing professional development and other support to school personnel providing services pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- 4) Provides that the training materials are intended to support liaisons in meeting the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.
- 5) Authorizes the CDE to use and adapt informational and training materials from state or national sources when applicable and appropriate.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Federal law requires LEAs to designate a homeless student liaison to help identify these students and assist them in accessing the rights and resources available to them by law. Despite the many responsibilities of these liaisons, California does not provide a training program or instructional materials that would help liaisons better assist their students and train other staff on how to identify and help homeless students. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act now requires states to develop professional development programs for liaisons, requires liaisons to participate in professional development as well as train other school personnel who provide services to homeless students. While these requirements are important, they also significantly increase the workload of already strained staff who receive little support from the state to help serve California’s over 300,000 homeless students. SB 1068 seeks to address these issues.”
- 2) ***Services for homeless youth.*** Existing law imposes general requirements for services, such as the immediate enrollment in school, access to educational opportunities offered to other students, referrals to appropriate services, and providing notice of the rights of homeless youth. LEAs are authorized to use dedicated federal funds to provide tutoring or supplemental instruction, expedited

evaluations of needs, professional development for educators, early education, and referral to other services. This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide informational materials to local educational agency (LEA) liaisons for homeless youth regarding the educational rights of homeless youth, updates and changes to state and federal law regarding the rights of homeless students, the responsibilities of LEA liaisons relating to homeless youth, and the resources available to schools to assist homeless children and youth. This information is generally available on the CDE's website, but in several different locations; this bill requires CDE to *provide* all of the information to liaisons, rather than relying upon liaisons to gather the information themselves.

- 3) ***Professional development.*** The recently reauthorized federal Every Student Succeeds Act, among other things, amended the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to require states to develop professional development opportunities for LEA liaisons and other school personnel who serve homeless youth. This bill requires the CDE to provide training materials to LEA liaisons for homeless youth to assist liaisons with providing professional development and other support to school personnel providing services to homeless youth. The CDE does not currently directly provide training materials but provides links to related information on its website.
- 4) ***Prior legislation.*** AB 951 (Medina, 2013) required school districts that designate a liaison for homeless children and youths, as required under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, to ensure the liaison is properly trained regarding the rights of these children to receive educational services. AB 951 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

California Coalition for Youth
Los Angeles Unified School District
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter

OPPOSITION

None received.

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