
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: SB 906
Author: Beall
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Urgency: No
Consultant: Kathleen Chavira
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Public postsecondary education: priority enrollment systems

SUMMARY

This bill conforms the definition of “foster youth or former foster youth,” for the purposes of priority registration at the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC), to existing state higher education program definitions, deletes the sunset on the extension of priority registration to foster youth or former foster youth, and deletes the sunset on the extension of priority registration to Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) students and Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) students at the California Community Colleges.

BACKGROUND

Current law requires, if the institution administers a priority enrollment system for registration, that the CSU and each CCC district, and requests that the UC, grant priority enrollment, to any current or former foster youth, and repeals these provisions on January 1, 2017. (EC § 66025.9)

Current law establishes the Community College EOPS to extend opportunities for community college education to all who may profit regardless of economic, social and educational status, and to encourage local community colleges to identify students affected by economic, language, and social disadvantages and encourage their enrollment and achievement of their educational objectives and goals. The Board of Governors is required to adopt regulations with the objective that the EOPS programs include qualified counseling staff, facilitation of transfer, and enrollment in courses necessary to develop successful study skills, as specified. Current law also authorizes local community college governing boards to provide services that may include loans or grants for living costs, student fees, and transportation costs and also scholarships, work-experience and job placement programs. (EC § 69640 - § 69656)

Current law requires each CCC district that administers a priority enrollment system for registration to grant priority registration for enrollment to students in the EOPS program and to disabled students, as specified, and repeals these provisions on January 1, 2017. (EC § 66025.91)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Redefines “foster youth or former foster youth,” for purposes of priority registration at California’s public higher education segments, to conform to definitions consistent with the California Chaffee Foster Youth Grant program and the community colleges Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support Program. More specifically, these students are defined as those who meet both the following criteria:
 - a) Dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth’s 16th birthday.
 - b) Are no older than 25 years of age at the commencement of the academic year.
- 2) Deletes the sunset on the requirement (and in the case of the University of California, the request) that the California State University and each community college district grant priority registration for enrollment to a foster youth or former foster youth, thereby permanently extending this priority for these students.
- 3) Deletes the sunset on the extension of priority registration to Extended Opportunity Programs and Services students and disabled students at the California Community Colleges, thereby permanently extending registration priority to these students.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** This bill, sponsored by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges would statutorily require the extension of priority enrollment consistent with existing regulations adopted by the BOG.

According to the author, foster youth, students with disabilities, and low-income students all experience academic success rates disproportionately lower than the general population. The author cites various reports issued between 2009 and 2001 that indicate; 1) while half of all people from high-income families have a bachelor’s degree by age 25, only 10 percent of people from low-income families do; 2) only 29 percent of students with disabilities left having graduated or completed their postsecondary education program; 3) only 8 percent of foster youth had a postsecondary degree from either a 2-year or a 4-year school.

- 2) ***Existing state foster youth definitions.*** This bill redefines “foster youth and former foster youth” for the purposes of priority registration. The intent is to conform the definition for this purpose with the definitions for two existing programs designed to serve foster youth in postsecondary education.

The California Chafee Foster Youth Grant program is a federal and state funded program that provides financial assistance for current or former California foster

youth for college or career and technical training. Chafee Grants may also be used to pay for child care, rent, and transportation while the recipient is in school.

To qualify, the applicant, among other things, must be a current or former foster youth who was a dependent or ward of the court, living in foster care, between the ages of 16 and 18 and must not have reached his/her 22nd birthday as of July 1st of the award year.

The Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support program, established by SB 1023 (Liu, Chapter 771, Statutes of 2014), authorizes the California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellors Office to enter into agreements with up to 10 CCC districts to establish an additional supplemental component of the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) in order to provide additional funds for services in support of postsecondary education for foster youth. The 2015-16 Budget Act provided up to \$15 million for this purpose. A student participant in this program must be a current or former foster youth in California whose dependency was established or continued by the court on or after the youth's 16th birthday and be no older than 25 years of age at the commencement of any academic year in which he or she participates in the program.

- 3) ***Existing community college enrollment priority categories.*** Current law extends registration priority to foster youth and to EOPS students and Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) students at the community colleges until January 1, 2017. In addition, current law grants priority enrollment registration to any member or former member of the Armed Forces, as specified.

Enrollment policies related to the implementation of the system's Student Success Initiative (SSI) have also been implemented. The Legislature has provided significant funding for the Student Services Support Program (SSSP) established by SB 1425 (Lowenthal, Chapter 624, Statutes of 2013) to provide targeted services such as orientation, assessment, and counseling and advising to assist students with the development of education plans. The Board of Governors have implemented a number of related regulatory and administrative changes, including the provision of higher enrollment priority to students who have participated in these targeted services. Districts are also now required to notify students that accumulating 100 degree applicable units or being on academic or progress probation for two consecutive terms will result in the loss of enrollment priority.

AB 595 (Gomez, Chapter 704 Statutes of 2013), among other things, established the Legislature's intent that any student who receives priority registration for enrollment (which would include veterans, EOPS students, foster youth, and DSPS students) shall comply with the requirements of the Student Success Initiative. These provisions were adopted in order to ensure that the enrollment priorities supported, and did not undermine, statutory and regulatory efforts to ensure the development of statewide strategies and to incentivize student behaviors that result in student success.

According to the sponsor, it is the expectation that students granted priority enrollment by the provisions of this bill will comply with EC §66602.95 which clarifies that any student who receives priority registration shall participate in SSSP programs and services including orientation, assessment, counseling, and the development of an education plan, among other things.

- 4) **Net effect?** In 2014-15 the CCC enrolled over 2.3 million students. Of these, 121,406 were disabled students, over 15,000 were foster youth and, the CCC were allocated about \$79 million for the EOPS program and served about 79,000 EOPS students statewide. Additionally, according to the CCC, in 2014-15 more than 61,000 veterans, who also receive priority enrollment, utilized education benefits at a California community college.

Given the limited EOPS funding provided, not all students who meet the criteria for the EOPS program are able to be served. This population could include AB 540 students, CalWORKs recipients (about 30,800 enrolled in the California Community Colleges in 2014-15), as well as other students who are faced with educational, financial, or personal disadvantages. Although these students may have complied with the statutory and regulatory Student Success Initiative requirements, these students are extended priority enrollment only after veterans, foster youth, disabled students and students fortunate enough to be served through an Extended Opportunity Programs and Services program have received priority enrollment.

- 5) **Prior legislation.**

- a) *AB 595 (Gomez, Chapter 704, Statutes of 2013)* required a community college district that administers a priority enrollment system to grant priority registration for enrollment to students in the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) programs and to disabled students, as defined and also established the Legislature's intent that any student who receives priority registration for enrollment shall comply with the requirements of the Student Success Initiative.
- b) *SB 2133 (Blumenfeld, Chapter 400, Statutes of 2012)* required a veteran to use their four years of priority enrollment at the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges within 15 years of leaving active duty. The bill also required that veterans receiving priority enrollment comply with the requirements of the Student Success Act of 2012.
- c) *AB 194 (Beall, Chapter 458, Statutes of 2011)* until July 1, 2017, required a community college district to grant priority enrollment for registration to any current or former foster youth, if the institution already administers a priority enrollment system, and repeals these provisions on January 1, 2017.
- d) *SB 813 (Committee on Veteran Affairs, Chapter 375, Statutes of 2011)* extended the time frame for eligibility for priority enrollment for veterans at

the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges (CCC) from two years to four years.

- e) SB 272 (Runner, Chapter 356, Statutes of 2007) extended priority enrollment at the UC, CSU and CCC for a veteran who is a resident of California and who has received an honorable discharge, a general discharge, or an other than honorable discharge for any academic term attended at one of these institutions within two years of leaving state or federal active duty, if the institution already administered a priority enrollment system.

SUPPORT

Alameda County Office of Education
American Academy of Pediatrics
Berkeley Hope Scholars, University of California at Berkeley
Board of Governors, California Community Colleges
CA Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Community Colleges Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) Association
California State University Chico Student Learning Center
Chaffey Community College District
Children Now
East Bay Children's Law Offices
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges
Family Care Network, Inc.
Foster Care Counts
Foster Youth Success Program, College of the Siskiyous
Fred Finch Youth Center
Guardian Scholars Program, California State University Monterey Bay
Inspiring Scholars of Butte-Glenn Community College
John Burton Foundation
Kamali'I Foster Family Agency
Larkin Street Youth Services
Orange Coast College Guardian Scholars Program
PATH Scholars, California State University Chico
Peacock Acres, Inc.
Renaissance Scholars Program, California State University Fresno
Smith Renaissance Society at the University of California Santa Cruz
VOICES Youth Centers of California
Walden Family Services
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Youth and Family Services YMCA
90+ Letters from individuals

OPPOSITION

None received.