

SUMMARY OF PRIORITY TRACKED LEGISLATION

September 5, 2023



SPONSORED & SUPPORTED LEGISLATION

AB 1400 (Bryan) – College Access Tax Credit Fund: community college student transfers: Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Summary: Starting with the 2024-25 academic year, this bill refocuses the use of funds generated by the College Access Tax Credit from Cal Grant B recipients to California Community College transfer students with the greatest unmet financial need attending regionally accredited out-of-state Historically Black Colleges and Universities that have a transfer agreement with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Students must indicate their intent to return to California after graduation as a condition of receiving the grant. By creating a smaller pool of eligible students, it facilitates substantive increases to these awards (up to \$5,000 one-time); thus, ensuring that the program can meet its goal of providing additional financial aid to low-income students and help them to cover a larger portion of their annual cost of attendance.

Status: Senate Floor

Position: Sponsor

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

AB 1540 (Fong, M.) – AB 540/CADAA Integration

Summary: This bill requires community colleges and California State University campuses, and requests the University of California and independent institutions of higher education, to accept the AB 540 affidavit provided by the Commission via the California Dream Act Application. Additionally, the bill also requires that institutions then share AB 540 affidavits received via the Dream Act Application with departments on campus that require it. The bill also makes clear that institutions shall retain the ability to verify affidavits, and offer a campus-based form to students that do not apply for aid through the California Dream Act Application.

Status: Senate Floor

Position: Sponsor

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

AB 274 (Bryan) – CalWORKs: CalFresh: eligibility: income exclusions

Summary: This bill exempts any grant, award, scholarship, loan, or fellowship from consideration as income when determining CalWORKs eligibility or grant amounts and requires the State Department of Social Services (CDSS, to the extent permitted by federal law, regulation, or guidance) to exercise a federal option to exclude, for purposes of calculating a household's income under CalFresh, any type of income that the department excludes when determining eligibility or benefits for CalWORKs. This type of income is anything the state excludes when determining eligibility or benefits for TANF cash assistance. The bill also requires the department to implement these provisions through an all-county letter or similar instruction until regulations are adopted.

Status: Senate Floor

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.)

AB 278 (Reyes) – High Schools: Dream Resource Center Grant Program

Summary: This bill establishes the Dream Resource Center Grant Program for the purpose of providing pupils, including undocumented pupils, in grades 9 to 12 with specified resources, including financial aid support. Additionally, this bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to review and award grants based on a tiered point system that prioritizes local educational agencies with multiple school sites, in underserved areas, and local educational agencies that serve a large number of English learners and pupils who eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The bill also requires CDE to submit a report to the Legislature by June 1, 2026 on the pilot's outcomes.

Status: Senate Floor

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Enhance early awareness of financial aid through outreach programs that help students and families plan for the total cost of attendance.

AB 680 (Rubio, B.) – Public postsecondary education: nonresident tuition: exemption

Summary: This bill authorizes, as an alternative to the existing requirements to qualify for the AB 540 exemption from nonresident fees, either completion of 60 semester units of credit or 90 quarter units of credit at a California community college, or attainment of an associate degree for transfer to meet AB 540 requirements and attain AB 540 status.

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Ensure undocumented students – who are unable to access federal financial aid – have access to financial aid opportunities equitable to those of their peers.

AB 870 (Arambula) – Public social services: benefits for students

Summary: This bill requires CDSS to convene a workgroup that meets quarterly, comprised of relevant stakeholders as needed to share best practices, updates, challenges, or other topics related to programs and services offered by CDSS that may be available to students attending a campus of an institution of public higher education.

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.)

AB 928 (Rendon) – CalFresh Data Dashboard: students

Summary: This bill requires CDSS to update its CalFresh Data Dashboard on an annual basis and as additional data become available about students enrolled in postsecondary

education. The Dashboard publishes certain data specific to students' receipt of CalFresh benefits to assist in monitoring information about access to CalFresh by students enrolled in an institution of higher education.

Status: **GOVERNOR'S DESK**

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.)

AB 1393 (Calderon) – California Dream Act: Food Support Pilot Program

Summary: This bill requires the Student Aid Commission to establish the Food Support Pilot Program for four years to provide food support grants to eligible students who submit a complete California Dream Act application and receive financial assistance under the California Dream Act. It specifies that the award shall be equivalent to the maximum amount appropriated to CalFresh recipients each year of the program.

Status: **Senate Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense**

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.)

AB 1514 (Reyes) – Public social services: student eligibility

Summary: This bill requires CDSS to convene a workgroup to develop recommendations that allow data from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be shared with all county welfare departments to allow students to apply for and receive public social services. It requires administrative and statutory changes allowing FAFSA data, and any other student data from applications administered by the Student Aid Commission, to prepopulate information into public social services applications from students. It also requires CDSS to ensure that the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) allows all county office eligibility workers to view, transfer, and process all CalFresh applications via CalSAWS to allow students to apply for benefits in their home county before moving, or, in the county of their school.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.)

SB 633 (Gonzalez) – California DREAM Loan Program: DREAM grants

Summary: This bill authorizes, commencing with the 2024–25 academic year, participating institutions to award DREAM grants to eligible students if the institution's DREAM revolving loan program has unawarded funds.

Status: **Assembly Floor**

Position: Support

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Ensure undocumented students – who are unable to access federal financial aid – have access to financial aid opportunities equitable to those of their peers.

LEGISLATION WITH DIRECT IMPACT TO THE COMMISSION

AB 25 (McCarty) - Middle Class Scholarship Program

Summary: Requires the Department of Finance, following a growth of General Fund revenues for two consecutive fiscal years, to fund the cost of the Middle Class Scholarship Program, as determined by the Commission, over the five fiscal years following that growth. The bill also expresses the intent of the Legislature to fully fund the Cal Grant Reform Act before funding the Middle Class Scholarship Program.

Status: **Senate Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense**

Position: Watch

AB 91 (Alvarez) - Community colleges: exemption from nonresident tuition fee: residence near the California-Mexico border

Summary: This bill establishes a pilot program to allow low-income students who are residents of Mexico, to be eligible for in-state tuition rates at specified community colleges near the San Diego-Mexico border. Additionally, this bill requires that the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges enter into an attendance agreement with a nationally or internationally accredited university located in the State of Baja California, Mexico, that provides reciprocal rights and benefits under this bill to California residents attending a university in the State of Baja California.

Status: **Senate Floor**

Position: Watch

AB 238 (Muratsuchi) - California Student Teacher Support Grant Program

Summary: This bill establishes the California Student Teacher Support Grant Program to compensate teacher candidates during their required student teacher hours as part of their teacher preparation programs. This program would be administered by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing via request for applications process to all local educational agencies.

Status: **Senate Floor**

Position: Watch

AB 263 (Jones-Sawyer) - Public postsecondary education: pilot program for free cost of education: working group

Summary: This bill requires the Student Aid Commission to convene a working group until July 1, 2026, consisting of representatives from the State Department of Education (CDE) and the public higher education segments, as well as faculty, staff, and students from each public segment to develop recommendations for the creation of a free college pilot program that covers both tuition and fees and non-tuition costs. The bill requires a report to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2026, and specifies items for inclusion in the report.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 320 (Lee) – Student Aid Commissioners

Summary: This bill increases the number of Governor appointed student Commissioners from 2 to 4, one for each segment of higher education.

Status: **Senate Education Committee (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 376 (Villapudua) – Cal Grant C: driver training programs: commercial motor vehicles

Summary: This bill authorizes Cal Grant C awards for entry-level driver training programs of less than 4 months, current law specifies that eligible Cal Grant C programs cannot be less than 4 months, and requires the Commission to classify an institution as a qualifying institution if its driver training program has a graduation rate of at least 30%, is listed on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration training provider registry, and has been approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE). It also requires the Commission to consult with the BPPE to submit a report to the Legislature by April 1, 2027 that includes several data points related to the impact of the pilot program. The bill repeals these provisions on January 1, 2028.

Status: **Senate Floor**

Position: Watch

AB 638 (McCarty) – Golden State Teacher Grant Program

Summary: This bill makes funds appropriated for the Golden State Teacher Grant Program in the Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023 available for encumbrance or expenditure by the Commission until June 30, 2028. It also requires recipients to commit to work for four years in a shortage area at any California public or nonpublic school, instead of a priority school, as determined by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. This bill also requires the Commission to partner with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to conduct an evaluation (and then report findings to the Legislature and Department of Finance every two years starting with December 31, 2025) of the program for purpose of determining its effectiveness. Lastly, the bill also requires the Commission to collect and report on demographic data on recipients.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 746 (Sanchez) - Learning-Aligned Employment Program: eligibility

Summary: This bill removes research centers and institutions operated by public postsecondary institutions as allowable employers in the Learning-Aligned Employment Program, and instead broadens the program by allowing public campuses that provide employment experience related to the student's major or provide opportunities for skill attainment necessary for employment within their areas of study after graduation.

Status: **Senate Floor**

Position: Watch

AB 789 (Berman) – Cal Grants: satisfactory academic progress

Summary: This bill establishes a common set of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards to ensure that all California students, regardless of the campus are provided with the same flexibility provided under federal law and requires minimum SAP communication standards regarding policies and appeals processes. It also specifies criteria for how SAP appeals are accepted and handled, and prohibits additional requirements that are more restrictive than those that are federally mandated. Lastly, the bill clarifies that institutions are not precluded from requiring a student on “financial aid probation” (as defined federally) to comply with the terms of the student’s academic plan to maintain financial aid eligibility.

Status: Senate Floor

Position: Watch

AB 888 (Cervantes) – Student financial aid: immigrants seeking asylum

Summary: Contingent upon an appropriation, this bill provides Cal Grant eligibility to noncitizens who have filed a designated application for asylum and have a valid employment authorization document and social security number.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense

Position: Watch

AB 1062 (Santiago) - Public postsecondary education: California State University: tuition

Summary: This bill prohibits charging tuition or mandatory systemwide fees at a California State University (CSU) campus for up to two academic years to resident California Community College transfer students who complete an associate degree for transfer and demonstrate financial need. It requires the CSU Chancellor’s Office to distribute funding to each campus to offset the costs of waiving tuition and mandatory systemwide fees. Implementation is contingent on an appropriation by the Legislature.

Status: Assembly Higher Education Committee (2-year bill)

Position: Watch

AB 1142 (Fong, M.) - Postsecondary education: Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education in California

Summary: This bill establishes the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education in California, an independent state agency to serve as an advisory body for the State Legislature and the Governor on matters related to higher education policy.

Status: Assembly Higher Education Committee (2-year bill)

Position: Watch

AB 1237 (Petrie-Norris) - Student financial aid: California Public Interest Veterinary Debt Relief Program

Summary: This bill, upon appropriation by the Legislature, establishes the California Public Interest Veterinary Debt Relief Program under the administration of the Commission to award funds to California-licensed veterinarians who agree to specified terms. The bill

requires the Commission to prepare a report regarding program outcomes by March 31, 2026, and each year thereafter.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

ACR 16 (Fong, M.) - Needs of opportunity youth

Summary: This measure declares that the Legislature recognizes the importance of creating pathways to success for California's opportunity youth and the need to develop a statewide comprehensive plan that will reduce persistent economic inequities endured by California's opportunity youth, including removing barriers to access student financial aid programs.

Status: **CHAPTERED**

Position: Watch

SB 223 (Menjivar) - Pupil personnel services: child welfare and attendance services

Summary: This bill allows the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to approve a professional preparation program offered by a local educational agency for candidates seeking a services credential with a specialization in pupil personnel services in child welfare and attendance services, if it meets program quality and effectiveness standards adopted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Status: **GOVERNOR'S DESK**

Position: Watch

SB 242 (Skinner) – California Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment (HOPE) for Children Trust Account Program

Summary: This bill prohibits, to the extent permitted by federal law, the deposit of funds and investment returns accrued in a HOPE trust fund account from being considered as income or assets when determining eligibility and benefit amounts for any means-tested program (including Cal Grant, Chafee Grant, Middle Class Scholarship, and other financial aid programs) until an eligible youth withdraws or transfers the funds from the HOPE trust fund account. The bill would become operative on July 1, 2024, or on the date that CDSS notifies the Legislature that the Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) can perform the necessary automation to implement these provisions, or no automation is necessary, whichever date is later.

Status: **Assembly Human Services Committee (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

SB 307 (Ashby) – Middle Class Scholarship: community colleges: current and former foster youth

Summary: This bill expands the Middle Class Scholarship program to allow current or former foster youth enrolled in a community college pursuing to transfer to a four-year institution, an associate degree, or career technical education certificate to have 100% of their unmet need covered.

Status: **Assembly Higher Education Committee (2-year bill, but elements of the bill were adopted in the 2023 State Budget)**

Position: Watch

SB 531 (Ochoa-Bogh) – Financial literacy: student financial aid

Summary: This bill requires the Student Aid Commission and the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation to prominently display a link to a specified financial literacy document created by the Federal Student Aid Information Center on the home page or on a page dedicated to providing resources related to student loans of their respective internet websites.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Suspense File (Gut & Amended in Senate Education Committee and no longer impacts the Commission)**

Position: Watch

SB 765 (Portantino) – Teachers: retired teachers: teacher preparation: student financial aid

Summary: Among other non-related provisions, starting with the 2024-25 academic year, this bill removes the need-based element for 1,000 Cal Grant awards for applicants who file a statement of intent with the Commission stating their agreement to enroll in a teacher preparation program upon completion of a baccalaureate degree. This bill also requires that applicants agree to repay the total Cal Grant amount award received if the applicant fails to enroll in a teacher preparation program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing within one academic year of completing their baccalaureate degree.

Status: **Assembly Floor**

Position: Watch

SB 886 (Committee on Education) – Postsecondary education: omnibus bill

Summary: This bill is the annual higher education omnibus clean-up bill and proposes technical, non-controversial amendments to existing law in the education code. Specifically, this clarifies that an organization that is not part of a Regional Coordinating Organization (RCO), but has a written partnership agreement with the Commission or a RCO, may offer free local and regional workshops through the Cash for College Program. This bill also removes several reporting requirements by the Commission for defunded programs.

Status: **GOVERNOR'S DESK**

Position: Watch

OTHER TRACKED LEGISLATION

AB 94 (Davies) - Administration of public social services: blocked telephone calls

Summary: This bill prohibits a call, made by or on behalf of a county for the purposes of administering public social services programs, to an applicant or recipient of benefits from blocking caller identification information and would require the call to display a telephone number.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 311 (Santiago) – California Food Assistance Program eligibility and benefits

Summary: This bill removes the 55 years of age or older limitation to be eligible for the CalFresh program and makes any individual eligible for the program if the individual's immigration status is the sole basis for their ineligibility for CalFresh benefits.

Status: **Senate Human Services Committee (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 605 (Arambula) - California Fruit and Vegetable Supplemental Benefits Expansion Program

Summary: This bill establishes the California Fruit and Vegetable Supplemental Benefits Expansion Program, under CDSS, creates the California Fruit and Vegetable EBT Expansion Fund in the State Treasury, and specifies various program implementation requirements.

Status: **Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Suspense (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

AB 610 (Holden) – Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program: free youth transit passes

Summary: This bill, upon appropriation from the Legislature, creates the Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program, administered by the Department of Transportation to award grants to transit agencies for the costs of creating, designing, developing, advertising, distributing, and implementing free youth transit passes to persons attending public institutions.

Status: **Senate Floor**

Position: Watch

AB 712 (Carrillo, W.) - CalFresh: hot and prepared foods

Summary: This bill requires CDSS to seek all available federal waivers and approvals to maximize food choices for CalFresh recipients, including hot and prepared foods ready for immediate consumption.

Status: **CHAPTERED**

Position: Watch

SB 245 (Hurtado) – California Food Assistance Program: eligibility and benefits

Summary: This bill removes the 55 years of age or older limitation to be eligible for the CalFresh program if the individual's immigration status is the sole basis for ineligibility for CalFresh benefits and makes any individual in this situation eligible for CalFresh.

Status: **Assembly Human Services Committee (2-year bill)**

Position: Watch

SB 600 (Menjivar) – California CalFresh Minimum Benefit Adequacy Act of 2023

Summary: This bill establishes the CalFresh Minimum Nutrition Benefit (MNB) Program to raise the minimum monthly benefit to \$50. This bill also requires CDSS to adjust for inflation.

Status: Assembly Human Services Committee (2-year bill, but partially funded in the 2023 State Budget)

Position: Watch