

**SB 940 (Beall)**  
**Cal Grant Access for Foster Youth**  
**Fact Sheet**

**ISSUE**

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The State of California continues to struggle to improve college outcomes among foster youth. By age 26, just 4 percent of former foster youth earn a Bachelor's degree as compared to 36 percent of the same-age population of young adults. Financial aid plays a key role in student's success, yet for foster youth attending community college in California, just 9 percent received the Cal Grant, California's largest financial aid program.

**BACKGROUND**

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California's foster care system has made important strides in the last several years for older youth in foster care, including expanding access to housing and other support services. These important investments have not translated to improved outcomes in higher education achievement. Research has identified several explanations for the low rate of college success among foster youth, including high rates of disability, negative effects of multiple foster care placements and others. An additional key factor is that foster youth do not receive the financial aid to which they are entitled, most notably the Cal Grant B, which provides up to \$1,672 for students attending community college, \$7,414 for a student attending a campus of the California State University system, \$14,302 for students attending University of California campus and \$10,756 for students enrolled at a qualifying private institution.

Multiple studies have shown that financial aid receipt positively impacts grade point average, transfer rates and undergraduate degree attainment, making it an essential college completion tool for foster youth. The current lack of access to the Cal Grant among foster youth can be attributed to three main barriers. First, foster youth receive less assistance preparing for college and do not submit the required financial aid application within one year of completing high school, as required. Second, the average length of time for a foster youth to complete college exceeds the four-year limit of the Cal Grant. Finally, foster youth attending community college often start school without completing a financial aid application, thereby missing the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Cal Grant deadline.

**THIS BILL**

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SB 940 will improve post-secondary achievement among foster youth by increasing access to California's largest and most important financial aid program, the Cal Grant. This bill has three key provisions:

- First, remove the requirement that foster youth apply for an entitlement Cal Grant B within one year of high school graduation and instead authorize foster youth to receive an entitlement Cal Grant B if they meet other existing eligibility criteria and *have not reached their 26th birthday as of July 1 of the award year.*
- Second, extend the length of time a foster youth is eligible for the Cal Grant B from 4 years to 8 years.
- Third, change the deadline for the Cal Grant B entitlement application from March 2<sup>nd</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup> for foster youth applying to attend community college.

**STATUS/VOTES**

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Passed Senate Education Committee, 5-0

**SUPPORT**

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John Burton Advocates for Youth (sponsor)  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce (sponsor)  
2-1-1 San Diego/Imperial  
All Saints Church Foster Care Project  
Alliance for Children's Rights  
Antelope Valley College  
Bakersfield College  
Bill Wilson Center  
Bunker Wilson, LLC  
Butte College Inspiring Scholars  
California Alliance of Child and Family Services  
County Welfare Directors Association  
California Community College Chancellor's Office  
California EDGE Coalition  
California Student Aid Commission  
California State University Fullerton, Guardian Scholars  
California State University San Bernardino (EOP)  
Renaissance Scholars Program  
California State University San Marcos

California State University, Bakersfield's Guardian  
Scholars Program  
California State University, Long Beach  
Casa De Amparo  
Central Valley Higher Education Consortium  
Cerritos College  
Child Advocates of Silicon Valley  
Children Now  
Children's Law Center of California  
Coalition for Responsible Community Development  
Community College League of California  
Cosumnes River College  
County of Santa Cruz, Human Services Department  
Cuyamaca College  
David & Margaret Youth and Family Services  
East Bay Children's Law Office  
Family Care Network, Inc.  
First Place  
First Star  
Foster Care Counts  
Fred Finch Youth Center  
Hillsides  
Jovenes, Inc  
Juma Support  
Laney College  
Leaders Involved in Creating Change-Cerritos College  
Learning Rights Law Center  
Los Angeles City College  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Mount San Antonio College  
National Center for Youth Law  
National Foster Youth Institute  
New Alternatives, Inc.  
Norco College  
Path Scholars Program at CSU, Chico  
Peacock Acres  
Peralta Community College District  
Persistence Plus  
Power to Soar  
Redwood Community Action Agency's Youth Service  
Bureau  
Reedley College  
Reedley College-Madera Center  
Sierra College  
Silicon Valley Leadership Group  
StarVista  
The Community College Foundation  
The Institute for College Access and Success  
Ticket to Dream Foundation  
TLC Child and Family Services  
Transitional Youth Services of Santa Barbara County  
Education Office (SBCEO)  
United Friends of the Children  
Unity Care  
University of California, San Diego Hope Scholars  
University of San Diego

Valley Industry and Commerce Association  
Walden Family Services  
Youth Policy Institute

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## OPPOSITION

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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