

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 20, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 31, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1984

Introduced by Assembly Member Linder

February 16, 2016

An act to add and repeal Section 16007-~~to~~ of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster youth.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1984, as amended, Linder. Foster youth: enrichment activities.

Existing law provides that it is the policy of the state that all minors and nonminors in foster care have specified rights, including, among others, the right to attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment activities, consistent with the child's age and developmental level, with minimal disruptions to school attendance and educational stability.

This bill would require the State Department of Social Services, on or before March 1, 2017, to convene a workgroup and would require the workgroup to develop an implementation plan for the California Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Program. The bill would require the department, on or before January 1, 2018, upon appropriation by the Legislature and in consideration of the implementation plan, to establish that program in order to provide grants of \$500 or less to qualified foster youth to enable the foster youth to participate in activities that enhance the foster youth's skills, abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being. The bill would specify eligibility criteria for receipt of a grant and the authorized uses of a grant. The bill would require a recipient, within 6

months after receipt of a grant, to submit documentation that describes how the grant was used and the actual cost, supported by copies of receipts, of the program, product, or service, and directly related costs, purchased with the grant. The bill would require the department, on or before January 1, 2021, to submit a report to the Legislature *containing* the addresses, among other things, data on the number of applications received and the number of grants awarded. The bill would repeal these provisions on January 1, 2022.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
2 *following:*

3 *(a) California foster youth face many challenges. Approximately*
4 *three-fourths of youth in foster care have spent two or more years*
5 *in the system between birth and 12th grade. While in foster care,*
6 *about 70 percent of youth had three or more placements. Less than*
7 *half of all foster youth complete high school.*

8 *(b) Although the state has seen a reduction in the number of*
9 *children in foster care and a decreased reliance on group homes,*
10 *it continues to struggle to find stable, fulfilling families for children.*

11 *(c) Participating in enrichment activities, including, but not*
12 *limited to, sports leagues, camps, college preparation courses,*
13 *arts, music, and formative social experiences, can greatly*
14 *contribute to a foster youth’s sense of normalcy and increase the*
15 *likelihood of a successful transition to adulthood.*

16 ~~SECTION 1.~~

17 ~~SEC. 2. Section 16007 is added to the Welfare and Institutions~~
18 ~~Code, to read:~~

19 ~~16007. (a) (1) The Legislature finds and declares all of the~~
20 ~~following:~~

21 ~~(A) California foster youth face many challenges. Approximately~~
22 ~~three-fourths of youth in foster care have spent two or more years~~
23 ~~in the system between birth and 12th grade. While in foster care,~~
24 ~~about 70 percent of youth had three or more placements. Less than~~
25 ~~half of all foster youth complete high school.~~

26 ~~(B) Although the state has seen a reduction in the number of~~
27 ~~children in foster care and a decreased reliance on group homes,~~

1 ~~it continues to struggle to find stable, fulfilling families for~~
2 ~~children.~~

3 ~~(C) Participating in enrichment activities, including, but not~~
4 ~~limited to, sports leagues, camps, college preparation courses, arts,~~
5 ~~music, and formative social experiences, can greatly contribute to~~
6 ~~a foster youth's sense of normalcy and increase the likelihood of~~
7 ~~a successful transition to adulthood.~~

8 ~~(2)~~

9 *16007. (a) The purpose of this section is to establish the*
10 *California Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Program, which will*
11 *provide grants to foster youth to participate in activities that*
12 *enhance their skills, abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being.*

13 *(b) On or before March 1, 2017, the State Department of Social*
14 *Services shall convene a workgroup composed of individuals and*
15 *groups that represent the interests of foster youth. The workgroup*
16 *shall develop an implementation plan to maximize the California*
17 *Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Program's impact.*

18 *(c) On or before January 1, 2018, upon appropriation by the*
19 *Legislature and in consideration of the plan developed pursuant*
20 *to subdivision (b), the State Department of Social Services shall*
21 *establish the California Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Program*
22 *to provide grants to qualified foster youth to enable the foster youth*
23 *to participate in activities that enhance the foster youth's skills,*
24 *abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being.*

25 ~~(d) Grant applicants shall meet all of the following criteria~~
26 ~~immediately prior to approval of a grant:~~

27 ~~(1) Be a California foster youth between six years of age and~~
28 ~~17 years of age, inclusive, or a California nonminor dependent.~~

29 ~~(2) Be placed in a foster family home, certified family home,~~
30 ~~or group home.~~

31 ~~(3) Be enrolled in a California school.~~

32 *(d) A grant shall be awarded to a foster youth who meets all of*
33 *the following eligibility criteria:*

34 *(1) Is in foster care under the placement and care responsibility*
35 *of a county welfare department, county probation department,*
36 *Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization that has*
37 *entered into an agreement pursuant to Section 10553.1.*

38 *(2) Is 6 years of age to 21 years of age, inclusive.*

1 (3) *Is enrolled in an elementary, middle, or high school, or an*
2 *equivalent educational program, or in a postsecondary educational*
3 *institution in California.*

4 ~~(e) (1) Grants~~

5 (e) *Grants awarded under this section for activities that*
6 *contribute to the enhancement of an individual foster youth's skills,*
7 *abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being shall be five hundred*
8 *dollars (\$500) or less and less. Grants shall be used to fund a*
9 *program, service, or product, and any directly related costs, that*
10 *provide any of the following to a foster youth:*

11 ~~(A)~~

12 (1) *Skill development, including, but not limited to, lessons in*
13 *music, dance, or drama, and the rental or purchase of equipment*
14 *needed to further skill development.*

15 ~~(B)~~

16 (2) *Academic or school-related assistance, including, but not*
17 *limited to, school trips, college campus visits, Advanced Placement*
18 *or International Baccalaureate exam fees, test preparation courses*
19 *or materials, and books.*

20 ~~(C)~~

21 (3) *Recreational or social participation, including, but not limited*
22 *to, summer camp attendance, sports league participation,*
23 *school-sponsored formal dance attendance, and participation in*
24 *school graduation activities.*

25 ~~(2) Grants shall not be awarded to fund any activity that does~~
26 ~~not directly contribute to the enhancement of an individual foster~~
27 ~~youth's skills, abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being,~~
28 ~~including, but not limited to, either of the following:~~

29 ~~(A) Child care expenses for the foster youth or his or her child.~~

30 ~~(B) A vacation with the foster youth's foster family.~~

31 (f) *Applications for grants under this section shall be on forms*
32 *developed by the department, and shall include, at a minimum, all*
33 *of the following:*

34 (1) *Evidence that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria*
35 *specified in subdivision (d).*

36 (2) *A description of the need for and proposed use of the grant,*
37 *the anticipated cost of the program, product, or service, and directly*
38 *related costs, and the projected benefit to the foster youth.*

39 (3) *Any other information that the department determines is*
40 *necessary to further the intent of this section.*

- 1 (g) Within six months after a grant is awarded, the recipient
2 shall submit documentation, on forms developed by the department,
3 that describes how the grant was used and the actual cost, supported
4 by copies of receipts, of the program, product, or service, and
5 directly related costs, purchased with the grant. A foster youth
6 shall not be eligible for a subsequent grant until this documentation
7 is received.
- 8 (h) (1) On or before January 1, 2021, the department shall
9 submit a report to the Legislature that addresses, at a minimum,
10 all of the following:
- 11 (A) Data on the number of applications received, aggregated
12 by year.
- 13 (B) Data on the number of grants awarded, aggregated by year.
- 14 (C) Data on the programs, products, or services, and directly
15 related costs, the grants were used to fund, aggregated by year.
- 16 (D) A description of the documentation a recipient is required
17 to submit pursuant to subdivision (g).
- 18 (E) Data on the number of recipients who provided the
19 documentation required pursuant to subdivision (g) and who did
20 not provide the documentation required by subdivision (g),
21 aggregated by year.
- 22 (2) The report required pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be
23 submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government
24 Code.
- 25 (i) It is the intent of the Legislature that the department explore
26 the feasibility of transitioning the program to private funding and
27 control.
- 28 (j) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2022,
29 and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that
30 is enacted before January 1, 2022, deletes or extends that date.