

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 28, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1994

Introduced by Assembly Member Lopez

February 16, 2016

An act to add Article 3.7 (commencing with Section 11340) to Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to CalWORKs.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1994, as amended, Lopez. CalED Program.

Existing law requires each county to provide cash assistance and other social services to needy families through the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program using federal, state, and county funds. Under existing law, a recipient of CalWORKs is required to participate in welfare-to-work activities for a specified number of hours each week as a condition of eligibility for aid. Existing law authorizes certain welfare-to-work participants to engage in adult basic education in satisfaction of these work requirements.

Existing law establishes the Cal-Learn Program, under which a recipient of CalWORKs aid who is under 19 years of age and who does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent is required to participate in the program as a student attending school on a full-time basis. Existing law provides for a supplement to, or a reduction in, a Cal-Learn participant's aid grant based on his or her performance in school.

This bill would create the CalED Program for the purpose of assisting CalWORKs recipients who are at least 19 years of age to obtain high school diplomas or equivalency certificates. The bill would provide a

~~\$100 aid supplement if a CalED participant maintains satisfactory progress in school, as defined, and a one-time \$500 aid supplement if the participant successfully completes high school or a high school equivalency examination. *general educational development test approved by the State Board of Education and administered by a testing center approved by the State Department of Education.*~~ The bill would provide that participation in the program is optional and would authorize recipients of CalWORKs to opt out in writing. The bill would require the department to develop a comprehensive form that explains the benefits of the program and would require the county, at the time it conducts a welfare-to-work appraisal, to provide the form to the recipient. The bill would also require counties to arrange for the provision of education and supportive services that an individual needs to successfully participate in the CalED Program. By imposing these duties on counties, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

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

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

1 SECTION 1. Article 3.7 (commencing with Section 11340) is
2 added to Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and
3 Institutions Code, to read:

4

5 Article 3.7. CalED Program

6

7 11340. (a) This article shall be known, and may be cited, as
8 the CalED Program.

9 (b) The Legislature finds and declares that the connection
10 between education and long-term welfare dependency has been
11 well documented by social science research. Average time on aid
12 for parents without a high school diploma or its equivalent is

1 significantly longer than for parents who have completed high
2 school or an equivalent program.

3 (c) The Legislature finds that CalWORKs recipients have unique
4 education, vocational, training, health, and other social service
5 needs that are not specifically provided for as part of the
6 welfare-to-work activities. Research shows that successful
7 programs that help CalWORKs recipients achieve self-sufficiency
8 increase the earning capacity of those individuals.

9 11341. A recipient of aid under this chapter is eligible to
10 participate in the CalED Program if all of the following
11 requirements are met:

12 (a) The person is at least 19 years of age.

13 (b) The person does not have a high school diploma or its
14 equivalent.

15 (c) The person is attending school on a full-time basis, as
16 normally defined by the school in which the participant enrolls.

17 (d) *The person is participating in welfare-to-work activities*
18 *pursuant to Article 3.2 (commencing with Section 11320).*

19 11342. (a) Participation in the CalED Program is optional. If
20 a person declines to participate, he or she shall opt out in writing.

21 (b) At the time the county conducts an appraisal pursuant to
22 Section 11325.2, the county shall inform each person who does
23 not have a high school diploma or its equivalent that he or she may
24 participate in the CalED Program or may opt out in writing, and
25 shall give the person the form described in subdivision (c).

26 (c) The State Department of Social Services shall develop a
27 comprehensive form that explains the benefits of the program,
28 including the bonuses that are available pursuant to Section 11344,
29 in order to empower the person to make an informed decision.

30 11343. (a) Counties shall arrange for the provision of education
31 and supportive services that a person needs to successfully
32 participate in the CalED Program. The county shall identify the
33 need of each person for, and the method of providing, the following
34 services:

35 (a)

36 (1) Supportive services, including child care and transportation,
37 as specified in Section 11323.2. Supportive services shall be limited
38 to those that are necessary to enable the person to attend school
39 regularly.

40 (b)

1 (2) Any other services necessary for the person to successfully
2 participate in the CalED Program, which may include, but not be
3 limited to, mental health services and substance abuse treatment.

4 (b) *CalED participants may participate in programs provided*
5 *for in Section 52500 of the Education Code in order to obtain the*
6 *certificate described in Section 51420 of the Education Code.*

7 ~~11344. (a) A participant in the CalED Program who maintains~~
8 ~~satisfactory progress in school shall, not more than four times in~~
9 ~~a calendar year, receive a one hundred dollar (\$100) supplement~~
10 ~~to the amount of aid paid pursuant to Section 11450. The~~
11 ~~supplement shall be paid to the assistance unit of which the~~
12 ~~participant is a member in the month following submission of the~~
13 ~~report card, if received by the county no later than the 11th calendar~~
14 ~~day of the month, or in the second month following submission~~
15 ~~of the report card, if received by the county after the 11th calendar~~
16 ~~day of the month.~~

17 ~~(b)~~

18 ~~11344. (a) A participant who fails to demonstrate that he or~~
19 ~~she has made adequate progress in school, either by failing to~~
20 ~~provide the a report card or based on the grades on the report card,~~
21 ~~shall be assigned to another welfare-to-work activity.~~

22 ~~(e)~~

23 (b) A participant who successfully completes high school or a
24 ~~California high school equivalency examination~~ *general*
25 *educational development test approved by the State Board of*
26 *Education and administered by a testing center approved by the*
27 *State Department of Education shall receive a one-time supplement*
28 *in the amount of five hundred dollar (\$500) supplement. An*
29 ~~assistance unit shall not receive a one hundred dollar (\$100)~~
30 ~~supplement when a five hundred dollar (\$500) supplement for the~~
31 ~~same report card or progress report is paid.~~ *dollars (\$500). The*
32 *five hundred dollar (\$500) supplement shall be paid to the*
33 *participant in the month following submission of the record of*
34 *completion, if received by the county no later than the 11th*
35 *calendar day of the month, or in the second month following*
36 *submission of the record of completion, if received by the county*
37 *after the 11th calendar day of the month.*

38 ~~(d) (1) For purposes of this section, in schools that provide~~
39 ~~periodic report cards with letter grades, “satisfactory progress”~~
40 ~~means maintaining a grade point average of at least 2.0 on a scale~~

1 where A equals 4.0 points and F equals 0 points, and adequate
2 progress means maintaining a grade point average of at least 1.0
3 on the same scale.

4 (2) For the purposes of this section, in schools or other
5 educational programs that do not provide letter grades indicating
6 student performance, satisfactory progress or inadequate progress
7 shall be determined by the school's regular assessment of periodic
8 progress.

9 SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that
10 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to
11 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made
12 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
13 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.