

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 6, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 28, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1994**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Lopez**

February 16, 2016

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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.~~ *certificates, if they are at least 19 years of age and satisfy specified eligibility criteria.* The bill would provide a one-time \$500 aid supplement if ~~the~~ *a* participant *in the program* successfully completes high school or a 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~~ *the* 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  
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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

1 well documented by social science research. Average time on aid  
2 for parents without a high school diploma or its equivalent is  
3 significantly longer than for parents who have completed high  
4 school or an equivalent program.

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

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

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

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

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

19 ~~(d)~~

20 (c) The person is participating in welfare-to-work activities  
21 pursuant to Article 3.2 (commencing with Section 11320).

22 11342. (a) Participation in the CalED Program is optional. If  
23 a person declines to participate, he or she shall opt out in writing.

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

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

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

38 (1) Supportive services, including child care and transportation,  
39 as specified in Section 11323.2. Supportive services shall be limited

1 to those that are necessary to enable the person to attend school  
 2 regularly.

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

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

9 ~~11344. (a)~~

10 *11344. (a) A participant in the CalED Program shall do all*  
 11 *of the following:*

12 *(1) Attend an educational program on a full-time basis, as*  
 13 *normally defined by the school in which the participant enrolls.*

14 *(2) Maintain adequate progress in the educational program.*

15 *(3) Submit grades, if available, to the county welfare department*  
 16 *on a basis to be determined by the county welfare department.*

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

21 ~~(b)~~

22 (c) A participant who successfully completes high school or a  
 23 general educational development test approved by the State Board  
 24 of Education and administered by a testing center approved by the  
 25 State Department of Education shall receive a one-time supplement  
 26 in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500). The five hundred  
 27 dollar (\$500) supplement shall be paid to the participant in the  
 28 month following submission of the record of completion, if  
 29 received by the county no later than the 11th calendar day of the  
 30 month, or in the second month following submission of the record  
 31 of completion, if received by the county after the 11th calendar  
 32 day of the month.

33 (d) For purposes of this section, “adequate progress” means  
 34 maintaining a grade point average of at least 1.0 on a scale where  
 35 A equals 4.0 points and F equals 0 points.

36 SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
 37 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
 38 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made

- 1 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
- 2 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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