

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 4, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 20, 2016

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2058

Introduced by Assembly Member Mayes

(Principal coauthor: Senator Bates)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members ~~Bigelow~~ *Bigelow, Chang, Jones, Lackey, and Mathis*)

February 17, 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, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2058, as amended, Mayes. CalWORKs: education incentives.

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 CalWORKs Educational Opportunity and Attainment Program to provide CalWORKs recipients with a monthly education incentive grant of \$100 for attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent, \$200 for attainment of an associate's ~~degree,~~ *degree or career technical education program*, or \$300 for attainment of a bachelor's degree, if the ~~diploma or degree was earned~~ *educational program was completed* while the recipient was receiving CalWORKs assistance. The bill would require the education incentive grant to be provided on an ongoing basis if the recipient meets certain eligibility criteria. The bill would require a recipient, when applying for an education bonus, to submit evidence of completion of the educational program to the county. The bill would require the county, upon verification of completion of the educational program, to certify that the recipient is eligible for an education incentive grant and ensure that the recipient's monthly cash grant is increased. By imposing additional administrative duties on counties, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law establishes the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program in the California Community Colleges. Existing law requires, to the extent that funding is provided in the annual Budget Act, a community college district to receive funding for purposes of providing special services for CalWORKs recipients, including job placement and workstudy.

This bill would appropriate \$20,000,000 from the General Fund to the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges to fund services provided under that 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: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

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) In California’s high-skill economy, it is very difficult to get
4 a good, middle-class job without vocational education or a college
5 degree, let alone a high school diploma.

6 (b) This is a significant barrier to socioeconomic mobility for
7 California’s highly vulnerable CalWORKs recipients, because as
8 many as 65 percent of CalWORKs recipients do not have a high
9 school education.

10 (c) Research has consistently shown that postsecondary
11 education boosts social mobility, particularly for those at the
12 bottom of the income distribution scale, and that a parent’s level
13 of education has positive effects on his or her child’s level of
14 success into middle adulthood.

15 (d) California has the ~~seventh-largest~~ *seventh largest* federal
16 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cash grant in the nation,
17 and the second largest among the 10 largest states.

18 (e) Poverty remains a persistent problem.

19 (f) This act is intended to provide incentives for CalWORKs
20 recipients to pursue education, thereby improving the opportunities
21 and outcomes for adults and children in the CalWORKs program.

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

25

26 Article 3.7. CalWORKs Educational Opportunity and
27 Attainment Program
28

29 11340. This article shall be known, and may be cited, as the
30 CalWORKs Educational Opportunity and Attainment Program.

31 11341. (a) A CalWORKs recipient may apply to receive an
32 education incentive grant in the following amounts:

33 (1) One hundred dollars (\$100) per month for completion of a
34 high school diploma or its equivalent.

35 (2) Two hundred dollars (\$200) per month for completion of
36 an associate’s ~~degree~~. *degree or career technical education*
37 *program.*

1 (3) Three hundred dollars (\$300) per month for completion of
2 a bachelor’s degree.

3 (b) The amounts listed in subdivision (a) are not cumulative. A
4 recipient shall receive, on an ongoing basis, the highest monthly
5 bonus to which he or she is entitled.

6 (c) The amounts listed in subdivision (a) constitute ongoing
7 adjustments to the recipient’s monthly cash grant.

8 11342. (a) When applying for an education incentive grant, a
9 recipient shall submit evidence of completion of the educational
10 program to the county. A recipient is not eligible unless all of the
11 following criteria are satisfied:

12 (1) The recipient completed an educational program included
13 in the recipient’s welfare-to-work plan approved by the county.

14 (2) The recipient completed an educational program offered by
15 an accredited educational institution.

16 (3) The recipient completed the educational program while
17 receiving CalWORKs assistance.

18 (b) Upon verification of completion of the educational program,
19 the county shall certify that the recipient is eligible for an education
20 incentive grant, grant and shall ensure that the recipient’s monthly
21 cash grant is increased as prescribed in Section 11341.

22 11343. (a) A CalWORKs recipient who is receiving an
23 education incentive grant and then ceases to receive CalWORKs
24 assistance shall not be eligible for the same education incentive
25 grant if he or she begins receiving CalWORKs assistance in the
26 future. The recipient is eligible, however, to receive a different
27 education incentive grant if he or she attains a higher level of
28 education while receiving CalWORKs assistance.

29 (b) A CalWORKs recipient is permanently ineligible for an
30 education incentive grant under either of the following
31 circumstances:

32 (1) The recipient has exhausted his or her CalWORKs benefits.

33 (2) The recipient has committed public assistance fraud, as
34 described in Article 7 (commencing with Section 11475.2).

35 (c) A CalWORKs recipient shall not receive an education
36 incentive grant in any month during which he or she is sanctioned.

37 SEC. 3. The sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) is
38 hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of
39 Governors of the California Community Colleges to fund services
40 provided under the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program

1 (Article 5 (commencing with Section 79200) of Chapter 9 of Part
2 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code), including, but
3 not limited to, education and career counseling services,
4 employment development services, including job development
5 staff positions, and workstudy positions.

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

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