

SB 271 (Reyes): Transforming Higher Education for Student Parents through Financial Support and Childcare Support Services

SUMMARY

SB 271 ensures student parents are notified of supportive resources while they pursue higher education.

This bill requires that when a student parent on a higher education campus is identified at one of the following campus locations: a financial aid office, a child development center, or a basic need center, the student parent shall be notified about the childcare and financial aid resources available to them. Further, this bill will require basic need centers to coordinate with local Resource and Referral Agencies to ensure student parents have support to apply for subsidized childcare and to find childcare providers.

BACKGROUND

In California, there are more than 400,000 student parents pursuing higher education, many of whom are parenting infants and toddlers. The academic success of student parents enrolled in institutions of higher education and the well-being of their young children are heavily influenced by the level of institutional support available to them. Without proper institutional support, student parents struggle to navigate through their journey towards higher education. The Institute of Women's Policy Research found

that student parents have lower graduation rates and the SPARK Collaborative found that student parents have delayed enrollment times.

Similarly, inadequate institutional support leaves student parents unaware of the breadth of resources available to them on their campuses. For example, helpful resources like Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), child care options, and supplemental financial aid through a campus' financial aid office are often missed by student parents due to a lack of information sharing on campuses of higher education.

A report by Early Edge found that a lack of information on childcare resources and financial aid was a major contributor to student parents not continuing their education. These insights from student parents underscored the importance of connecting students to and creating protocol at supportive resources at higher education institutions.

Bridging this gap in knowledge can ease the burdens on student parents and help them balance the difficulty of parenting while pursuing higher education.

THIS BILL

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COMMITTEES:
EDUCATION
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
HOUSING
JUDICIARY
LEGISLATIVE ETHICS
RULES

SB 271 will connect student parents to resources by requiring the following at each campus of the CSU and the California Community Colleges and requesting at each campus of the UC:

1. Require basic needs centers to coordinate with the local Resource and Referral agency in their county.
2. Require basic needs centers to inform student parents they may qualify for subsidized childcare and refer them to the local Resource and Referral Agency for support applying and finding local childcare service providers.
3. Require the basic needs center, financial aid office, and if applicable the child development center to work in tandem and inform student parents seeking support at any of their offices, of the full scope of services available on campus.

SB 271 will inform student parents about these vital resources that can enhance their student experience. Rather than being left alone in the dark in search of helpful resources, they will be guided toward the spaces where they can be better helped as students and parents.

SUPPORT

Early Edge California (Co-Sponsor)
Student Senate for the California
Community Colleges (Co-Sponsor)
UC Student Association (Co-Sponsor)
Cal State Student Association (Co-Sponsor)

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