

Education Table Meeting Recap/Action Items

- At the May 13th Education Table Meeting the main topic was **Pathways to Post-Secondary Education** presented by John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY).
 - JBAY provided an overview and updates related to the FAFSA Challenge, CalKIDS, the Direct Admissions Pilot, Release of Information (ROI) to Campus Based Support Programs, and Legislative updates.
- **FAFSA/CADAA Challenge**
 - The numbers for the 2025-2026 FAFSA Challenge are still being finalized but the estimated completion rate is 60%, which is a 3% increase from last year.
 - CASA shared it can be challenging to support young people in getting a “verification of foster youth status” needed for financial aid.
 - JBAY offered to send a list of the different ways that youth supporting adults can confirm their foster youth status.
 - Gloria from DCFS also shared there is a centralized inbox that can be used for these requests.
 - **Action Item:**
 - JBAY will send a list to OCP of the various ways youth support adults can confirm their foster youth status for financial aid purposes.
- **CalKIDS Scholarship**
 - There are 2 types of accounts:
 - At Birth Account: \$25 initial deposit for children born in California from 2022-23, and \$100 after July 1, 2023.
 - School-Age Account: \$500 for eligible low-income, additional \$500 for foster, additional \$500 for homeless. This is stackable—can receive all of these. Also applies to vocational schools and other options as long as they are FAFSA eligible. Can also be used for out of state programs.
 - Foster youth may have at least \$1000 in their CalKIDS account. Undocumented youth qualify as well.
 - As part of 2025-26 California state budget, public schools are required to inform students about CalKIDS scholarships
 - The strategies below were discussed to increase young people’s awareness of CalKIDS:
 - Add education on CalKIDS as a requirement in the DCFS contracts with FFAs, STRTPs, etc.
 - Update the Needs and Services Plan to include specifics around CalKIDS.
 - JBAY is considering adding CalKIDS to the FAFSA Challenge.
 - Use letters, back-to-school events, and graduation events as opportunities to inform young people of these funds.
 - Training should happen for CLC, CASA, Court, etc. to ensure everyone is informed.
 - Suggested to add a check box about CalKIDS onto existing forms such as TILP, CASA Report, etc.

- Consider having CalKIDS be included in any kind of exit planning—especially for those whose case closes before ILP eligibility.
 - DCFS suggested doing mass sessions on CalKIDS that is similarly done for the FAFSA Challenge
- **Action Items:**
 - DCFS is working to add training on CalKIDS to mandatory training for caregivers and resource families (Turning Dreams into Degrees). Will also be working on training staff that support resource families and Binti email blast, along with adding information on CalKIDS to the ILP website.
 - Jessica (JBAY) will connect with Michelle (Ombudsperson for Youth in STRTPs) to discuss making updates to DCFS's contracts with STRTPs and FFA's along with updating the Needs and Services Plan to include education on CalKIDS.
 - Chis (JBAY) will connect with Rebecca (DMH) about doing a presentation on CalKIDS at their youth spaces.
 - Jessica (JBAY) will connect with Judge Arakaki to offer any support around educating the bench on CalKIDS.
 - JBAY will share out flyers to the Education Table Members about CalKIDS so school districts can share out the materials to young people at the beginning of the school year.
- **Direct Admissions Pilot**
 - SB 640 guarantees admissions to CSU for ALL eligible High School Seniors who have completed their A-G coursework in California.
 - Students must still apply to the CSU they plan to attend.
 - LEAs are required to have an MOU with College Guidance Initiative along with a data sharing MOU with CSU Chancellor's Office.
 - Once MOU is signed, students will receive 1 of 3 mailers from the CSU Chancellor's Office stating: 1) they meet criteria, 2) they are close to meeting the criteria, or 3) if they are not close to meeting the criteria, they will get a different letter letting them know they can go to community college and then how to transfer to CSU.
 - Current LA County efforts to increase direct enrollment into CSUs for foster youth:
 - Leverage CSU's Life Prep Academy for middle school students
 - Sending direct admissions mailers to LA County's foster youth in 8th-11th grade.
 - Execute MOU between LACOE and CCGI to receive and leverage student-level A-G data. Districts will be uploading transcripts to this system—would be valuable for LACOE to have that data as well to help think about targeted interventions.
 - **Action Items:**

- Chris (JBAY) to connect with LACOE about gaining access to student-level A-G data to support the implementation of targeted interventions to increase foster youth enrollment to CSUs.
 - JBAY will share sample letters of what the language from the Chancellor's Office may look regarding the Direct Admissions to CSUs. This will help to ensure young people know what to look for when they receive the letter so that they are not suspicious.
 - JBAY is working on creating their own letter to explain the Direct Admissions Pilot to young people and will share it out to the group once it's finalized.
 - Stefanie (OCFW) will connect JBAY with the Department of Arts and Culture to discuss potential training for their teaching artists as part of their Creative Wellbeing work.
- **Release of Information (ROI) to Campus Based Support Programs:**
 - To support the increase of direct college enrollment for foster youth, a ROI form was created so that a warm-hand-off would be established for young people after they graduate high school.
 - The form is student-friendly for DCFS and LACOE to use to allow colleges to outreach to High School Seniors.
 - At DCFS, this effort is led by ILP, while at LACOE they are working with non-ILP eligible young people.
 - In Spring 2025, 253 ROI forms were signed, and there has been great feedback from youth and colleges regarding the form.
- **Legislative Updates:**
 - AB 2766 Improving Access to Student Housing and Course Enrollment
 - Requires priority housing at CA Community Colleges (CCC) for eligible students with experience in foster care or homelessness.
 - Requires housing applications to identify current/former foster youth and students experiencing homelessness across CCCs and CSUs
 - Improves transparency by ensuring eligibility information is clearly posted on campus websites.
 - Allows housing deposits and upfront housing fees to be deferred or waived until financial aid disbursement.
 - Aligns priority registration (PR) with NextUp—a program that provides financial support and resources to current/former foster youth attending CCC—eligibility so that all students in NextUp continue to have access to PR at the CCCs
 - AB 2251 Making Cost of Attendance (COA) Transparent, Flexible, and Student-Centered
 - Requires campuses to publicly explain how COA budgets are calculated and to post information about the COA appeal process.
 - Allows students to request COA adjustments for any expense category.
 - Adds clear timelines for review and notification.
- **Child Welfare Education Updates**

- UNITE-LA presented on the High School Transitions Impact Initiative that focuses on reducing youth disconnection among 18–19-year-olds in Los Angeles County by strengthening the transitions to post-secondary education and career training after high school, with a priority focus on alternative education students. Jenny provided an overview of the recommendations they are working to implement that focuses on systemic change that includes:
 - Holistic student supports that remove barriers
 - Early identification and coherent referral systems
 - High-quality, career-connected learning and paid pathways
 - Cross-system coordination, alignment and shared accountability
 - Policy, advocacy and funding to enable system redesign
 - Professional development and mindset shifts
 - Financial Aid and College Access Support:
 - Supported 10 LAUSD continuation schools with financial aid completion efforts to meet March 2nd priority deadline.
 - New funding from California Community College Chancellors Fund to support college-readiness at community schools.
 - Jenny provided an opportunity for any school district to reach out to them so Jenny and her team can present at their high schools to gauge interest in participating in the initiative.
 - **Action Item:**
 - La Shona (LACOE) offered Jenny (UNITE-LA) to be invited to meetings their staff have at schools to inform and talk through the Impact Initiative.
- **Issues from the Field:**
 - JV-535
 - Judge Arakaki shared that the Court is working to ensure that the JV-535s are sent out to the required parties when there is an Education Rights Holder appointed for a young person. They have set up a resource email address and have 3 interns assigned to this work.
 - However, they have been facing challenges in determining who to send the JV-535s and have requested a centralized email address to help streamline the process.
 - LACOE updated the Court that they have provided them with a link to the list of LEA FY Liaisons that LACOE has committed to updating regularly.
 - CLC also shared that it is their policy to send any JV-535s to the Education Rights Holder.
 - **Action Item:**
 - OCFW offered to work with DCFS and LACOE to convene a meeting to identify appropriate contacts for each key party so that they may receive the JV-535 from the Court.