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AB-278 High Schools: Dream Resource Center Grant Program. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Bill No. 278

CHAPTER 424

An act to add Article 4 (commencing with Section 54680) to Chapter 9 of Part 29 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to pupil services.

[Approved by Governor October 08, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 08, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 278, Reyes. High Schools: Dream Resource Center Grant Program.

Existing law authorizes the governing board of a school district to provide a comprehensive educational counseling program for all pupils enrolled in the school district. Existing law provides that educational counseling may include counseling in developing pupil knowledge of financial aid planning for postsecondary education, including, among others, financial aid programs and resources for foster and homeless youth.

This bill would establish the Dream Resource Center Grant Program for the purpose of providing pupils, including undocumented pupils, in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, with specified resources. The bill would require the State Department of Education, in administering the program, to review applications and award grants based off of a tiered point system that prioritizes applications for funding, as provided. The bill would authorize a school district, county office of education, or charter school, including those that have already established a Dream Resource Center at one or more schoolsites, to apply to the department to be eligible to receive a grant, as provided.

The bill would require a local educational agency that receives a grant under the program to use it for creating a Dream Resource Center or for supplementing, but not supplanting, an existing Dream Resource Center, as provided. The bill would require the department, on or before June 1, 2026, to submit a report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature detailing the successes, best practices, barriers or constraints, and outcomes of Dream Resource Centers funded with these grants.

The bill would condition the implementation of these provisions on an appropriation by the Legislature for these purposes in the annual Budget Act or other statute.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Article 4 (commencing with Section 54680) is added to Chapter 9 of Part 29 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, to read:

Article 4. Dream Resource Center Grant Program

54680. (a) The Dream Resource Center Grant Program is hereby established with the goal of creating Dream Resource Centers at schoolsites that serve pupils in grades 9 to 12, inclusive.

(b) The purpose of a Dream Resource Center is to provide pupils, including undocumented pupils, in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, with resources that include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) Financial aid support.
- (2) Social services support.
- (3) State-funded immigration legal services.
- (4) Academic opportunities.
- (5) Parent and family workshops.

(c) For purposes of this article, "local educational agency" means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

54681. (a) The department shall administer the Dream Resource Center Grant Program, which shall be a four-year grant program.

(b) (1) A local educational agency, including those that have already established a Dream Resource Center at one or more schoolsites, may apply for funds for one or more schoolsites within the local educational agency.

(2) An application shall demonstrate the need for a Dream Resource Center at one or more schoolsites within the local educational agency or the need for supplemental funding at one or more schoolsites within the local educational agency that has already established a Dream Resource Center.

54682. The department shall perform all of the following functions in the administration of the Dream Resource Center Grant Program:

(a) Review applications and award grants based off of a tiered point system that prioritizes applications for funding as follows:

- (1) Local educational agencies that are applying for funds for multiple schoolsites shall be given additional points.
- (2) Local educational agencies in underserved areas, including those in rural areas, shall be given additional points to ensure local educational agencies across the state are given fair opportunities for funding.
- (3) Local educational agencies that serve a large number of English learners shall be given additional points.
- (4) Local educational agencies that serve a large number of pupils who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, as defined in Section 42238.01, shall be given additional points.
- (5) Award no more than 5 percent of the total funding to supplementing the funding of existing Dream Resource Centers.

(b) Identify data to be collected by grant recipients.

(c) Identify how the department will collect data reported by grant recipients.

54683. A grant recipient shall use the grant for either of the following purposes:

(a) (1) To create a Dream Resource Center that provides pupils with the resources identified pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 54680.

(2) Schoolsites may choose to have the Dream Resource Center solely supported by the schoolsite or can choose to have the Dream Resource Center be supported through memorandums of understanding between the schoolsite and community-based organizations or institutions of higher education.

(b) To supplement, but not supplant, funding for an existing Dream Resource Center that provides pupils with the resources identified pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 54680.

54684. On or before June 1, 2026, the department shall submit a report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature detailing the successes, best practices, barriers or constraints, and outcomes of Dream Resource Centers funded with grants pursuant to this article. The report shall include the data collected pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 54682.

54685. This article shall be implemented only upon an appropriation by the Legislature for its purposes in the annual Budget Act or other statute.