

## **AB 2508: Expanded eligibility to the CalKIDS program for students in foster care**

Assembly Bill (AB) 2508, authored by Assemblymember McCarty, was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 26, 2024, expanding access to the CalKIDS program for students in foster care.

### **WHAT IS CALKIDS?**

CalKIDS is a California state program administered by the ScholarShare Investment Board that helps children save for college or career training after high school. There are two components to the program. The first component of the program is for newborns born on or after July 1, 2022, regardless of parental income. Babies born between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 are eligible to receive up to \$100 and babies born after July 1, 2023 are eligible to receive up to \$175.

The second component of the program serves students enrolled in a California public school who are low-income, homeless or in foster care. California public school students identified as low-income were given CalKIDS accounts with a seed deposit of \$500 if they were enrolled in 1st through 12th grade during the 2021-2022 academic year. If a student was identified as a foster youth or homeless they received an additional \$500, totaling up to \$1,500. Starting in the 2022-2023 academic year, only students attending a California public school in the first grade who were identified as low-income, foster youth or homeless could receive these payments.

### **HOW DOES AB 2508 CHANGE ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM?**

Beginning in Fall 2025, AB 2508 will expand eligibility for the CalKIDS program so that all foster youth in grades one through twelve will receive this supplemental payment if they have not already received it rather than just those in foster care in the first grade. If a student did not receive the \$500 payment for low-income students, this will also be added to their account.

### **WHEN DOES THIS CHANGE GO INTO EFFECT AND END?**

This change goes into effect in the 2025-26 fiscal year. Eligibility for student awards, including students in foster care, are determined each fall on Census Day (the first Wednesday in October) and are awarded in the following spring or early summer. The expanded eligibility for foster youth will sunset on January 1, 2029.

### **HOW ARE FOSTER YOUTH DEFINED AND IDENTIFIED?**

Students are identified as foster youth based on the LCFF definition ([Education Code 42238.01\(b\)](#)). This information is gathered by the California Department of Education (CDE) through a data match with the California Department of Social Services. CDE then shares this information with the State Treasurer's Office to administer the program.

### **HOW DOES A STUDENT REGISTER AND VIEW THEIR CALKIDS ACCOUNT?**

To register and claim an account, a student must visit the online portal at [calkids.org](http://calkids.org) and provide their birthday, their 10-digit Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) or, if they received a letter about their account via mail, their unique registration code, and the county where the student attended school at the time that their account was established. Once on the portal, a student can see the current value of the account, including any earnings.

### **WHAT ARE ALLOWABLE USES OF THE FUNDING?**

CalKIDS funds can be used at accredited educational institutions across the county, including community colleges, universities, vocational schools and professional schools. The funds can be used to cover education expenses such as tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board and computer equipment.

### **DO CALKIDS FUNDS EXPIRE?**

Yes. Eligible program participants have until age 26 to use their CalKIDS funds.