FOSTER YOUTH

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING GUIDE

November 2019

CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS

CONTENTS

PART 1 ..... pages 3-5

College Pathways: options available for higher education

PART 2 ..... pages 6-12

College Preparation Guidelines: create an education plan from middle through high school to help advance you to the college of your choice

PART 3 ..... pages 13-15

Resources: some of the help available to Foster Youth to assist you every step of the way

Community Colleges train 70% of California nurses and 80% of our state's firefighters, law enforcement personnel, and emergency medical technicians.

More than half of California's teachers are CSU graduates.

More UC academic programs are consistently rated among the top 10 nationally than any other public or private university.

On average, a person with a 2-year associate's degree earns $6,800 more every year than a person with only a high school diploma. With a 4-year bachelor's degree, the difference rises to $24,300 more per year. This adds up to more than $1 million over a person's lifetime!

College can be the ticket to a fulfilling life and a great career. It dramatically increases career options and college graduates earn substantially more money throughout their lifetimes. And the sooner you start preparing, the more college options you will have.

This guide is designed to help you chart your course to the college that is right for your interests and career goals. It will also direct you to the support and resources available for foster youth scholars that can help you turn your dreams into degrees.

California offers a variety of affordable college options in every corner of the state, and many of them have specific programs to support foster youth scholars.

There are three segments of public higher education in California—the California Community Colleges (CCC) system, the California State University (CSU) system, and the University of California (UC) system. In addition, there are a wide range of private independent colleges.

ALL COLLEGES FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES:

SELECTIVE COLLEGES	OPEN-ACCESS COLLEGES
UC, CSU, private colleges and universities	California Community Colleges
Generally require completion of "a-g" courses in high school, a minimum grade point average and test scores	Open to everyone
4-year programs in a variety of fields leading to a bachelor's degree (e.g., BA or BS)	2-year or shorter programs in a variety of fields leading to an associate's degree (e.g., AA or AS), transfer to a 4-year university, and/or career certificates
Higher tuition costs, however, financial aid may be available	Lower tuition costs, sometimes waived for low-income students
Generally have onsite campus housing available	Generally do not have onsite campus housing (with a few exceptions)

More than half of all CSU graduates were community college transfer students.

Nearly one in three UC graduates transferred from a community college.

Which path is right for you will depend on your interests, career goals, and educational background. This guide will help you get on—*and stay on*—the path that is right for you.

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES (CCC) SYSTEM

Community colleges are California's most accessible and least expensive higher education option. Most programs don't require that you have a certain grade point average (GPA) and there are no tests to take or essays to write in order to be admitted. Community colleges offer students training and education in more than 175 different fields. With 115 campuses across the state, there's guaranteed to be one near you.

- MOST ACCESSIBLE
- LEAST EXPENSIVE
- NO GPA MINIMUM
- NO ADMISSIONS TEST
- NO ESSAYS TO WRITE TO APPLY
- 2-YEAR ASSOCIATES
- CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION
- PRIORITY TRANSFER ADMISSION TO CSU AND UC

At a community college you can:

- obtain a 2-year associate's degree (e.g., AA or AS),
- transfer to a 4-year university, or
- train for a particular career path through Career Technical Education (CTE). Short-term certificate programs in a particular field (for example as a Medical Assistant, Auto Mechanic, Early Child Development Specialist, Landscape Designer, etc.) can quickly provide you with the skills and tools you need to find a job in your field of choice.

A select number of community colleges also offer 4-year bachelor's degrees in certain high-demand fields in the areas of health, science and technology.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU) SYSTEM

The CSU system includes 23 campuses across California and offers qualified students a path towards a 4-year bachelor's degree (e.g., BA or BS). Students who graduate from CSUs go on to work in some of California's most important jobs—from teaching and social work to health care and technology.

- 23 CAMPUSES
- 4-YEAR BACHELORS
- PRIORITY ADMISSION FROM CCC

A California Community College student who has earned an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) will be granted priority admission to the CSU into a similar bachelor's degree program with a guarantee of junior standing as long as the student meets all admission requirements.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC) SYSTEM

- 150 DISCIPLINES
- 4-YEAR BACHELORS
- PRIORITY ADMISSION FROM CCC

The University of California campuses offer 4-year degree programs in more than 150 disciplines, one of the broadest ranges of study of any university in the world. Each year thousands of students enter as freshmen or as transfer students from community colleges. UC gives California Community College students first priority over other transfer applicants, and many campuses offer guaranteed admission for well-prepared transfer students.

Beware!

In addition to the California Community Colleges, private vocational schools like those that you may have seen advertised on television offer CTE programs, but typically at a much higher cost. Some of these schools may charge tens of thousands of dollars in tuition, leaving you owing as much as $30,000 to $60,000 even if you drop out before completing the program. Exercise extreme caution and discuss the pros and cons with an advisor, mentor or other adult whom you trust before choosing a privately based program.

PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- 4-YEAR BACHELORS
- COST MORE THAN CSU OR UC
- IN CALIFORNIA & OUT-OF-STATE

These colleges generally offer 4-year bachelor's degrees. Although the list price is typically more than at a CSU or UC, financial aid is often available so students are still encouraged to apply. Private colleges typically have a selective admissions process that requires testing and essays. They can be found in California and out-of-state. Many have smaller class sizes with easier access to professors.

The earlier you begin preparing for college the better. You'll have more options for schools to attend and you'll be better prepared for college-level work.

If you want to attend a CSU or UC campus, the selective admission process requires certain courses from 9th grade on known as the "a-g" course requirements (see pg 7). The following plan explains the steps to take each year to meet those requirements.

Depending on what grade you are in when you start your planning, some of these steps may not apply to you. If you have not met the requirements or timetable for attending a CSU or UC or are interested in a career path that does not require a 4-year degree, don't worry! You can enroll in a community college by following the steps outlined on this checklist for the 12th grade.

START WITH GETTING ORGANIZED:

- ❑ Start a binder to place all information related to college.
- ❑ Keep copies of test scores and/or write down dates of tests taken.
- ❑ Save your log-in name and passwords for online registration, etc.

★ 6TH & 7TH GRADES

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❑ Talk to your school counselor about courses that will prepare you for college and create an academic plan to take college preparatory courses. Check out "How to Get to College" at blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.
- ❑ Have your guardian(s) or other supportive adult in your life attend the education planning night at the middle school where local high school counselors present their programs and schedules.
- ❑ Start a binder to keep all information related to college. Keep copies of test scores and save your log-in names and passwords for college-related websites.

Coursework

- ❑ Obtain the College Preparatory "a-g" course list at blogs.calstate.edu/college/students or ucop.edu/agguide.
- ❑ Do well in your English class to prepare for high school.
- ❑ Take mathematics, such as Pre-Algebra.

★ 8TH GRADE

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❑ Begin your High School Planner at californiacolleges.edu. The planner has information on courses and grades required for college admission. *Update your High School Planner every semester, and if you decide to apply to a CSU, your course information will automatically transfer to your application—making the application process much easier!*
- ❑ Visit college campuses or attend a college fair.

Coursework

- ❑ Develop a tentative schedule of specific courses for grades 9-12 using the College Preparatory "a-g" course list and a list of CTE (Career Technical Education) course lists for high schools in your area. Learn more about what classes to take by visiting blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.
- ❑ Take Pre-Algebra or Algebra I or another rigorous math course.
- ❑ Take a language other than English.
- ❑ Find programs to help you succeed in college prep courses, such as those found on page 13.

Testing

- ❑ Optional: take the 8th grade ACT Aspire assessment test (formerly ACT Explore and ACT Plan) to help you gauge progress towards college preparedness. *Ask your school counselor for information about how to sign up and about getting a fee waiver.*

Career Planning

- ❑ See your school counselor about taking a career interest and aptitude assessment.
- ❑ Participate in career awareness activities, such as job shadowing or career fairs.
- ❑ Explore career options on these websites:
  - careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers • cccmypath.org
  - salarysurfer.cccco.edu • cacareerzone.org

WHAT ARE THE "a-g" REQUIREMENTS?

The California State University and the University of California require the college preparatory pattern of classes referred to as the "a-g" courses for admission.

a. History / Social Science
Two years, including one year of world history, cultures and historical geography and one year of U.S. history, or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of American government or civics.

b. English Four years of college preparatory English that integrates reading of classic and modern literature, frequent and regular writing, and practice listening and speaking.

c. Math Three years of college-preparatory mathematics that include or integrate the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry. Four years of math are recommended.

d. Laboratory Science Two years of laboratory science providing fundamental knowledge in at least two of the three disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.

e. Language (other than English) Two years of the same language other than English or equivalent to the second level of high school instruction.

f. Visual and Performing Arts One year chosen from dance, music, theater or the visual arts.

g. College Preparatory Elective One year chosen from the "a-f" courses beyond those used to satisfy the requirements above, or courses that have been approved solely in the elective area.

Note: More than 4,000 high school career/technical classes are accepted as fulfilling one of the "a-g" course requirements. See "a-g course lists" at ucop.edu/agguide to find out which ones qualify.

★ 9TH GRADE

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❏ Attend an orientation session at your new school.
- ❏ Meet with your high school counselor each semester.
- ❏ Create a file for keeping track of everything related to education and career: include your grade reports and honors or awards you receive. Keep a record of extracurricular activities like paid employment, school clubs, sports, music, and volunteer work. If you transfer to a new school, get a copy of your school record and keep it in this file. *If you update this every semester it will make filling out the college application easy.*
- ❏ Begin or update your High School Planner at californiacolleges.edu.

Coursework

- ❏ Take the required college preparatory "a-g" coursework including:
  - Algebra I or Geometry, college prep English, and a foreign language.
  - Elective courses that meet college admission standards: history, English, mathematics, science, visual and performing arts, and a foreign language.
  - Aim for As and Bs in all your classes; focus on developing good study habits.
- ❏ Register for AP (Advanced Placement) and honors courses for 10th grade, if available.
- ❏ Find programs to help you succeed in college prep courses on page 13.
- ❏ Learn more about what classes to take by visiting blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.

Testing

- ❏ Optional: Take the 9th grade ACT Aspire assessment test.

Career Planning

- ❏ Participate in career exploration activities, such as career fairs or a workplace tour.
- ❏ Update your career interest and aptitude assessment (or take one if you have not already).
- ❏ Participate in a community project or volunteer.
- ❏ Explore career options on these websites:
  - careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers
  - cccmypath.org
  - salarysurfer.cccco.edu

10TH GRADE

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❑ Talk with your guardian(s) or other supportive adult in your life about your educational choices and review your course load to make sure you are satisfying high school graduation and college entrance requirements.
- ❑ Visit college campuses and attend college fairs.
- ❑ Contact your local ILP (Independent Living Program) to find out about college visits or other planning services they sponsor.
- ❑ Update your High School Planner at californiacolleges.edu.

Coursework

- ❑ Take the required college preparatory "a-g" coursework including Geometry or Algebra II, college prep English and electives.
- ❑ Take part in enrichment programs, summer workshops and camps in subjects like music, science, engineering, writing, filmmaking, and others.
- ❑ Register for AP (Advanced Placement) and honors courses for 11th grade, if available.
- ❑ Find programs to help you succeed in college prep courses, such as those found on page 13.
- ❑ Learn more about what classes to take by visiting blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.

Testing

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ *October:* Register for the PSAT, a practice exam for the SAT. *Ask your counselor for a fee waiver code when registering online for the PSAT.*
- ❑ Take the 10th grade ACT Aspire assessment test. *Ask your school counselor about a fee waiver.*

AP (Advanced Placement) students:

- ❑ *March:* Register to take the AP exam in the spring. You can earn college credit for AP courses if you score well on the test(s), which may exempt you from taking entry-level classes in college and shorten the time it takes you to finish college. *Ask your school counselor about a fee waiver.*

Career Planning

- ❑ Participate in career awareness, career exploration and career preparation activities.
- ❑ Find out about career-related and occupational programs at your high school and sign up for those that interest you.
- ❑ Update your career interest and aptitude assessment (or take one if you haven't already).
- ❑ Explore educational requirements of careers that interest you.
- ❑ Participate in a community project.
- ❑ Prepare for and participate in a summer internship.
- ❑ Explore career options on these websites:
  - careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers
  - cccmypath.org
  - salarysurfer.cccco.edu
  - cacareerzone.org
  - livingwage.mit.edu

11TH GRADE

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❑ Review the classes you need to take for college admissions with your school counselor, including Algebra II or advanced mathematics and English with emphasis on writing and critical reading.
- ❑ Review your academic record with your school counselor; strengthen any weak or problem areas.
- ❑ Attend financial aid information sessions at your high school, local ILP (Independent Living Program) or local colleges.
- ❑ Attend college fairs and college planning sessions with your guardian or other supportive adult.
- ❑ Use spring break or summer vacation to tour college campuses. Have questions prepared in advance and take notes on your visits.
- ❑ Check your transcript at the end of the year to make sure it is correct.
- ❑ Update your High School Planner at californiacolleges.edu.

Coursework

- ❑ Enroll in honors, AP and advanced courses if possible.
- ❑ Select courses for your senior year that strengthen your academic record and ensure that you meet the "a-g" requirements.
- ❑ Register for AP (Advanced Placement) and honors courses for 12th grade, if available.
- ❑ Find programs to help you succeed in college prep courses, such as those found on page 13.
- ❑ Learn more about what classes to take by visiting blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.

Testing

AP (Advanced Placement) students:

- ❑ *March:* Register to take the AP exam in the spring. You can earn college credit for AP courses if you score well on the test(s), which may exempt you from taking entry-level classes in college and shorten the time it takes you to finish college. *Ask your counselor about a fee waiver.*

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ Register for the ACT or the SAT two months before the exam. If you take the exam in the spring or summer, you will get the results in time to see if you need to retake it in the fall of 12th grade. Many CSU campuses require you to take the ACT or SAT by October of your senior year. *Ask your counselor for a fee waiver code.*

CSU EAP (Early Assessment Program):

All 11th graders will participate in the CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress) exam. Included on the CAASPP Individual Student Score Report provided by your high school is an EAP score which provides an indicator of your readiness to take college-level English and math courses before you attend college.

Important: *Mark the release button at the end of each exam* to ensure that the CSU campus(es) you are applying to receive your EAP results. If you do not mark the release button for each test, you will be required to submit your EAP results to the CSU campus(es) upon request. (NOTE: EAP results are not used for admission.) If your EAP score does not authorize you to enroll directly in college level courses, talk with your school counselor to make sure you are enrolled in the necessary courses in your senior year. Visit csustudentsuccess.org for more information.

Career Planning

- ❑ Participate in career awareness, career exploration and career preparation activities.
- ❑ Explore careers by taking a summer job or job shadowing in your field of interest.
- ❑ Update your career interest and aptitude assessment (or take one if you haven't already).
- ❑ Explore educational requirements of careers that interest you.
- ❑ Identify educational goals and schools consistent with your career interests.
- ❑ Participate in a community project.
- ❑ Prepare for and participate in a summer internship or work experience.
- ❑ Explore career options on these websites:
  - careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers
  - cccmypath.org
  - salarysurfer.cccco.edu
  - cacareerzone.org
  - livingwage.mit.edu

★ 12TH GRADE – FALL SEMESTER

Advising & Record-keeping

- ❑ Review courses with your school counselor to make sure you are meeting high school graduation and entrance requirements for the colleges that interest you.
- ❑ Search for scholarship money using the scholarship search function at californiacolleges.edu or other scholarship search sites.
- ❑ Attend ILP workshops, college fairs, college planning sessions, and financial aid information sessions.
- ❑ Visit college campuses that are a good match with your credentials and career interests. Many students who apply to selective colleges select three to five schools to apply to: their "dream" school, their "safety" school, and two to three other choices. For foster youth, applying to up to four UC and four CSU campuses is free.
- ❑ If you plan to attend a California Community College with the intent to transfer to a CSU, visit calstate.edu/transfer/ for transfer pathways.
- ❑ Update your High School Planner at californiacolleges.edu.
- ❑ Gather vital documents, such as your birth certificate, social security card and California ID, and store in a secure location.

Coursework

- ❑ Complete all final "a-g" course requirements. Be sure to take an English and math course to keep your skills strong for your first year in college. Advanced math courses such as Trigonometry or Analytic Geometry/Calculus are also recommended.
- ❑ Find programs to help you succeed in college prep courses, such as those found on page 13.
- ❑ Learn more about what classes to take by visiting blogs.calstate.edu/college/students.

Testing

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ *Early September:* Register for the October ACT (American College Test) or SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test).
- ❑ *Early November:* Register for the December ACT or SAT if you are retaking the exam.

Applying to College

August - September

- ❑ Contact the foster youth liaison at the college of your choice to find out about your eligibility for foster youth and EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs & Services) or EOP (Educational Opportunity Programs) support and important dates and application procedures. For info, visit student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.
- ❑ Get an email address for yourself that is strictly for college and financial aid application information. Avoid using a high school email address, since those often expire.

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ Start your personal essay for college admission. The essay will be used to complete applications for CSU EOP, UC and scholarships. Get coaching and feedback from your counselors. *If you are comfortable doing so, include information about your foster care experience in your essay.*
- ❑ Request letters of recommendation be written by November 15 from three individuals who can write strong recommendations for you for your EOP and scholarship applications. (Letters of recommendation are not required for CSU/UC admission.)

October - November

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ Finish your personal essay for your EOP and scholarship applications.
- ❑ Have your high school counselor or other advisor proofread your application, including any essays, before submitting it.
- ❑ Apply to CSU (calstate.edu/apply) and/or UC (universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions). If you regularly updated your High School Planner, your course information will be automatically transferred to your application. ***Application deadline is November 30***, unless otherwise noted. For foster youth, up to four CSU and four UC applications are free.
- ❑ *Don't forget to press the submit button on your college application* and ALWAYS print out copies of applications submitted online.
- ❑ Double check your transcript to make sure all the information is correct.
- ❑ Have your transcripts sent to requesting colleges. Save one copy for yourself.
- ❑ Apply for on-campus housing ("dorms" or "residence halls") for each college campus that you are applying to and place your name on the waitlist, if needed. *As a foster youth, you may have priority access to on-campus housing.*
- ❑ Check with your campus support program or ILP Coordinator for assistance with payments and deposits for college. Some colleges require an upfront deposit for on-campus housing and only accept checks or credit cards.
- ❑ Apply for the EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) when you submit your CSU or UC application. Include your letters of recommendation.

★ 12TH GRADE – SPRING SEMESTER

Applying to College

If you plan to attend a community college:

- ❏ Complete the college application at cccapply.org. Identify yourself as a foster youth on the application to ensure that you are able to access all benefits for which you are eligible.
- ❏ Contact the foster youth liaison at the college to find out about your eligibility for foster youth and EOPS support programs and important dates and application procedures. Attend any orientations they offer. For info, visit student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.
- ❏ Meet with a counselor at the college to create your education plan. If you are enrolled in EOPS or NextUp (also known as CAFYES), you will receive counseling through those programs. (Bring transcripts to your counseling appointment.)
- ❏ Enroll in an orientation course designed to familiarize you with the college and its services, assist you in selecting classes and create your abbreviated SEP (Student Education Plan). See the current Schedule of Classes for available counseling courses.
- ❏ If you plan to transfer to a 4-year college from community college, meet with a counselor early in your enrollment to develop an education plan and map out the appropriate sequence of courses to get you where you want to go. You'll want to ensure that all your coursework units are transferable.
- ❏ Ask your school counselor to send your final high school transcript to the college you will attend.
- ❏ Students can attend community college without a high school diploma or GED. For students without a high school diploma or GED, talk to your high school counselor or local community college to learn more about your options.

Course Placement

AP (Advanced Placement) students:

- ❏ *March:* Take the AP exam(s). You can earn college credit for AP courses if you score well on the test(s), which may exempt you from taking entry-level classes in college and shorten the time it takes you to finish college. Have the scores sent to the schools where you are applying. *Ask your counselor about a fee waiver.*

If you plan to attend a community college:

- ❏ The process for course placement varies by college, but your college will likely use your high school grades to determine what level math and English classes they recommend you take. If you disagree with your college's placement recommendation you have the right to enroll directly in transfer level courses. If you need additional support in math or English find out if your college offers concurrent enrollment, which provides extra help while you take transfer level courses. If you plan to enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) credit coursework, talk to your counselor to determine if any assessment tests are needed for placement into the appropriate course.

If you plan to attend CSU:

- ❏ The EAP test you took in 11th grade (see page 9) will determine whether you need to attend a summer Early Start Program. Visit csustudentsuccess.org for more information.

★ 12TH GRADE – SPRING SEMESTER (CONTINUED)

Applying for Financial Aid and Academic Assistance

Financial aid programs have limited funding—the earlier you apply, the more you may receive.

- ❑ Get the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster Youth at jbay.org/ca-fy-financial-aid-guide.
- ❑ Apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at fafsa.gov or California Dream Application at caldreamact.org *by March 2*. If you miss the March 2 deadline, you can still apply, but less financial aid is likely to be available. You can start completing the FAFSA as early as October 1 for the following fall term.
- ❑ Identify yourself as a foster youth by marking yes on the question asking if you are an "orphan or ward of the court or foster youth" on the FAFSA.
- ❑ Apply online for the Chafee Grant at chafee.csac.ca.gov. Up to $5,000 in grant funds may be available for eligible foster youth.
- ❑ Create a Webgrants account to manage your Cal Grant and Chafee Grant online and view the status at mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov.
- ☐ Check to see that your high school sent your Cal Grant GPA Verification form to the California State Aid Commission (CSAC).
- ❑ Apply for any private scholarships for which you may be eligible.
- ❑ Obtain a letter that verifies that you were in foster care from your social worker and keep it in a safe place. You will need this to qualify for certain benefits available only to foster youth. If you have exited foster care and no longer have a social worker, you can obtain a letter verifying that you were previously in foster care by calling the Foster Care Ombudsman's office at 877-846-1602.

If you plan to attend a community college:

- ❑ Apply for EOPS and NextUp (also known as CAFYES) by contacting the EOPS office at the school to which you are applying for information about application requirements and deadlines. *NextUp is only available at certain colleges.*
- ❑ Apply for DSPS (Disabled Student Programs and Services), which provides support if you have a disability, including a physical, psychological or learning disability.
- ❑ Determine if the college you will be attending has a foster youth support program and contact the program to determine participation requirements. You can find programs at student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❑ Apply to participate in campus support programs for foster youth like Guardian Scholars and Renaissance Scholars. You can find programs at student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.
- ❑ Apply for EOP at the same time that you submit your admissions application.
- ❑ If applicable, apply for Services for Students with Disabilities, which provides support if you have a physical, psychological or learning disability.

Enrollment and Fees

If you plan to attend a community college:

- ❑ Register ASAP: *as a current or former foster youth, you may be entitled to register prior to the general registration period.* Classes fill up fast, and getting into the classes you want is important to keeping your education plan, as well as your financial aid, on track. Determine in advance if you are eligible and take advantage of this option. *You must complete orientation, assessment and an education plan to qualify for priority enrollment. See the website of the school you plan to attend for more information or visit stepforward.cccco.edu.*
- ❑ Pay enrollment fees and any nominal health and/or student activity fees, due at the time of registration. Check in advance with the Admissions Office for acceptable forms of payment; many can be made online. *You may qualify for a waiver of certain fees. Check with the foster youth liaison at the college you plan to attend and make sure you have applied for a CA College Promise Grant (formerly the BOG fee waiver) to have your course enrollment fees waived.*

Warning! Dis-enrollment may occur after registration if fees have not been paid within a certain time frame. Check with the college Admissions Office for deadlines.

If you plan to attend CSU or UC:

- ❏ Pay a nonrefundable deposit for freshmen tuition to the college you plan to attend, if required, to hold your spot. Contact the foster youth campus program for possible help paying that deposit.
- ❏ Pay any on-campus housing deposits required to secure your housing. *As a foster youth, you may be entitled to priority access to on-campus housing.*
- ❏ Register ASAP: *as a current or former foster youth, you may be entitled to register prior to the general registration period.* Classes fill up fast, and getting into the classes you want is important to keeping your education plan, as well as your financial aid, on track. Determine in advance if you are eligible and take advantage of this option.

Career Planning

- ❏ Participate in career awareness, career exploration and career preparation activities.
- ❏ Explore careers by taking a summer job or job shadowing in your field of interest.
- ❏ Update your career interest and aptitude assessment (or take one if you haven't already).
- ❏ Explore educational requirements of careers that interest you.
- ❏ Identify educational goals and schools consistent with your career interests.
- ❏ Prepare for and participate in a summer internship or paid work experience.
- ❏ Explore career options on these websites:
  - careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers
  - cccmypath.org
  - salarysurfer.cccco.edu
  - cacareerzone.org
  - livingwage.mit.edu

RESOURCES FOR FOSTER YOUTH IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

- **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID):** This college prep program helps students succeed in classes they need for college and increases their chances of enrolling in 4-year colleges. Ask your CASA, guardian or other trusted adult to help you speak with your school counselor or foster youth education liaison about AVID. These programs can fill up so ask as early as you can. avid.org

- **Khan Academy:** Offers free online tutoring. khanacademy.org

- **Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program:** Each county has a program to coordinate foster youth education. Each school district also has a foster youth liaison (also known as AB 490 Liaison) who can link students with tutoring resources and provide other support. cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy

- **Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP):** Each UC campus has an EAOP office to work directly with students at underserved schools to increase the number of students who achieve a college education. eaop.org

- **Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA):** MESA provides individualized academic plans, academic excellence workshops in math and science, study skills training, PSAT and SAT preparation, hands-on math and science competition, career and college exploration, interaction with industry representatives, and caregiver involvement. mesa.ucop.edu

- **Puente:** Puente programs in high schools and community colleges throughout the state support educationally disadvantaged students to complete college degrees and serve as mentors and leaders to the future generation. This interdisciplinary approach includes writing, counseling and mentoring components. puente.berkeley.edu

- **Upward Bound:** Serves foster youth who are preparing to enter postsecondary education with programs in math, laboratory science, composition, literature, and languages other than English. Ask your CASA, guardian or other trusted adult to help you speak with your school counselor or foster youth education liaison about Upward Bound. These programs can fill up so ask as early as you can. www2.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html

BENEFITS AND RESOURCES FOR FOSTER YOUTH AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- **California College Promise Grant (formerly the BOG Fee Waiver):** Allows low-income students at community colleges to have enrollment fees waived. Contact the college that you will be attending to find out how to apply for the fee waiver; you may be able to apply through cccapply.org.

- **California Community Colleges Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS):** All California community colleges offer EOPS to enable low-income, educationally disadvantaged students to complete their educational goals. EOPS offers academic counseling, book grants and more. *These programs have limited space so it's important to apply as early as possible.*

- **Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth:** Many community colleges have support programs specifically for foster youth. Services can include assistance with admissions, financial aid, housing, orientation, advisement, counseling, and tutoring. Visit student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.

- **NextUp, also known as Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support (CAFYES):** Students under age 26, who were in foster care on or after their 16th birthday and enrolled in at least 9 units at one of 26 colleges with a NextUp (CAFYES) program, qualify for special assistance including one-on-one support, book vouchers, and additional financial resources. To find out which colleges have programs visit student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs/cafyes.

- **Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) and CalWORKs:** CARE and CalWORKs programs offer additional assistance to single head-of-household parents who receive public assistance. Students may be eligible to receive grants, child care assistance, job placement assistance, and under certain conditions, post-employment skills training, and instructional services.

- **Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS):** These programs provide assistance and accommodations for students with physical, mental and/or learning disabilities that facilitate them in achieving their educational goals. They can provide note-taking assistance, special test-taking conditions, interpreters, and assistive technology.

- **Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) Liaisons:** Every community college has a foster youth liaison designated to assist foster youth in accessing financial aid, scholarships, student services, and resources. Visit bit.ly/FYSI-liaisons.

- **Physical and Mental Health Services:** May include physical exams, family planning, pregnancy testing, prescription refills, and counseling for grief or loss, emotional difficulties, worry and anxiety.

- **Priority Registration for Foster Youth:** This benefit makes it much easier to enroll in competitive classes. Getting the right classes at the right time makes a big difference in your ability to earn a degree and continue to receive financial aid. Visit the website of the college you wish to attend for more information or visit stepforward.cccco.edu.

BENEFITS AND RESOURCES FOR FOSTER YOUTH AT CSU AND UC

- **Application Fee Waiver:** Foster youth are likely to qualify for a waiver for the $55 application fee for CSUs and $70 fee for UCs. You can submit an application fee waiver to up to four campuses.

- **Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth:** Most CSU and UC campuses have programs specifically for foster youth that can include assistance with admissions, financial aid, housing, advisement, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, life skills, and employment and career planning. Visit student.cacollegepathways.org/find-campus-support-programs.

- **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP):** EOP is designed for students who have not been able to realize their educational potential because of their economic or educational backgrounds. The program provides admission and academic assistance and, in many cases, offers financial assistance to eligible students. EOP accepts students who do not meet regular admission criteria, as well as those who qualify for regular admission. *Be sure to apply for EOP when you are completing your undergraduate application for admission.*

- **Students with Disabilities Services:** Each UC and CSU has a disability student services center. These programs provide assistance and accommodations for students with physical, mental and/or learning disabilities that facilitate them in achieving their educational goals. They can provide note-taking assistance, special test-taking conditions, interpreters, adaptive equipment and more.

- **Priority Housing:** Former foster youth can receive priority in college housing, and some students can stay on campus year-round including holiday breaks.

- **Priority Registration for Foster Youth:** As a current or former foster youth in California, you receive priority course registration at CSU and most UC campuses. This benefit makes it much easier to enroll in competitive classes. Getting the right classes at the right time makes a big difference in your ability to earn a degree and continue to receive financial aid. Visit the website of the college you wish to attend for more information.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FOSTER YOUTH AT ALL CALIFORNIA COLLEGES

- **Federal and State Financial Aid Programs** such as the Federal Pell Grant and state CalGrant provide funds that can pay for tuition costs at 4-year institutions and help pay for living expenses. To apply for these programs, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.gov or the California Dream Act application for undocumented students at caldreamact.org. For maximum aid, the ***FAFSA must be submitted by March 2***. Students who miss this deadline can still apply, but less financial aid is likely to be available.

- **The California Chafee Grant Program** gives up to $5,000 for up to five years to eligible former foster youth for college, including career and technical training leading to certificates, diplomas or degrees at California Community Colleges, CSUs, UCs, and other accredited institutions both in and out of California. To qualify, a student must be under age 26, be enrolled at least half time in college, have financial need and have been in foster care at least one day between the ages of 16 to 18. Students need to complete a FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application and a separate Chafee grant application. Visit chafee.csac.ca.gov to apply and learn more.

Get the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster Youth at
jbay.org/ca-fy-financial-aid-guide

Visit ICanAffordCollege.com or talk with the financial aid office at the college that you plan to attend for more information about applying for financial aid.

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