

TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Chief Business Officers
Chief Information Officers
Financial Aid Directors and Administrators

FROM: Allison Beer, Dean of Educational Services and Support

RE: Implementation of AB2458
Student Parent Cost of Attendance Adjustments and Resources

This memorandum aims to outline requirements of [Assembly Bill 2458](#) (Berman, 2024), which requires each California community college and district to implement a policy for estimating and adjusting cost of attendance (COA) information for student parents on or before the start of the 2026–27 academic year. In accordance with AB 2458, this memorandum establishes the recommended methodology and practices for COA adjustments.

Furthermore, this memorandum provides instructions for:

- Identifying enrolled student parents and local data collection.
- Including cost of attendance information in admitted student materials.
- Explaining the dependent care allowance to student parents; and
- Informing student parents of affordable childcare options offered by the campus or within the local community.

Guidelines and instructions in this memorandum are in alignment with the federal Higher Education Act (HEA) Title IV, under which California community colleges are permitted to adjust non-tuition costs of attendance for student parents.¹ Information regarding HEA requirements for financial aid information, costs of attendance policies, and dependent care costs allowances are available in the [Federal Student Aid Handbook](#).

¹ For purposes of this memorandum, “student parent” means a student who has a child or children under 18 years of age who will receive more than half of their support from that student, as defined by California Education Code Section 66025.81 (b).

Cost of Attendance Adjustment Methodology

On or before the start of the 2026–27 academic year, colleges and districts shall implement a process for providing COA adjustments for eligible student parents, according to the methodology below. Eligibility for COA adjustments and confirmation of expenses shall be determined by the college financial office. For any cost category, federal law permits students to request an adjustment to reflect their actual expected costs with adequate documentation or reasonable self-attestation.

Table 1: Cost of Attendance Adjustment Methodology

Cost Category	On-Campus Methodology	Off-Campus Methodology
Dependent Care Allowance	Actual cost of on-campus childcare center rates per dependent child by age. May also include food, housing, transportation, and other actual costs expected to be incurred for dependent care during periods that include but are not limited to class time, study time, field work, internships, and commuting time for the student. The amount of the allowance should be based on the number and age of the student's dependents.	California Department of Social Services (CDSS) county-specific reimbursement rates. May also include food, housing, transportation, and other actual costs expected to be incurred for dependent care during periods that include but are not limited to class time, study time, field work, internships, and commuting time for the student. The amount of the allowance should be based on the number and age of the student's dependents.
Food	Actual cost of campus meal plan.	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) food plan . Recommended to use at least the moderate or liberal level.

Cost Category	On-Campus Methodology	Off-Campus Methodology
Housing	Actual cost of on-campus family housing, including all utilities and internet.	U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) fair market rent (FMR), for an apartment in the metropolitan area or county where the campus is located. Recommended to set a minimum at the two-bedroom rate and increase as deemed appropriate for students with more than one dependent child. AND Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Consumer Expenditure Survey data for California for electricity, water, gas, trash service; and monthly internet service rates by country from Broadband Now.
Transportation	Transportation costs from the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) Student Expenses Budget .	Transportation costs from the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) Student Expenses Budget .

For any years of data not available at listed sources, colleges should adjust costs for inflation using the California Consumer Price Index ([CCPI](#)) for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the most recently available information.

The financial aid office may create either a 9-month or 12-month sample budget, based on at least half-time enrollment. An individual student's actual COA adjustments shall be based on their level of enrollment.

Sample Budget

The table below is a sample 9-month student expenses budget for students with dependent(s), enrolled at least half-time, for the categories listed above. All other COA categories should be aligned with the college's standard COA.

Table 2: Example Student Budget: Alameda County, Off-Campus Housing, 2025-26 Academic Year

Cost Category	1 Dependent, Age 5	2 Dependents, Ages 5, and 10
Dependent Care Allowance	Childcare: Age 5: \$9,643 (CDSS, Child Care Center Part-Time Monthly, 2-5 yrs. Adjusted for inflation) Food: Age 5: \$2,304 (USDA Liberal Meal Plan, Child Age 4-5) Transportation: Transportation expenses associated with childcare Housing: See housing category below	Childcare: Age 5: \$9,643 (CDSS, Child Care Center Part-Time Monthly, 2-5 yrs. Adjusted for inflation) Age 10: \$5,267 (CDSS, Child Care Center Part-Time Monthly, School Aged. Adjusted for inflation) Food: Age 5: \$2,304 (USDA Liberal Meal Plan, Child Age 4-5) Age 10: \$3,489 Transportation: Transportation expenses associated with childcare Housing: See housing category below
Food	Student expense: \$3,693 (USDA Liberal Meal Plan, Female Age 19-50)	Student expense: \$3,693 (USDA Liberal Meal Plan, Female Age 19-50)

Cost Category	1 Dependent, Age 5	2 Dependents, Ages 5, and 10
Housing	2 Bedroom FMR (HUD): \$24,138 Plus cost for electricity, water, gas, trash service; and monthly internet.	2 Bedroom FMR (HUD): \$24,138 Plus cost for electricity, water, gas, trash service; and monthly internet.
Transportation	Student expense: \$1,818 (CSAC)	Student expense: \$1,818 (CSAC)

Identifying Students with Dependents and Local Data Collection

Campuses may identify student parents using several methods. It is recommended that colleges reassess students' parent status at least annually. Methods for identifying student parents may include, but are not limited to:

- Financial aid applications, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), or the California Community College Promise Grant (CCPG) application.
- CCCApply.
- Student Information Systems, including information provided by the student through self-service portals.
- Program referrals and other campus-based applications, such as CalWORKs, EOPS/CARE, and Basic Needs Centers.
- Referrals from faculty and staff; and/or
- Other self-certification documentation provided by the student directly to the financial aid office.

In addition, colleges and districts are required to collect data locally identifying student parents, which must be reported to the Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS), using data element [SB39](#) (effective Summer 2023).

Net Price Calculator

On or before the start of the 2026-27 academic year, colleges are required to update Net Price Calculators (NPC) to include allowable adjustments for students with dependents, based on the methodology described above and federal guidelines. The NPC should include adjustments based on the number of and age of dependents. The NPC should also include information that other adjustments may be available for student parents based on their specific circumstances and that they may contact their Financial Aid Office for additional support.

Outreach and Student Information

On or before the start of the 2026-27 academic year, colleges shall update their campus websites with cost of attendance and dependent care allowance information, using student-friendly language. The information shall be posted to campus financial aid student parent web pages. Colleges shall ensure that student parent websites are updated with all required information pursuant to Education Code Section 66027.81.

In addition, colleges are required to 1) share cost of attendance information in admitted student materials; 2) explain the dependent care allowance to student parents; and 3) inform student parents of affordable childcare options offered by the campus or within the local community.

Colleges may inform students that financial aid may be impacted by COA adjustments; however, final award packages depend on a combination of COA, available aid, and determined eligibility.

The Chancellor's Office recommends that colleges use available institutional data to proactively identify students with dependents and inform them of available COA adjustments and available resources.

Resources for Colleges and Districts

To supplement this memorandum, colleges may refer to the resources below developed by the Chancellor's Office and other organizational partners to support implementation:

- California Community Colleges [Basic Needs Centers Toolkit](#) (updated April 2025)
- [California Alliance for Student Parent Success](#) AB2458 Fact Sheets and Toolkit
- [SPARK Collaborative](#) Resource Library

For questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Dean Allison Beer at ABeer@CCCCO.edu.

cc: Rowena Tomaneng, Deputy Chancellor
David O'Brien, Vice Chancellor of External Relations