2025 REPORT

Hire UP Program

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor

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SONYA CHRISTIAN
Chancellor

April 28, 2025

Secretary of the Senate
Erika Contreras
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Hire UP Pilot Program

Dear Secretary, Contreras:

Pursuant to Education Code EDC 78080-78084, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office is pleased to provide the 2025 Hire UP Program Legislative Report.

The Hire UP Pilot Program, established in 2022, aims to provide financial support and workforce integration for vulnerable student populations, including formerly incarcerated students, CalWORKs recipients, and former foster youth. The total allocation for this program is $30 million for 10 selected districts. The following report provides an in-depth analysis of the required performance metrics.

For any questions regarding this report, please contact Allison Beer, Dean, Educational Services and Support, at ABeer@cccco.edu.

Sincerely,

Sonya Christian, Chancellor

Enclosure: Report

CC:
Rowena Tomaneng, Deputy Chancellor
Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Office of Legislative Counsel

2025 HIRE UP PROGRAM REPORT

Prepared By

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Educational Services and Support

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INTRODUCTION

The California Community Colleges is the largest higher education system in the nation, serving over two million students in every community in the state. California's 116 community colleges serve the most diverse student body of any California higher education system; they are uniquely positioned to help residents of all backgrounds improve their social and economic mobility and build a better future for themselves, their communities, and the state. The California Community Colleges system is a critical partner to achieve state higher education priorities by supporting baccalaureate degree attainment through transfer to four-year institutions—annually transferring about 80,000 students and offering Baccalaureate Degree Programs—and to meet its workforce needs by providing opportunities for upskilling and workforce preparation for all Californians, particularly working adults.

The Hire UP Pilot Program was established June 30, 2022, through Assembly Bill No. 183 (Education Code EDC 78080-78084). This five-year pilot program allocated $15 million in 2023 and another $15 million in 2024. This initiative provides financial support and workforce integration for vulnerable student populations, including formerly incarcerated students, CalWORKs recipients, and former foster youth.

Ten districts were selected to provide financial support by providing stipends to eligible students to cover their cost of college attendance, including living expenses, and ensure students have access to higher education programs. Hire UP leverages a unique financial aid model, in which students receive monthly stipends rather than lumpsum payments at the beginning of each term. This financial aid model is often referred to as "aid like a paycheck," intended to support students extend their available aid overtime. Furthermore, the stipend amount is equivalent to earnings from a full-time job at the California state minimum wage and can be awarded to students up to their total cost of attendance, adjusted for enrollment intensity and unmet need.

Pilot districts were selected based on criteria developed by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office), including the percentage of enrolled students who are formerly incarcerated, former foster youth, or current CalWORKs recipients as well students that completed transfer level math and English. Districts were invited to submit a completed interest form by March 30, 2023, with all requested information. This information was used to confirm that invited districts have the capacity to effectively administer the Hire UP program as requited by education code including: participation in the Rising Scholars Network/another dedicated reentry program, established career pathways, established mechanisms to measure student success and the ability to ensure students received assistance with applying for financial aid, and sufficient staffing within district to administer the pilot program.

HIRE UP FUNDING OVERVIEW

The Chancellor's Office received $30 million over two fiscal years to distribute to participating districts and was granted the authority to determine a funding formula that takes into consideration various local factors. Each pilot district received an allocation based on their percentage of formerly incarcerated students, former foster youth, CalWORKs recipients and students who completed transfer level math and English. Each district may use up to 7% of

their allocation for any purpose to support the Hire UP implementation. The total allocation for each district was split evenly between the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 fiscal years.

This funding is intended to provide stipends to eligible students and support the participating districts in achieving the program's goals.

Table 1: Hire UP Allocation by District

District	2023 Allocation	2024 Allocation
Solano	$1,750,000.00	$1,750,000.00
San Diego	$1,750,000.00	$1,750,000.00
Shasta-Tehama	$1,750,000.00	$1,750,000.00
Los Angeles	$1,750,000.00	$1,750,000.00
Rio Hondo	$1,400,000.00	$1,400,000.00
San Francisco	$1,320,000.00	$1,320,000.00
Peralta	$1,320,000.00	$1,320,000.00
Sonoma	$1,320,000.00	$1,320,000.00
Allan Hancock	$1,320,000.00	$1,320,000.00
North Orange	$1,320,000.00	$1,320,000.00
Totals	$15,000,000.00	$15,000,000.00

DATA COLLECTION

The Chancellor's Office collected student-level data from participating districts, including the total number of students receiving stipends, their enrollment levels, and the total stipend amounts for each student. Additionally, participating districts reported whether the students were formerly incarcerated, CalWORKs recipients, or former foster youth. Other data points included the units completed by each student while in the program, and the degree or training program the student was currently participating in or had completed. The data collected so far pertains to the 2023-2024 academic year.

Districts were asked to report on various educational outcomes for all participants. These outcomes included completion rates, persistence, employment status, additional education pursued, business start-ups or entrepreneurial ventures, and the percentage of students employed in the field in which they earned their degree or completed training. This comprehensive data collection aimed to provide a holistic view of the program's impact on student success and career readiness.

Since the pilot program is in its early stages and students are at varying points in their progress toward degree completion, many districts do not have outcome data readily available. Much of this information must be collected directly from students, and districts may face challenges contacting students to self-report their status post-program participation, as many students may change their contact information or fail to provide updated information. Although the Chancellor's Office has access to the Employment Development Department

(EDD) wage and employment data, there is a lag in availability, and it requires matching student records based on social security numbers, which not all California community college students report, resulting in partial matches. When available, this information will be incorporated into future reports.

Districts are also required to report on the degrees or training programs students are currently pursuing. However, some districts submitted locally unique codes that were not interpretable by the Chancellor's Office. Such issues are common when establishing new data collection processes and generally improve over time. To address this, the Chancellor's Office has reaffirmed the requirement for districts to use established MIS codes, accompanied by clear program titles, for subsequent submissions. It is therefore anticipated that the next legislative report will include a detailed breakdown of participating students' degrees and training programs.

The Chancellor's Office will continue to provide technical assistance to districts for data collection throughout the pilot. This support will help ensure more consistent, accurate, and comprehensive reporting to inform ongoing policy decisions and program improvements.

Findings from this report are separated into two areas – program allocation and spending, and progress on program goals outlined in AB 183.

PROGRAM ALLOCATION AND SPENDING

Table 2: Hire UP Disbursement Percentages

District	Funds Disbursed to Students	Percentage of Allocation Spent
North Orange	$1,003,085	38%
Solano	$949,209	27%
San Francisco	$586,824	22%
Peralta	$307,780	12%
Shasta Tehama	$239,840	7%
Sonoma	$236,677	9%
Los Angeles*	$43,310	1%
San Diego*	$0	0%
Rio Hondo*	$0	0%
Allan Hancock*	$0	0%

Seven out of 10 districts disbursed funds to students during 2023-2024 academic year. The total amount disbursed to students was $3,366,725 which is 16% of the overall total allocation of $30,000,000 for all districts.

*These districts reported that for the 2023-2024 academic year they were developing procedures and coordinating staffing for the implementation of this program, they have committed to disbursing funds in the 2024-2025 academic year.

REPORTING ON PROGRAM GOALS

Performance Metric 1: The number of students receiving a stipend pursuant to this article.

Table 3: Hire UP Students Receiving a Stipend and Enrollment Status by District in Academic Year 2023-2024

District	Number of Students Receiving Stipend	Part-Time Students	Full-Time Students
Shasta Tehama	27	11	16
Sonoma	31	14	17
Solano	107	50	57
Peralta	113	35	78
San Francisco	87	39	48
Los Angeles	11	5	6
North Orange	262	109	153
San Diego	0	0	0
Rio Hondo	0	0	0
Allan Hancock	0	0	0
Total	638	263	375

Unmet need refers to the portion of a student's educational expenses that remains after all forms of other financial aid have been applied.

Performance Metric 2: The degree or training program the student has completed or is participating in.

Table 5: Hire UP Number and Percentage of Students by Educational Goal in Academic Year 2023-2024

Educational Goal	Students	Percentage
Earn an Associate of Arts Degree	271	42%
Transfer	198	31%
Undecided	67	10%
Obtaining or Maintaining Certification	38	6%
Vocational Certification	29	5%
Job/Career Skills	21	3%
Unreported	6	1%
Educational Development	5	1%
Improve English and Math	2	0%
Complete High School Credential (ATB)	1	0%

Performance Metric 3: The outcomes for all participants, including employment, additional education, or business startups.

Since the program is still new, there is not yet sufficient information to accurately report on employment outcomes or business startups. As the program progresses and more data becomes available, we will be able to provide a more comprehensive report on participant outcomes.

Performance Metric 4: The percentage of students employed in the field in which they received a degree or completed training.

Data on participating students' employment outcomes is not yet available, as most students are still completing their program of study and have not yet transitioned to employment. As the program continues, the Chancellor's Office plans to collect employment data for participating students, through several methods including self-reported surveys and by linking student records with data from the California Employment Development Department to the extent possible.

Performance Metric 5: The degree to which Hire UP supportive services acknowledge and address historic racial inequity and socioeconomic barriers to workforce participation for the target population groups.

The Hire UP program is specifically designed to support underserved student populations, addressing historic racial inequity and socioeconomic barriers to educational attainment and workforce participation, targeting formerly incarcerated students, former foster youth, and CalWORKs recipients. The program focuses on removing barriers by instituting an innovative financial aid model that models paychecks from employment and encourages participating students to identify educational and career goals. The unique Hire UP model has quickly led to the program becoming in-demand at several participating districts, fulling their program cohort in the first year of implementation.

Performance Metric 6: The impact of the pilot program on the target population groups, including key conclusions and policy recommendations to provide guidance to the Legislature and the Governor.

The Hire UP program is an important and vital resource for colleges, enhancing student support and improving college affordability. Colleges have so far provided over $3.3 million in financial aid to participating students.

The Chancellor's Office will continue to collect and analyze data regarding the program of the pilot program. Recommendations will be included in future reports, as implementation and data collection become more robust.

Table 6: Hire UP Number and Percentage of Students by Target Population in Academic Year 2023-2024

Target Population Category	Students	Percentage
CalWORKs	263	41%
Formerly Incarcerated	142	22%
Identified with 1 or More Categories but Unspecified	113	18%
Former Foster Youth	112	18%
Both Formerly Incarcerated and Former Foster Youth	7	1%
Both Formerly Incarcerated and CalWORKs	1	0%

CONCLUSION

During the 2023-2024 academic year, participating districts began initial implementation of the Hire UP program, providing over $3.3 million in aid to 638 students. The Hire UP pilot program is a vital resource for colleges to evaluate the effectiveness of innovative financial aid structures which seeks to help students extend their funding over the course of an entire term, meet their full cost of attendance, and help prepare students for gainful employment. While still in its infancy, early information from colleges indicates that the program is in high demand locally and exhibits promise for continuation beyond the five-year pilot. To support the pilot through its growth, the Chancellor's Office will continue to provide technical assistance regarding best practices for serving students, addressing structural inequities through financial aid, and continued improvement in reporting regarding student outcomes.

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California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

1102 Q Street | Suite 4400 | Sacramento, CA 95811

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