



## REVERENCE FOR LIFE

**THE ISSUE: AB 809 Public postsecondary education: Child Development programs: Priority enrollment: Title IX protection: Pregnancy and parental status (Santiago, D-Los Angeles)** would allow pregnant and parenting students to know their rights on college campuses. **(SUPPORT)**

### HISTORY & BACKGROUND

Title IX was established to ensure that all students, regardless of gender or sex, are afforded equal educational opportunities. Any public postsecondary educational institution that receives federal funds must adhere to Title IX requirements; therefore, these regulations apply to the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California. State law further expands on Title IX by requiring all public colleges and universities to clearly post on their website the name and contact for that institutions Title IX coordinator and instructions on how to file a complaint under Title IX.

However, despite Title IX protections, pregnant and parenting students still face difficult hurdles when obtaining a college degree. Many college students are unaware of their Title IX protections, especially pregnant and parenting students, as many postsecondary educational institutions do not post this information clearly online for students to find and only 39.4% of the universities explicitly include this in their published Title IX information. Some of the Title IX rights include having pregnancy-related absences excused by instructors and providing pregnant students with the same special services provided to students with temporary medical conditions

Another challenge facing pregnant and single parents in college is finding affordable childcare that fits within their school schedule. On campus, childcare programs can help ease some of this burden, but, while 97% of universities in California offer childcare, space is often limited and children can be waitlisted for months. This leaves single parents with the struggle of securing alternative childcare while attending school, which is costly and can disrupt their education. AB 809 would encourage on campus childcare centers to prioritize the enrollment of children to low-income single parents. It would alleviate one of the biggest challenges faced by parenting students, which is securing affordable and flexible childcare.

### CHURCH TEACHING

The Church frequently reminds us that we are to care for all of God's people, especially the weakest and defenseless among us. Pregnancy support services provide care and protection for some of our society's most vulnerable members by assisting women throughout their pregnancies and as they welcome their children into the world.

### TALKING POINTS

- It is essential that pregnant and parenting students not only have equal access to education, but also receive support to help them succeed in school.
- By clearly posting Title IX protections for pregnant and parenting students on the college's website it will provide students with information that can help them overcome challenges that otherwise may have caused them to leave college.
- Having flexible childcare is crucial to educational success.

“Don't be discouraged by the difficulties that the educational challenge presents! Educating isn't a profession but an attitude, a way of being. In order to educate you must go out of yourselves and be amidst the young, accompanying them in the stages of their growth, standing beside them.”

- Pope Francis