

Student's tuition loan approved after father's suspected suicide

Local governments have been told to streamline college tuition loans for students from poor families, after a man was suspected to have killed himself over a document related to his son's loan application.

Yue Chengyi, a resident of Youyu county in Shanxi province, was reported to have stabbed himself to death on Aug 14 as he was trying to obtain a document from the local government that was required for a student loan application.

Yue, 50, was the breadwinner of his family – an unemployed wife, two sons and a daughter.

On Aug 7, Yue's second son was admitted to a college and needed about 5,000 yuan (\$750) for tuition for his freshman year.

Aware of the student loan policy to reduce the financial burden for impoverished families, the father approached the township government on Aug 14 hoping to obtain an official document proving that his son qualified for the loan.

Students are allowed to apply for interest-free loans from banks if they have documents showing the family's financial difficulty. The documents must carry government seals.

Yue went to the government office alone. Two hours later, he was found lying in blood in the office by himself, with several stab wounds on his belly and neck. He was sent to the hospital but was too severely injured to be saved. He died that night while being moved to a hospital in Beijing.

On Aug 17, the Youyu county government said on its Weibo account that, according to the local police, Yue, who was feeling great pressure, killed himself with a knife 15 to 20 centimeters long.

Yue Zhong, the older son, told Beijing News that he didn't know whether the knife was his father's.

"We don't know what happened in the office at that time," Yue Zhong was quoted as saying. "We don't know why my father did it."

A staff member of the township government told Beijing News that because there was no surveillance camera in the office, nobody knew exactly what happened.

The Youyu county government told China Daily on Wednesday that a task force has been formed to investigate the incident. The government helped the son get the loan.

The China National Center for Student Financial Aid issued a notice on

Tuesday urging education authorities and banks to improve working efficiency and make the application process “student-centered”, so that every student in need can get loans in a timely manner.

“Students who can offer a statement showing their families’ financial difficulty – whether it’s from their school or the village-or township-level government – are eligible for the loans,” the center said in the notice.