

Date of Hearing: July 12, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair  
ACR 102 (Eduardo Garcia) – As Introduced June 13, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Opportunity Youth Reengagement Month

**SUMMARY:** Recognizes the month of August 2017 as Opportunity Youth Reengagement Month, and states the intent of the Legislature to encourage the expansion of schools authorized to specifically reengage “opportunity youth” 16 to 24 years of age. Specifically, **this resolution:**

- 1) States that California’s reported dropout rate was 11.6 percent in 2014, and there are approximately 700,000 youths in California who are not in school or are not working.
- 2) States that there are overwhelming economic, social, and personal barriers to young people who are out of work and not in school, defining “opportunity youth” as youth ages 16 to 24 who are not engaged in either work or school at any meaningful level.
- 3) States that youth and young adults of color disproportionately make up nearly 74 percent of “opportunity youth” in California, and GradNation reports that the United States cannot achieve its national graduation goals without increasing California’s graduation rate for Latino and African American pupils.
- 4) States that “The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth” study has shown that the total taxpayer burden for each “opportunity youth,” reflecting earnings, productivity spillovers, and taxes; crime; health costs; and welfare and social supports, in 2012 dollars, is equivalent to \$235,680 as a current lump sum, and the total social lump sum burden is \$704,020 per youth, and that the burden is even greater for African American and Latino youth.
- 5) States that our education and workforce systems in California lack the necessary resources to adequately prepare Latinos, African Americans, and other people of color for our current and future workforce needs, which is contributing to a persistent skills gap across the state.
- 6) States that wide and persistent gaps in educational attainment will be key to building a strong workforce that is prepared for the jobs of the future, and to ensuring that workers of color can succeed in the knowledge-driven economy.
- 7) States that the skills gap faced by “opportunity youth” limits their employment opportunities to substandard wages, poor-quality jobs, and a greater likelihood to be unemployed or to be the first to be displaced when the economy is tight, and they often face incarceration as adults.
- 8) States that Drexel University found that high school dropouts earn 14 percent less than high school graduates, 23 percent less than those earning a postsecondary credential, and 36 percent less than those earning an associate degree.

- 9) States that research by WestEd demonstrates that reenrolling dropouts and providing additional time for reengaged dropouts to earn a diploma can significantly increase graduation rates.
- 10) States that research by the Alliance for Excellent Education concludes that if only one-half of the dropouts from a single year were to earn a diploma, the economic benefits to California would include an additional \$1.4 billion in earnings annually for these pupils and an annual increase in state and local tax revenues of \$167 million.
- 11) States that successful dropout recovery schools in California utilize evidence-based alternative strategies and accountability metrics, including accelerated learning pedagogies, competency-based instruction, inclusion of noncognitive indicators, and alternative graduation rate cohorts.
- 12) States that successful programs include high-quality career pathways to overcome the skills gap faced by “opportunity youth” and partnerships to provide a full complement of services along with fully accredited high schools and colleges.
- 13) Resolves that the Legislature declares the month of August as Opportunity Youth Reengagement Month, in honor of the schools and staff who work to reengage pupils who have previously dropped out of school, and in honor of the pupils who overcome significant challenges and systemic barriers to reengage in high school and become transformed learners in preparation for postsecondary success.
- 14) Resolves that the Legislature intends to encourage the expansion of schools authorized to specifically reengage “opportunity youth” 16 to 24 years of age by developing recommendations for a statewide student reengagement strategy and identifying the cost of the strategy compared to the cost of inaction; authorizing systems for accountability to students, parents, and families through transparency, active engagement, and outreach strategies; and highlighting, promoting, and uplifting evidence-based practices for successful student reengagement efforts that maintain multiple measures for evaluation of student success.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** The Office of Legislative Counsel keyed this resolution as non-fiscal.

**COMMENTS:**

***Need for the resolution.*** According to the author, “California lacks a unified strategy for addressing the needs of the more than 700,000 dropouts and other opportunity youth in the state. ACR 102 provides a platform for developing a statewide strategy for reengaging opportunity youth by declaring August as Opportunity Youth Reengagement Month. The resolution also specifically identifies legislative intent to encourage the expansion of schools authorized to reengage opportunity youth 16-24 years of age by developing recommendations for a statewide student reengagement; authorized systems for accountability; and promotion of evidence-based practices for successful student reengagement efforts.”

***Arguments in support.*** The numerous organizations co-sponsoring the bill note that research has identified policies and practices that can increase success of schools serving opportunity youth. These include policies and practices to reengage dropouts, including multiple metrics of

individual student progress, provision of wraparound supports, differentiated instruction, and relevant curriculum including workforce development. Supporters contend that more California schools need to utilize these practices.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

California Association of Local Conservation Corps (Co-sponsor)  
EdTrust West (Co-sponsor)  
Kids Alliance, John Burton Foundation (Co-sponsor)  
Learn4Life (Co-sponsor)  
Los Angeles County Office of Education (Co-sponsor)  
Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Debra Duardo  
Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (Co-sponsor)  
National Center for Youth Law (Co-sponsor)  
PolicyLink (Co-sponsor)  
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools (Co-sponsor)  
San Diego Unified School District (Co-sponsor)  
SIATech (Co-sponsor)  
Public Advocates

**Opposition**

None on file

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