

Date of Hearing: June 12, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Al Muratsuchi, Chair
SB 1410 (Ochoa Bogh) – As Amended April 25, 2024

SENATE VOTE:

SUBJECT: Student instruction: curriculum frameworks: mathematics: algebra

SUMMARY: Requires that when the mathematics curriculum is next revised after January 1, 2025, the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) consider including that students in grade 8 be offered the opportunity to take an Algebra I or Mathematics I course that is aligned to the content standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires students, to receive a diploma of graduation from high school, to complete two courses in mathematics and specifies that if a governing board of a school district requires more than two courses in mathematics for graduation, the governing board of the local educational agency (LEA) may award a student up to one mathematics course credit for successfully completing a “category C” approved computer science course. (Education Code (EC) 51225.3)
- 2) Specifies that a student who, before enrollment in grade 9, completes a course in Algebra I or Mathematics I, or mathematics courses of equal rigor, that is aligned to the content standards adopted by the SBE, is exempt from taking Algebra 1 or Mathematics 1 in high school but is not exempt from the requirement that the student complete two courses in mathematics while enrolled in grades 9 to 12. (EC 51224.5 (b))
- 3) Requires LEAs to develop and adopt a fair, objective, and transparent mathematics placement policy for grade 9 students and consider multiple academic measures, include a placement checkpoint, examine aggregate data annually, provide clear recourse for students, and address consistency between elementary and high school districts. (EC 51224.7)
- 4) Establishes the IQC, consisting of a Member of the Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, a Member of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, one public member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, one public member appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, one public member appointed by the Governor, and 13 public members appointed by the SBE upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) or the members of the SBE. (EC 33530(a))
- 5) Authorizes the SBE to establish a Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria Committee (CFCC) to assist in the process of developing a curriculum framework and evaluation criteria for a particular content field and to make a recommendation to the Subject Matter Committee, IQC, and SBE regarding a CFCC’s criteria, and requires that when the SBE requests that the IQC recommend a curriculum framework and evaluation criteria, the California Department of Education (CDE) convene four public focus groups of educators in different regions of California to provide comment to the IQC, the CFCC (if established), and the SBE. (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 5, 9511 (b) and (c))

- 6) Requires the IQC to consider a curriculum framework and evaluation criteria developed by the CFCC, approve it, and make it public for 60 days. Requires the CDE to post the criteria on the CDE website and Learning Resources Display Centers (LRDCs). Public comments must be received 14 days before the meeting, and the CDE must post the criteria for public review. (CCR Title. 5, 9515 et seq.)

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, negligible state costs.

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, “In evaluating the new mathematics curriculum framework, experts, parents, and educators expressed concerns regarding guidance suggesting that school districts move away from teaching Algebra I and Mathematics I in 8th grade, and that, for purposes of meeting California’s public university A-G requirements, data science course content met the same standards and rigor as an Algebra II course. Despite these concerns, the framework was adopted, putting students at risk of not meeting the minimum requirements for admission to California’s higher education institutions, especially those students applying for a STEM or mathematics-focused major.

Since this framework’s adoption, academic senates of our higher education institutions have repeatedly explained that data science courses do not meet admissions requirements as an ‘advanced math course.’ Additionally, professors and experts have voiced how the framework’s suggestion to teach Algebra I or Mathematics I in 9th grade as opposed to 8th grade would have detrimental impacts on student access to advanced courses like calculus and college admissions.

By requiring that an Algebra I or Integrated Math I course be an available option to middle school students, all students will have the opportunity to take an Algebra I (or Integrated Math I) course prior to 9th grade, thereby ensuring students can more seamlessly transition from K-12 to higher education.”

Algebra 1 in the 2023 Math Curriculum Framework. The California Mathematics Framework, a 900-page document, was adopted by the SBE in July 2023. The framework provides voluntary guidelines to teachers and textbook publishers on how to teach the state's academic standards. The new framework has a more “student-centered goal” – to build an understanding of math concepts and relationships across grades and subjects while developing students' critical thinking and reasoning skills.

The framework acknowledges the option of offering Algebra I (or Integrated Math I) in eighth grade, but it also suggests that districts should assess students' readiness and consider requiring a summer course or additional preparation. It proposes designing a new high school course combining four years of courses into three by eliminating repeated material, leading to an advanced math course in the senior year. The framework urges districts not to create an advanced track for some students and a separate track that filters most students out of high-level mathematics from a young age, as this approach historically has denied opportunities to underrepresented minorities.

These options are included in Chapter 7 (this chapter discusses the framework's approach to mathematics teaching in middle school, focusing on proportional reasoning, rational numbers, and measurement in geometrical and data science scenarios and providing guidance to help school districts determine whether students progress to high-level mathematics, impacting their futures in high school) and Chapter 8 (outlines traditional and integrated pathways, course options, and expectations for higher education, allowing students and families to choose courses based on their interests and aspirations).

Arguments in support. SaveMath writes, “The latest math curriculum framework, adopted on July 12, 2023 by the State Board of Education, gives inconsistent guidance on offering Algebra I (or Integrated Math I) courses to 8th grade students. The framework puts students at a disadvantage in college admissions by emphasizing that teaching Algebra I or Mathematics I should be reserved for 9th grade students as opposed to 8th grade. Students seeking to enter a STEM or Math-Intensive major within the CSU and UC systems are required to take five years of college preparatory math. Delaying a student’s access to Algebra I or Mathematics I until 9th grade puts these majors out of reach for most California students, especially those looking to enter a STEM field.”

The primary mission of SaveMath has been to oppose this faulty math framework. Later revisions of the framework relaxed the first draft’s strict admonition against offering Algebra I or Integrated Math 1 prior to 9th grade, but the issue still stands. It’s insane to me that any educator would willfully hold students back from the opportunity to complete an appropriate Algebra class in 8th grade, and for that guidance to even remotely be implied by the now-adopted curriculum framework is a huge mistake. We really can’t wait seven years for the next framework cycle to correct this problem, but SB 1410 provides important assurances that do not currently exist.”

Related Legislation. SB 141 (Ochoa Bogh) of the 2023-24 Session would add six public members appointed by the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS), as specified, to the IQC.

SB 1412 (Ochoa Bogh) of the 2023-24 Session would prohibit publishers, distributors, and retailers of instructional materials or professional development materials, and their representatives, from being eligible for appointment to the IQC or selected to serve on any committee, subcommittee, or working group of the IQC.

AB 220 (Holden), Chapter 165, Statutes of 2015, allows the course Mathematics I to satisfy a mathematics graduation requirement.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

SaveMath

Opposition

None on file

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