

Date of Hearing: March 29, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Al Muratsuchi, Chair  
AB 1357 (Quirk-Silva) – As Amended March 16, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Elementary and secondary education: school districts: local authority

**SUMMARY:** Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to consider adopting regulations, by January 1, 2025, to include the completion of a culminating performance assessment that demonstrates competency in skills beyond core academic areas as an accepted measure for the college or career readiness indicator (CCI) for the California School Dashboard (Dashboard). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the SBE to consider adopting regulations, by January 1, 2025, to include the completion of a culminating performance assessment, such as a graduate pupil profile, capstone project, senior exhibition, or portfolio, which demonstrates competency in skills beyond core academic areas, as an accepted measure for the CCI for the Dashboard.
- 2) Authorizes, in considering the inclusion of a culminating performance assessment as an accepted measure for the CCI for the Dashboard, the SBE to consider parameters that include, but are not limited to, the following criteria:
  - a) Whether the culminating performance assessment should be locally developed, and whether the development process should include collaborative input from pupils, teachers, and community stakeholders, such as parents, employers, and community-based nonprofit organizations;
  - b) Whether the culminating performance assessment should incorporate measures of soft skills in addition to traditional assessment measures;
  - c) Whether the culminating performance assessment should be submitted to the governing board or body of the local educational agency (LEA) for review and approval before use; and
  - d) Whether all pupils enrolled at the LEA should be made aware of any requirements related to a culminating performance assessment as part of their pupil orientation process and ongoing academic counseling.
- 3) Defines the following terms:
  - a) “Capstone project” to mean a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic experience for pupils; and
  - b) “Graduate pupil profile” to mean a document that an LEA uses to specify the cognitive, personal, and interpersonal competencies that pupils should have when they graduate.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires, on or before October 1, 2016, the SBE to adopt evaluation rubrics for all of the following purposes:
  - a) To assist a school district, county office of education (COE), or charter school in evaluating its strengths, weaknesses, and areas that require improvement;
  - b) To assist a county superintendent of schools, the California Department of Education (CDE), or a chartering authority in identifying school districts, COEs, and charter schools in need of technical assistance, as specified, as applicable, and the specific priorities upon which the technical assistance should be focused; and
  - c) To assist the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) in identifying school districts and COEs for which intervention, as specified, as applicable, is warranted.
- 2) Requires the evaluation rubrics to reflect a holistic, multidimensional assessment of school district and individual schoolsite performance and to include all of the state priorities.
- 3) Requires, as part of the evaluation rubrics, the SBE to adopt state and local indicators to measure school district and individual schoolsite performance in regard to each of the state priorities. Requires, no later than January 31, 2021, local indicators to reflect school-level data to the extent the department collects or otherwise has access to relevant and reliable school-level data for all schools statewide.
- 4) Requires the CDE, in collaboration with, and subject to the approval of, the executive director of the SBE, to develop and maintain the Dashboard, a Web-based system for publicly reporting performance data on the state and local indicators included in the evaluation rubrics.
- 5) Requires, as part of the evaluation rubrics, the SBE to adopt performance criteria for LEA assistance and intervention, as specified. Requires the criteria to be based on performance by pupil subgroups either across two or more of the state and local indicators or across two or more of the state priorities. (Education Code (EC) 52064.5)
- 6) Requires all of the following as state priorities for purposes of a school district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP):
  - a) The degree to which the teachers of the school district are appropriately assigned in accordance, and fully credentialed in the subject areas, and, for the pupils they are teaching, every student in the school district has sufficient access to the standards-aligned instructional materials, and school facilities are maintained in good repair;
  - b) Implementation of the academic content and performance standards adopted by the SBE;
  - c) Parental involvement and family engagement;
  - d) Pupil achievement;

- e) Pupil engagement;
- f) School climate;
- g) Student access to and enrollment in a broad course of study; and
- h) Pupil outcomes. (EC 52060)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “As a teacher in K-12 schools for over 25 years in my District, I have had the privilege to witness many students matriculate through elementary school, high-school and even on to College and University. It cannot be understated how much the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted our school systems, and especially our students. School districts and their students can benefit from having additional options to measure college and career readiness. AB 1357 would add a ninth element to the College/Career Indicators and provide increased flexibility in their approach to, and assessment of, student success; and allow California school districts to remain competitive.”

This bill would require the SBE to consider utilizing a culminating performance assessment, often referred to as a senior project, in the calculation of the CCI for the Dashboard. This bill would not require a culminating performance assessment as a graduation requirement. Due to the local variance of culminating projects between California school districts, ***the Committee may wish to consider*** the challenge the SBE may encounter when considering adding this type of project to a standardized state indicator on the Dashboard.

***Senior projects.*** The Education Code does not require that students complete a senior project. However, in California, school districts have the authority and responsibility for determining graduation requirements. Local school districts are authorized to require students to complete a senior project in order to receive a high school diploma. A senior project is one of many terms used for this type of culminating performance assessment of high school, including a graduate pupil profile, capstone project, senior exhibition, or portfolio. They may be a project completed during the final year of high school, or worked on incrementally throughout a student’s tenure in high school. Senior projects vary greatly across the state: some require writing a research paper, giving oral presentation, completing volunteer hours, or working with a mentor from a field they hope to enter upon graduation. Further, the criteria used to evaluate senior projects also has tremendous variance: some senior projects are scored with a letter grade, while others are evaluated only on whether or not they are completed before graduation.

According to a 2002 paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, A Preliminary Study of Senior Project Programs in Selected Southeastern High Schools, which analyzed the characteristics and outcomes of a senior project program in rural North Carolina, about 75% of students completing a senior project reported developing skills in public speaking, research, writing, interviewing, planning, organization, interpersonal, and work-related skills. More than half of the graduates that were a part of the study and completed a senior project felt that the project experience had influenced their future careers. However, students who completed a senior project perceived a greater emphasis on writing skills

in their high school English classes than did students who did not, but tests of global writing abilities showed no significant difference between the two.

**California School Dashboard.** California's accountability system is based on a multiple measures system that assesses how LEAs and schools are meeting the needs of their students. Performance on these measures is reported through the Dashboard. The Dashboard is an online tool designed to help communities across the state access information about kindergarten through grade twelve schools and districts and features reports on the performance of districts, schools, and student groups on a specific set of state and local measures.

The Dashboard includes a concise set of state indicators and local indicators that are founded on the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priorities but are also aligned to the measures required under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). State measures are based on student data that are annually collected across the state and apply to all districts, schools, and student groups. The six state indicators are:

- Academic Performance (English language arts and mathematics);
- Chronic Absenteeism;
- College/Career;
- English Learner Progress;
- Graduation Rate; and
- Suspension Rate.

Those LCFF priorities for which there is no state level data collected are referred to as local indicators. The seven local indicators are:

- Basic Services and Conditions (teacher assignments, safe and clean buildings, instructional materials for all students);
- Implementation of State Academic Standards;
- Parent and Family Engagement;
- School Climate (student safety, connection to the school);
- Access to a Broad Course of Study;
- Coordination of Services for Expelled Students (for COEs only); and
- Coordination of Services for Foster Youth (for COEs only).

In addition to being a public record of progress on the Dashboard, the local indicator process serves to inform process and planning within the LCAP. Further, progress in local indicators can inform technical assistance provided through the Differentiated Assistance process.

**College/Career Indicator.** The CCI is one of several state indicators that the CDE reports on the Dashboard for any LEA and high school that enrolls students in grade twelve. It represents the percentage of high school graduates who are prepared for college or a career. This indicator was designed to encourage high schools to provide all students with a rigorous broad course of study that prepares them for postsecondary success. The following measures have been approved by the SBE for inclusion into the indicator:

- Advanced Placement Exams;
- a–g Completion;

- Career Technical Education Pathway Completion;
- College Credit Course (formerly called Dual Enrollment);
- International Baccalaureate Exams;
- Leadership/Military Science;
- Pre-Apprenticeships;
- Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics (Grade 11);
- State and Federal Job Programs;
- State Seal of Biliteracy; and
- Transition Classroom and Work-Based Learning Experiences.

While other state measures (Academic, Chronic Absenteeism, English Learner Progress, Graduation Rate, and Suspension Rate) will be reported on the 2022 Dashboard, the CCI will not. During the 2020–21 school year, LEAs were required to administer the statewide summative assessment. However, if administering a statewide summative assessment was not the most viable option for the LEA, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LEA was allowed to report results from a different assessment that met the criteria established by the SBE. Therefore, while some statewide summative assessment results were available to use for the CCI, there were many schools and LEAs missing these scores. Since the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment is both a standalone measure and a part of other compound measures in the CCI, the CDE is unable to determine which graduates in the 2021–22 school year met the prepared criteria. Reporting of the CCI on the Dashboard will resume in 2023.

***Arguments in support.*** The Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) writes, “Across the country, school districts are adopting innovative approaches to education that incorporate whole-student learning, soft skills, civic engagement, and social and emotional intelligence. Districts that have embraced a blend of competency-based learning along with traditional classroom instruction and assessment have seen overall improvements in their student outcomes—including higher graduation rates, higher college attendance, and better paying salaries for those entering the workforce immediately after high school. At the most recent meeting of the State Board of Education, members of the Board acknowledged that California is lagging behind other states when it comes to these types of innovations.

AUHSD is home to some of the best performing school sites in the state and attributes a great deal of its success to the adoption of its whole-student model, known locally as the 5Cs. The 5Cs—Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Compassion—represent the core building blocks of what a student needs to be successful in college, in a career, and in life and is a profile of what a student should have achieved at the time of graduation. However, this type of innovative approach can be hard for other districts to model without the explicit ability to report on them via the California School Dashboard and other assessment measures. AB 1357 would request the SBE to consider supporting these innovative approaches, both at AUHSD and other districts, by recognizing them under a new element of the College/Career Indicators. This approach provides districts with new flexibility in the way they approach educating future generations and allows California to remain at the forefront of innovation without imposing new requirements or costs for schools that have identified other priorities at the local level.”

**Related legislation.** AB 647 (Quirk-Silva) of the 2021-22 Session would have appropriated \$1 million in the 2021-22 fiscal year to be allocated by the CDE, through a competitive selection process, to a school district for the purpose of developing a Career Preparedness Framework pilot program for use by LEAs to build and cultivate pupils' soft skills, hard skills, and well as pupil purpose and authentic voice. This bill would have required the selected school district to submit a report to the CDE and the Legislature by January 1, 2023, on the development of the framework, including recommendations on how to incorporate the framework into an LEA's LCAP. This bill was held in the Assembly Education Committee.

AB 2044 (O'Donnell) of the 2021-22 Session would have extended for five years, until July 1, 2027, the sunset on the option for students to fulfill a state high school graduation requirement by successfully completing a career technical education (CTE) course. This bill was held in the Senate Education Committee.

AB 2088 (Cooper) of the 2021-22 Session would have the California Pilot Paid Internship Program to provide grants to LEAs to establish or expand internship programs within their CTE courses or pathways. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

#### **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

##### **Support**

Anaheim Union High School District  
Scaling Student Success

##### **Opposition**

None on file

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