

Date of Hearing: June 19, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Patrick O'Donnell, Chair

SB 554 (Roth) – As Amended April 10, 2019

[Note: This bill is double referred to the Assembly Higher Education Committee and will be heard by that Committee as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SENATE VOTE: 38-0

SUBJECT: Public schools: adult school students: Advanced Scholastic and Vocational Training Program

SUMMARY: Authorizes the governing board of a school district overseeing an adult education program or the governing board of a community college district overseeing a noncredit program to admit a pupil pursuing a high school diploma or the equivalent as special-admit part-time or full-time dual enrollment students. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Permits the governing board of a school district overseeing an adult education program or the governing board of a community college district overseeing a noncredit program to authorize a student pursuing a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate, upon recommendation of the administrator of the student's adult school or noncredit program of attendance, to attend a community college during any session or term as a special-admit part-time student.
- 2) Requires that the community college district be credited or reimbursed for the special-admit part-time students, provided that no school district has received reimbursement for the same instructional activity.
- 3) States the intent of the Legislature to better facilitate streamlined enrollment in colocated credit college courses on adult education and noncredit program sites and to help ensure a smoother transition from secondary education to college for adult high school equivalency students by providing them with greater exposure to the collegiate atmosphere.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires a community college district governing board to admit any California resident, and allows for admittance of any nonresident, possessing a high school diploma or the equivalent. (Education Code (EC) 76000)
- 2) Allows a community college district governing board to determine whether to admit any other person who is over 18 years of age and who, in the judgment of the board, would benefit from community college instruction. (EC 76000)
- 3) Allows a community college district governing board to establish and maintain classes for adults for the purpose of providing instruction in civic, vocational, literacy, health, homemaking, technical, and general education. (EC 78401)

- 4) Allows a community college district governing board to admit to any community college under its jurisdiction as a “special-admit” part-time or full-time student in any session a student who is determined by their school district governing board as likely to benefit from advanced scholastic or vocational work, upon recommendation by the pupil’s principal and with parental consent, or petitioned for community college attendance by a parent or guardian and approved. (EC 76002)
- 5) Establishes the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) Program under the administration of the Chancellor of the Community Colleges (Chancellor) and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and delineates the responsibilities of the Chancellor and SPI in overseeing the Program. Tasks the Chancellor and the SPI, with the advice of the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (SBE) to divide the state into regions that will best address the educational needs of adults in all regions of the state, stipulating that there shall be only one adult education consortium in each region. Requires the chancellor and the SPI to approve, with the advice of the Executive Director of the SBE, for each consortium, rules and procedures, as specified.
- 6) Authorizes unified or high school districts to establish separate adult schools. Courses under the following program areas that can be funded by state apportionment include:
 - a) Adult Literacy/High School Diploma;
 - b) English as a Second Language/Citizenship;
 - c) Adults with Disabilities;
 - d) Career Technical Education/Apprenticeships;
 - e) Parenting, Family, and Consumer Awareness; and
 - f) Older Adults.

FISCAL EFFECT:

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, “The Chancellor’s Office indicates that to the extent that community college districts would be able to claim apportionment funding for an increased number of special-admit students, there will be additional Proposition 98 General Fund costs. The exact amount is unknown, but assuming the equivalent of 50 additional special-admit full-time equivalent students (FTES) statewide at the current funding rate of \$5,457 for special-admit students per FTES, it would be approximately \$273,000.”

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, “Research both nationally and in California has documented that dual enrollment, a student enrolled in both a high school and community college at the same time, is a powerful strategy for increasing college success and affordability for low-income students, including underperforming students and students from underserved communities. To date, both regular dual enrollment and the new College Access and Career Pathways (CCAP) dual enrollment program have focused on students in traditional high schools.

This bill would provide a streamlined approach for adults enrolled in a High School Equivalency (HSE) program to concurrently enroll in one or more community college course without tuition or fees. In doing so, this bill encourages adult education programs and community colleges to create partnerships and pathways into college for a population of students with historically low levels of participation in post-secondary education and training.”

Adult education programs. Adult schools are public schools offering free to low-cost classes for adults 18 and older. The primary purpose of adult education is to provide adults with the pre-collegiate knowledge and skills they need to participate in civic life and the workforce. Toward this end, most adult education course offerings are in three instructional areas: basic math and English, English as a second language, and career technical education.

Community colleges and school district-run adult schools are the primary providers of adult education. In addition, various other entities provide adult education, including community-based organizations, libraries, and jails. Due to longstanding concerns with a lack of coordination among providers, the state budget created the Adult Education Block Grant in 2015-16, later renamed the Adult Education Program as part of the 2018-19 Budget. The program is currently appropriated \$526 million supporting consortia in various adult education regions. As a condition of apportionment under the Adult Education Program, consortia must develop and annually update a three year plan containing, among other things, an evaluation of the educational needs of adults in the region, the funding available among all of the entities within the consortia, and actions to be taken to better integrate services offered and transitions into postsecondary education and the workforce.

Concurrent enrollment. Concurrent enrollment provides pupils the opportunity to enroll in college courses and earn college credit while still enrolled in high school. Generally, a pupil is allowed to concurrently enroll in a community college as a “special-admit” while still attending high school, if the pupil's school district determines that the pupil would benefit from “advanced scholastic or vocational work.” Special-admit students have typically been advanced pupils wanting to take more challenging coursework or pupils who come from high schools where Advanced Placement or honors courses are not widely available. Additionally, programs such as Middle College High Schools and Early College High Schools use concurrent enrollment to offer instructional programs for at-risk pupils that focus on college preparatory curricula. These programs are developed through partnerships between a school district and a community college.

Concurrent enrollment options. Community college districts have several statutorily authorized means by which apportionments can be claimed for minors enrolled by the district. These include:

- ***Special-admit part-time or full-time students.*** School district governing boards can recommend K-12 students (most frequently high school students) who would benefit from advanced scholastic or vocational work for attendance at a community college upon recommendation of the principal or designee. The number of students who can be recommended for summer session enrollments is capped at five percent of the students in each grade. Community colleges can claim state funding for these students only if the course meets certain criteria, including if it is open and advertised to the general public. Under this authority, students are limited to enrolling in a maximum of 11 units per semester (special-admit part-time only), and must be assigned low enrollment priority by the college to avoid displacement of adults. In most cases, special-admit students have

their tuition and most fees waived through the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the Board of Governor's (BOG) Fee Waiver).

- *Early College High Schools (ECHS) and Middle College High Schools (MCHS)*. ECHS are designed for young people who are underrepresented in postsecondary education, including students who have not had access to the academic preparation needed to meet college readiness standards, students for whom the cost of college is prohibitive, students of color, first generation college-goers, and English learners. MCHS is a collaborative program that enables high-potential, “at-risk” students to obtain a high school education while concurrently receiving direct access to college courses and services. High school students attend classes at a community college and earn credit toward a high school diploma while having the opportunity to concurrently take college courses and to receive more intensive counseling and administrative attention. These programs are subject to the same conditions that exist for special-admit students, with the exception that MCHS students are exempt from the low enrollment priority provisions for classes necessary for completion of their programs.
- *College Promise Partnership Act*. SB 650 (Lowenthal, Chapter 633, Statutes of 2011) authorized a partnership between the Long Beach community college and school district to provide a seamless bridge to college for students who were not already college bound and to reduce the time needed for advanced students to complete programs. These students are exempted from the requirements applicable to special-admit students that they must be recommended by the school principal.
- *College Access and Career Pathways (CCAP) program*. AB 288 (Holden, Chapter 618, Statutes of 2015) authorized the CCAP program allows for partnerships between school and community college districts such that high school students dual enroll in up to 15 community college units per term; students may enroll in no more than four courses per term. Unlike other concurrent enrollment options, CCAP offers dual enrollment as a pathway, rather than a series of disconnected individual courses, and provides greater flexibility in the delivery of courses at the high school campus.

Can adults seeking a high school diploma already enroll in community college courses?

Current law requires community college districts to admit California residents possessing a high school diploma or the equivalent, and allows community college districts to admit any other person who would likely benefit from community college instruction. Therefore, a person attending any type of adult school can already also enroll in community college courses.

However, such adult school students are assigned the “special-admit” designation because they are over 18 years of age. This bill requires adult school attendees to obtain the special-admit designation only if they are: 1) pursuing their high school diploma or the equivalent, and 2) the governing board of the school district in which they attend adult school determines that community college courses would be beneficial.

How would the “special-admit” status benefit an adult school student seeking a high school diploma? Although adult school students may dual-enroll in community college courses without obtaining the special-admit designation, supporters of this bill believe that the ability of adult school students to obtain this designation is critical to streamlining enrollment and establishing smooth transitions from secondary to college for adult high school equivalency. Relative to

traditional community college students, special-admit students: 1) automatically have their tuition and fees waived without having to submit additional paperwork through the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the Board of Governor's (BOG) Fee Waiver), 2) are not required to submit any proof of residency, and 3) are not required to pay for books if they are a dual-enrollment student pursuant to a CCAP partnership agreement.

Arguments in support. Supporters from the California Edge Coalition (sponsor) state, "Currently, most adult school students are unable to access the dual enrollment program with its multiple advantages for at-risk populations. These advantages include an enrollment process that permits tuition free enrollment in a community college. SB 554 also creates closer partnerships between adult education programs and community colleges and, based on the experience of some pilot programs, can encourage community colleges to deliver credit bearing courses at adult education and noncredit program sites. Finally, SB 554 would allow HSE students to begin college course work while they complete high school and permit them to earn high school credit for their college courses, enabling them to complete their high school degrees more quickly and get a jump start on a college certificate or degree."

A robust body of research suggests that dual enrollment makes it more likely that a relatively low-performing student will enter and complete a college program. Adult school students pursuing their high school equivalency diploma are students who have struggled to complete high school and, without encouragement, are unlikely to attain a college credential or degree. They are disproportionately from low-income communities and communities of color. SB 554 could make a real difference in their lives."

Related legislation. AB 30 (Holden) of this Session streamlines the process for developing CCAP partnerships, in part, by: changing the conditions of how CCAP partnership agreements may be adopted; authorizing high school pupils to complete only one community college application for the duration of their attendance, as specified; and, extends the sunset of the CCAP partnership from January 1, 2022, to January 1, 2027.

AB 1729 (Smith) of this Session would authorize additional high school students who meet certain conditions to enroll in summer community college courses.

SB 563 (Roth) of this Session would establish the CCAP Grant Program to provide grants on a competitive basis with the goal of demonstrating effective models of fully funded CCAP programs.

SB 586 (Roth) of this Session would require the governing board of a school and community college district, as part of a career technical education CCAP partnership, to consult with the appropriate local workforce development board to determine the extent to which the pathway is aligned with regional and statewide employment needs.

AB 288 (Holden), Chapter 618, Statutes of 2015, authorizes the governing board of a community college district to enter into a CCAP partnership with the governing board of a school district in its immediate service area, with the goal of developing seamless pathways from high school to CCC in order to offer or expand dual enrollment opportunities for students who may not be college bound or who are underrepresented in higher education; and, outlines the conditions that must be met prior to the adoption of the CCAP agreement. Requires, on or before January 1, 2021, the Chancellor to report to the Legislature an evaluation of the CCAP partnerships, an

assessment of trends in the growth of special-admits system-wide and by campus, and, based upon the data collected recommendations for program improvements.

AB 1451 (Holden) of the 2013-14 Session was similar in nature to AB 288 of the 2015-16 Session. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

AB 1540 (Hagman) of the 2013-14 Session would have specified that the governing board of a school district may authorize a pupil, at the recommendation of the community college dean of a computer science department or other appropriate community college computer science administrator, and with parental consent, to attend a community college during any session or term as a special-admit part-time student and to undertake one or more computer science courses offered at the community college. This bill was held on the Assembly Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

AB 2352 (Chesbro) of the 2013-14 Session would have removed early and middle college high school students concurrently enrolled at a CCC from receiving low priority admission status. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 650 (Lowenthal), Chapter 633, Statutes of 2011, authorizes a partnership between the Long Beach community college and school district to provide a seamless bridge to college for students who were not already college bound and to reduce the time needed for advanced students to complete programs. These students are exempted from the requirement applicable to special-admit students that they must be recommended by the school principal.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Association Of Community And Continuing Education
California Business Education Advocacy (Cbea/Abe)
California Competes
California Edge Coalition
Campaign For College Opportunity
East Los Angeles College
Jff
Los Angeles County Office Of Education
Mt. San Antonio College
North Orange County Community College District

Opposition

None on file

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