
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 1366
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Public postsecondary education: Dream Resource Centers

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Community Colleges (CCC) and the California State University (CSU) and requests the University of California (UC) to establish Dream Resource Centers on their campuses, as specified to assist students meeting the requirements set forth in Section 68130.5 and authorizes the governing boards of the segments to accept private funds to establish and operate centers.

BACKGROUND

Existing law provides that, beginning January 1, 2013, AB 540 students are eligible to apply for, and participate in, any student financial aid program administered by the State of California to the full extent permitted by federal law. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) is required to establish procedures and forms that enable AB 540 students to apply for, and participate in, all student financial aid programs administered by the State of California to the full extent permitted by federal law. Current law prohibits AB 540 students from being eligible for Competitive Cal Grant A and B Awards unless specified conditions are met. (Education Code § 69508.5)

Existing law provides that a student attending the CSU, the CCC, or the UC who is exempt from paying nonresident tuition under the provisions of AB 540 is eligible to receive a scholarship derived from nonstate funds received, for the purpose of scholarships, by the segment at which he or she is a student. (EC § 66021.7)

Existing law requires the Trustees of the CSU and the Board of Governors of the CCC, and request the UC Regents, to establish procedures and forms that enable AB 540 students to apply for, and participate in, all student aid programs administered by these segments to the full extent permitted by federal law. (EC § 66021.6)

Existing law establishes the California DREAM Loan Program intended to provide low interest loans to Dream Act students who are accessing the Cal Grant program and attending UC and CSU. These students are not eligible for federal student loans, making it difficult for some to cover the total costs of college. The law requires the state and UC and CSU to split the costs of launching the program. The state would need to provide about \$4.7 million General Fund to begin the program. In 2014, the Governor signed SB 1210 (Lara), Chapter 754, but does not provide funding in the 2015-16 budget for the program. (EC § 70030-70039)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires, beginning 2017-18 the California Community Colleges (CCC) and the California State University (CSU) and requests the University of California (UC) to establish Dream Resource Centers on their campuses, as specified to assist students meeting the requirements set forth in Section 68130.5 of the Education Code.
- 2) Requires CCC to:
 - a) Establish a Dream Resource Center on any campus that has at least 500 currently enrolled students.
 - b) Ensure that CCCs with less than 500 students have a designated staff person who is knowledgeable in services and academic opportunities applicable to students who meet the specified requirements.
 - c) Encourage campuses to place the designated staff person, described in b), in the campus' extended opportunities programs and services office or financial aid office.
- 3) Requires CSU to:
 - a) Establish Dream Resource Centers on any campus where any of its local feeder community colleges meet the requirement, as specified.
 - b) Ensure it has a designated staff person who is knowledgeable in services and academic opportunities applicable to students who meet the specified requirements if a CSU campus that does not have a community college feeder school meeting specified requirements.
 - c) Encourage campuses to place the designated staff person, described in b), in the campus' extended opportunities programs and services office or financial aid office.
- 4) Specifies the following parameters for Dream Resource Centers:
 - a) May offer support services including, but not limited to, state and institutional financial aid assistance, academic counseling, peer support services, psychological counseling, referral services, and legal services.
 - b) May be housed within existing student service or academic centers.
 - c) Postsecondary institutions, as specified, are not required to construct new or separate spaces for Dream Resource Centers.

- 5) Authorizes the governing boards of the segments to accept private funds to establish and operate centers.
- 6) Establishes if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, the state will reimburse applicable entities.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, many undocumented youth and their families are unaware of recent policy changes, such as the enactment of AB 540 of 2001-2002 regular session, the California Dream Act of 2011 and the federal deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), that make college graduation more attainable. The author notes that the majority of college campuses do not have a centralized location that provides specialized support services and resources for students meeting requirements of AB 540. Furthermore, there are many unique barriers that this student population faces due to their residency status and a trust space designated for these students will encourage more youth to pursue postsecondary education to prepare them to enter the California's workforce. This bill seeks to create a centralized location for AB 540 students to access student support services and other applicable resources.
- 2) ***What currently exists?*** Each University of California (UC) campus designates a point of contact specifically for providing information to undocumented students. All but three campuses have physical space designates for this purpose. Among the twenty-three campuses at the California State University (CSU), the method of delivering information varies. Some campuses have a designated location but most provide information through existing student support programs.

Similarly, information and services offered at Community Colleges changes from campus to campus. For the most part Community Colleges do not have a centralized location dedicated for AB 540 students. However, some campuses in southern California are incorporating this group of students into their respective Student Equity Plans. These plans are developed in effort to close achievement gaps in access and success in underrepresented student groups. The 2015-16 Budget Act targeted funds for this purpose. It is unclear how many campuses have prioritized AB 540 students in the college Student Equity Plan or if they will establish a location similar to a Dream Resource Center as described by the bill.

- 3) ***Feeder school?*** This bill would trigger a Dream Resource Center at a CSU campus if its local feeder community college has at least 500 enrolled students. The term feeder school is not defined in the bill and it is unclear which campus would meet this criteria.
- 4) ***What would it look like?*** As drafted, the bill stipulates that a campus with more than 500 enrolled students must establish a center that may offer specified services and may share a space within existing student services or academic centers. The bill specifically provides that new or separate spaces do not need to be constructed. Given these criteria, institutions could simply post materials and information within an existing center or office and be deemed to have complied with the bill's provisions. In addition, while campuses with less than 500 enrolled AB 540 students

would be required to identify a designated staff person, no such requirement would exist for a campus with more than 500 enrolled students.

Wouldn't AB 540 students be better served by ensuring access to knowledgeable staff, rather than creating what might in essence be a passive space?

Staff recommends the bill be amended to require California Community College (CCC) and California State University (CSU) campuses to ensure that it has a designated staff person to be known as the Dream Resource Liaison, who is knowledgeable in available financial aid services and academic opportunities for AB 540 students. **Staff further recommends** that the space in which the Dream Resource Liaison is located may be deemed a Dream Resource Center.

Since these provisions would now apply to all community college and CSU campuses, **staff also recommends** the bill be amended to delete (b)(1)(A) and (b)(2)(A).

- 5) **Related legislation.** SB 247 (Lara, 2015) would have authorized the governing board of a school district or county office of education that maintain grades 9-12, the governing board of a CCC district, and the trustees of the CSU and encourages the Regents of the University of California (UC) to establish on-campus Dream Centers for the purposes of providing educational support services applicable to undocumented students. SB 247 passed this Committee and subsequently placed on the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.

SUPPORT

California Dream Network
 California Immigrant Policy Center
 Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles
 Espiritu de Nuestro Futuro at CSU, Dominguez Hills
 Fullerton College Dream Team
 Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
 IDEAS at Mt. San Antonio College
 Improving Dreams, Equity, Access and Success at San Francisco State (I.D.E.A.S SFSU)
 Lead Empower Achieve with Determination at Sacramento State University (LEAD)
 RISE at Los Angeles Trade Tech
 Rising Immigrant Scholars through Education (RISE) at Berkeley
 Scholars Promoting Education Awareness and Knowledge (SPEAK)
 Student Demand for Equality in Education at Cal Poly Pomona
 Undocumented/AB 540 Educational Equity Task Force at San Francisco State University
 Voices Organizing Immigrant Communities for Educational Success (VOICES)

OPPOSITION

None received.