
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 310 **Hearing Date:** April 25, 2018
Author: Medina
Version: February 6, 2017
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez

Subject: Part-time faculty office hours.

SUMMARY

This bill requires each community college district to annually report the total part-time faculty office hours paid divided by the total part-time faculty office hours taught and to post this information on its Internet Web site.

BACKGROUND

Existing law establishes the Community College Part-time Faculty Office Hours Program, contingent upon annual Budget Act funding, for the purpose of providing community college students with access to academic advice and assistance and to encourage districts to provide opportunities to compensate those who hold office hours related to their teaching load. The governing board of each district that establishes such a program is required to negotiate with the exclusive bargaining representative (or, if none exists, with the faculty) to establish the program. Participating districts are required to inform the Chancellor's office of the total costs of part-time faculty office hours compensation paid and the Chancellors office is required to apportion up to 50 percent of these costs, to be distributed proportionally based upon each districts' total cost and the total amount provided in the annual Budget Act. (Education Code § 87880-87885)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires that each community college district report, by August 15 of each year, the total part-time faculty office hours paid divided by the total part-time faculty hours taught during the prior fiscal year.
- 2) Requires that each community college district prominently post this information on its Internet Web site.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, "there is a defined correlation between after-class access to faculty and student success, this issue is not reported to the public. Given the importance of office hours on student performance, and the significant proportion of classes taught by part-time faculty, this metric should be included on community college district websites. When

prospective students are determining which community college to attend, this is one of the most practical data points to assist them in their decisions.”

- 2) **Part-time Faculty Office Hours.** In 1997, the Legislature created the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program to improve student access to instructors by establishing a fund to reimburse districts 50 percent of their costs if they negotiated some level of office hour compensation for their part-time faculty members. Funding for this program is currently disbursed on a reimbursement basis to participating community college districts pursuant to Education Code Section 87885.

The Program had been funded at a level of about \$2 million per year until 2001-02, when it reached its peak of funding at \$7.1 million. During the recession (2009-2015) this funding was reduced to about \$3.5 million per year. The 2016-17 Budget restored funding for the program to the 2008-09 pre-recession level with a total of \$7.2 million. The Budget Act of 2017 further increased the amount by an additional \$5 million bringing the total to \$12.2 million.

- 3) **Data Collection Challenges.** According to the CCC, paid part-time faculty office hours are not a state requirement and vary by district according to their individual local bargaining contracts. Consequently, statewide data are inconsistent. The Chancellor’s Office is only able to track information from districts which specifically participate in the state’s Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program. The Chancellor’s Office reports that, for the 2016-17 fiscal year, they have received claims from 23 of the 72 districts. The Chancellor’s office also noted that districts that do not participate in the program are not precluded from paying for office hours with other funds.
- 4) **Prior legislation.**

AB 2069 (Medina, 2016) identical to this bill was vetoed by the Governor whose message read:

“The state recognizes the many contributions part-time faculty make in students' lives. The 2016-17 budget increased payment for part-time faculty office hours by almost \$3.7 million, bringing the total state investment to \$7.2 million. In 2015-16, we created more opportunities for part-time faculty to become full-time faculty by providing \$62.3 million for the hiring of new full-time faculty.

Although the bill's language is simple, gathering and reporting this information still has a real cost-about 10 percent of the entire allocation of funding for part-time office hours.

We would do better to spend the money on more office hours.”

SUPPORT

California Teachers Association
California Part-Time Faculty Association

Faculty Association of California Community Colleges

OPPOSITION

None received

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