
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair

2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 740
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Academic content standards: update of adopted standards

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to recommend to the State Board of Education (SBE) a schedule for the regular update of academic content standards.

BACKGROUND

Academic content standards define the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. Curricular frameworks are the blueprint for implementing the standards, and include criteria by which instructional materials are evaluated.

Standards in several subject areas were adopted by the SBE beginning in the late 1990s. There is no statutory authority for the review or updating of standards. A schedule once existed for the review and update of frameworks and instructional materials in many subject areas, but those processes were suspended on July 28, 2009 due to budget constraints. Specific authority has since been provided to develop new standards in specific subjects (statutory authority was also provided to develop frameworks and instructional materials in some of these subjects).

The SBE has adopted, or is scheduled to adopt, the following standards:

- 1) The California Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics were adopted on August 2, 2010. (Education Code § 60605.8)
- 2) English language development standards that are aligned with the common core standards in English language arts in November 7, 2012. (Former EC § 60811.3)
- 3) A modification of the previously adopted common core standards in mathematics in January 2013. (EC § 60605.11)
- 4) Revised Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards on January 16, 2013. (EC § 51226)
- 5) The Next Generation Science Standards on September 4, 2013. (Former EC § 60605.85)

- 6) English language development standards that are aligned with the common core standards in mathematics and science. Current law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to submit recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) by January 2015, and requires the SBE to adopt updated standards by August 1, 2015. However, according to the California Department of Education's website, the panel of experts has just recently been convened, and it is anticipated that the SPI will provide recommendations to the SBE in July 2015; it is unclear if adoption by the SBE expected later than the statutory deadline of August 1, 2015. (EC § 60811.4)
- 7) The Instructional Quality Commission is required to consider developing and recommending to the SBE standards in computer science by July 31, 2019. (EC § 60605.4)

ANALYSIS

This bill requires the SPI to recommend to the SBE a schedule for the regular update of academic content standards. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires the SPI to recommend by January 1, 2017, to the SBE a schedule for the regular update of academic content standards in all subjects for which standards have been adopted by the SBE.
- 2) Requires the schedule to be aligned to the current eight-year cycle of updates to the curricular frameworks and adoptions of instructional materials.
- 3) Requires the SBE, when the academic content standards in a given subject area come up for review according to the schedule, to make a determination as to whether those standards require an update. The determination must be based upon the following considerations:
 - a) The amount of time since the standards were adopted or last updated.
 - b) Whether additional research conducted since the standards were adopted or last updated justifies updates to the standards.
 - c) The potential impact on existing curriculum, instructional materials, and assessment systems based upon the standards.
- 4) Requires the SBE, if it determines that an update to the standards in a given subject is warranted, to convene an academic content standards advisory committee to recommend updates to the standards in that subject. This bill requires an academic content standards advisory committee to consist of 21 members, appointed as follows:
 - a) Ten members appointed by the Governor.
 - b) Four members appointed by the Senate Rules Committee.

- c) Four members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
 - d) Three members appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- 5) Requires each academic content standards advisory committee to review the content standards established in its particular subject matter and prepare updates to the standards as the committee deems necessary. This bill requires the advisory committee, when making its recommendations, to consider both of the following criteria:
- a) The extent to which its proposed updates reflect current and confirmed research in the subject area under consideration.
 - b) The impact that the proposed updates will have upon school districts and the existing curricula and assessments.
- 6) Requires an academic content standards advisory committee to conduct at least two, and no more than six, in-person meetings that are open to the public and include opportunities for public input. This bill authorizes an advisory committee to convene additional meetings by teleconference or the Internet subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.
- 7) Requires an academic content standards advisory committee, upon updating the standards, to forward them to the State Board of Education (SBE), and requires the SBE to do either of the following within 120 days of receiving the updates:
- a) Adopt the proposed updates as proposed by the advisory committee.
 - b) Reject the proposed updates as proposed by the advisory committee. This bill requires the SBE to provide a specific written explanation to the Superintendent, Governor and Legislature of the reasons why the proposed standards were rejected.
- 8) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE), before final updates to standards are prepared by an advisory committee, to post on its website the proposed updates for at least 60 days. This bill requires the CDE to include a link by which members of the public may submit comments on the proposed updates.
- 9) Provides that members of an academic content standards advisory committee are to serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority, serve without compensation (other than actual and necessary travel expenses and costs for substitute teachers), and requires that at least one-half of the members appointed by each of the appointing authorities be current public elementary or secondary classroom teachers who have a professional credential and meet the definition of "highly qualified" in federal law (No Child Left Behind). This bill requires the terms of the members of an academic content standards advisory committee to cease upon completing the review.
- 10) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop, and requires the State Board of Education to adopt, guidelines to implement the provisions of this bill.

- 11) Clarifies that nothing in this bill is to be construed to prohibit the consideration of national standards adopted by other states in making this determination.
- 12) States legislative intent that all of the following occur:
 - a) The academic content standards advisory committees include representation from teachers of different grade level spans, including elementary, middle, and high school grades.
 - b) A member of an academic content standards advisory committee possesses a thorough knowledge of the academic content standards in the content area and grade level span in which he or she is appointed.
 - c) An academic content standards advisory committee membership reflects the diversity of the various ethnic groups, types of school districts, and regions in California.
- 13) States legislative intent that content standards be updated before the revision of curricular frameworks, and that framework revisions occur before the adoption of instructional materials.
- 14) States legislative findings and declarations relative to the need for a process for regular updating of the standards.
- 15) Provides that the convening of an academic content standards advisory committee is contingent upon the Legislature appropriating funds for that purpose in the annual Budget Act.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, "Though academic content standards are an essential part of the California achievement and accountability systems, there is no process currently in place for the regular review and update of the standards. Some of California's current standards, such as the history-social science standards, date back to 1998. Except for legislation, there is currently no process in place for the regular updating of academic content standards despite the fact that it is often necessary to make modifications to content standards given there are regular changes in disciplinary knowledge and academic research. The updating of content standards does not constitute a complete revision, but update where necessary to reflect new knowledge. The vast amount of legislation to update content standards has created an unpredictable process for school districts and teachers, making it challenging to plan for changes in curriculum."
- 2) **Existing standards.** This bill requires the development and adoption of a schedule for the regular update of academic content standards in all subjects for which standards have been adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). The most recent adoption (original or update) of content standards in each subject area, and date of adoption by the SBE, is as follows:

- a) Science, September 2013.
 - b) Common core standards for Mathematics, adopted August 2010 and modified January 2013.
 - c) Career Technical Education, January 2013.
 - d) English language development, November 2012.
 - e) Common core standards in English language arts, August 2010.
 - f) World Language, January 2009.
 - g) Health, March 2008.
 - h) Physical Education, January 2005.
 - i) Visual and Performing Arts, January 2001.
 - j) History-Social Science, October 1998.
- 3) ***Role of the State Board of Education.*** There is no statutory authority for the regular review or updating of standards. Authority has been provided to develop new standards in specific subjects, such as the California common core standards in English language arts and mathematics. This bill establishes a framework for the regular review and update of standards that is generally consistent with the process utilized in the past for the initial adoption of standards, as well as the process for the adoption of the California common core standards (such as convening a panel of subject matter experts). However, this bill deviates from prior adoptions by not providing the option to the SBE to modify standards that have been presented to the SBE for adoption. In the past, the SBE was given authority to adoption, modify or reject proposed standards. This bill requires the SBE to either adopt or reject the proposed standards, but does not authorize the SBE to modify standards. This change ensures the development of, and any revisions to, the standards is left to the subject matter experts.
- 4) ***Technical amendments needed.*** On page 4, line 32, after “receipt” add “of the updated standards.” On page 5, line 1, strike “(g)” and insert “(k).”
- 5) ***Fiscal impact.*** According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill would impose:
- a) Ongoing General Fund administrative costs of approximately \$800,000 to develop a new Content Standards Unit within the California Department of Education. This bill directs the standards to be tied to the eight-year cycle for frameworks and adoptions. It is likely staff would need to work on more than one project each year, on an ongoing basis.

- b) One-time costs of approximately \$100,000 (General Fund/non-Proposition 98) to convene each Academic Content Standards Advisory Committee. There are currently ten subjects that could be updated.
- c) The adoption of new content standards has a multiplier effect that leads to additional costs. Once new curriculum standards are adopted, frameworks aligned to those standards must be adopted (approximately \$1.2 million General Fund/non-Proposition 98 per framework). An instructional materials adoption follows each framework revision (approximately \$1.3 million General Fund/non-Proposition 98 per subject). These estimates do not include additional Proposition 98 costs, likely in the millions, for school districts to purchase instructional materials and provide professional development.

6) ***Related and prior legislation.***

RELATED LEGISLATION

SB 725 (Hancock, 2015) requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt content standards in visual and performing arts by June 30, 2017. SB 725 is scheduled to be heard by the Assembly Education Committee on July 15.

AB 711 (Santiago, 2015) requires the SBE to adopt World Languages content standards that are in accordance with the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages by June 1, 2017. AB 711 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 652 (Allen, 2015) delays by one year, until January 31, 2017, the date by which the SBE is required to consider the adoption of a revised *framework* for science. SB 652 is pending on the Assembly Floor.

AB 524 (Low, 2015) among other things, requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to develop curriculum standards for courses that incorporate a service learning component in order to satisfy state and local high school graduation requirements. AB 524 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

PRIOR LEGISLATION

SB 1057 (Corbett, 2014) required the SPI to recommended history-social science content standards to the SBE on or before March 30, 2018, and requires the SBE to adopt, reject, or modify the history-social science content standards by July 30, 2018. SB 1057 was vetoed by the Governor, whose veto message read:

I agree that providing up to date instructional guidance to educators for use in their classrooms is important. This is precisely why the State Board of Education is currently updating the history-social science framework which is on track to be adopted next spring. I am concerned that this bill may slow progress that is already underway, and does not include a role for the Instructional Quality Commission.

AB 1033 (Feuer, 2011) established a content standards review commission, if the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and the State Board of Education (SBE) jointly found a need to revise or modify the academic content standards. AB 1033 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 97 (Torlakson, 2010) established the Academic Content Standards Commission for Science and History-Social Science to review and update the standards. AB 97 was vetoed by the Governor, whose veto message read:

Given California's participation in the Common Core initiative and the anticipated reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, this bill is premature. This bill could create an unnecessary, duplicative process in the development of content standards and in the integration of those standards into the state's assessment system.

AB 1454 (Richardson, 2007) required the SPI to convene content standards review panels in English language arts and mathematics and repealed the authority of the SBE to modify proposed academic content standards. AB 1454 was held in this Committee.

AB 1100 (Mullin, 2005) authorized the SPI to appoint a content standards review panel in each subject area two years prior to the curriculum framework adoption for each subject area, and specifying that the panel review and revise the content standards. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2744 (Goldberg, 2004) established a process for the updating of academic content standards by requiring the SPI to convene content standards review panels in each subject area and requiring the SBE to adopt or reject the recommendations of each panel. AB 2744 was vetoed by the Governor; staff is unable to locate the veto message.

AB 642 (Mullin, 2003) required the SPI to periodically review and update academic content standards for the SBE to adopt or reject. AB 642 was vetoed by the Governor; staff is unable to locate the veto message.

SB 1367 (Karnette, 2002) required the SBE to periodically review and update core curriculum content standards. SB 1367 was vetoed by the Governor; staff is unable to locate the veto message.

SUPPORT

Association of California School Administrators

Business for Math, Science and Related Technologies Education

California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

California Council for the Social Studies

California School Boards Association

California Teachers Association

Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson

OPPOSITION

None received.

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