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California State Senate

EDUCATION



SASHA RENÉE PÉREZ
CHAIR

Staff Director
Lynn Lorber

Principal Consultant
Olgalilia Ramirez
Ian Johnson

Consultant
Therresa Austin

Committee Assistant
Maria Velez
Irma Kam

1021 O Street, Room 6740
(916) 651-4105
FAX: (916) 324-0917

AGENDA

Wednesday, April 30, 2025
9 a.m. -- 1021 O Street, Room 2100

MEASURES HEARD IN FILE ORDER

- | | | | |
|-----|--------|------------|---|
| 1. | SB 372 | Arreguín | California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009: exemptions. |
| 2. | SB 472 | Stern | Pupil instruction: Holocaust and genocide education: reporting and grant program. |
| 3. | SB 510 | Richardson | Pupil instruction: treatment of African Americans. |
| *4. | SB 631 | Richardson | Charter School Revolving Loan Fund. |
| 5. | SB 584 | Limón | Pupil instruction: civic engagement. |
| 6. | SB 612 | Valladares | Pupil instruction: high school graduation requirements: career technical education. |
| 7. | SB 531 | Rubio | Course of study: mental health education. |
| 8. | SB 638 | Padilla | California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity: Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program. |
| 9. | SB 644 | Blakespear | Political Reform Act of 1974: contribution limits. |
| 10. | SB 751 | Becker | Veterans and First Responders Research Pilot Program. |
| 11. | SB 640 | Cabaldon | Public postsecondary education: admission, transfer, and enrollment. |

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|-----|--------|------------|--|
| 12. | SB 790 | Cabaldon | Postsecondary education: postsecondary education coordinating entity: interstate reciprocity agreements for distance education: out-of-state postsecondary educational institutions. |
| 13. | SB 745 | Ochoa Bogh | High school graduation requirements: American government and civics: model curriculum: State Seal of Civic Engagement. |
| 14. | SB 837 | Reyes | Student financial aid: online technology platforms: guidance: training: media campaign. |
| 15. | SJR 4 | Laird | Research and education: federal funding cuts: the National Institutes of Health and postsecondary educational institutions. |

***Consent Item**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 372	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Arreguín		
Version:	February 13, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009: exemptions.

SUMMARY

This bill exempts a non-profit institution incorporated in the state in 1877 that was merged into another nonprofit institution from the California Private Postsecondary Education Act (the Act) and oversight by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (Bureau). It further authorizes the exempt non-profit institution to execute a contract with the Bureau to review and act on complaints concerning the institution.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009 (the Act) until January 1, 2027, and requires the Bureau to, among other things, review, investigate, and approve private postsecondary institutions, programs, and courses of instruction pursuant to the Act and authorizes the Bureau to take formal actions against an institution/school to ensure compliance with the Act and even seek closure of an institution/school if determined necessary. The Act requires unaccredited degree granting institutions to be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE). The Act also provides for specified disclosures and enrollment agreements for students, requirements for cancellations, withdrawals and refunds, and that the Bureau shall administer the Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) to provide refunds to students affected by the possible closure of an institution/school. (Education Code (EC) § 94800 *et seq.*)
- 2) Provides numerous exemptions from the Act and oversight by the Bureau, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Schools that are accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). (EC § 94874 (i))
- 3) Requires the Bureau to establish a process through which an institution exempt from the Act may request and obtain verification that the institution is exempt. Specifies that the verification is valid for a period of up to two years, as long as the

institution maintains full compliance with the requirements of the exemption. (EC 94874.7)

- 4) Authorizes an institution otherwise exempt from the Act based on specified accreditation to apply to the Bureau for an approval to operate according to specified requirements, including that upon issuing an approval to operate, the Bureau is authorized to regulate that institution through the full set of powers granted, and duties imposed, by the Act and upon issuance of an approval to operate, the institution is no longer eligible for exemption. (EC § 94874.8)
- 5) Requires an independent institution of higher education that is otherwise exempt from the Act to comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including laws relating to fraud, abuse, and false advertising and authorizes these types of institutions to execute a contract with the Bureau for the Bureau to review and, as appropriate, act on complaints concerning the institution, according to specified requirements and subject to a fee of \$1,076. (EC § 94874.9.)
- 6) Establishes, under Title IV of the Federal Higher Education Act of 1965, the federal student aid program, administered by the USDE to provide grants, loans, and work-study funds from the federal government to eligible students enrolled in eligible colleges or career schools. (20 U.S.C. § 1070, et seq.) Institutional eligibility requirements for Title IV financial aid, include that institutions be “authorized” by each state in which they operate, and have an independent state-level student complaint process. (34 Code of Federal Regulations § 600.9)
- 7) Defines the public higher education to consist of the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and each campus, branch, and function thereof, and each campus, branch, and function of the University of California. It further defines the independent institutions of higher education as those nonpublic higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that are formed as nonprofit corporations in this state and are accredited by an agency recognized by USDE. (EC § 66010 (a)(b))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Exempts from the Act and Bureau oversight, an institution that was incorporated in the state in 1877, that operated continuously as an independent nonprofit institution and was exempt from the Act until 2022, and that was merged into another nonprofit private postsecondary educational institution accredited by a regional body recognized by the USDE that accredits institutions.
- 2) Specifies that the institution be considered an independent institution of higher education as defined in the Education Code and be exempt from the Act.
- 3) Authorizes the exempted institution to execute a contract with the Bureau for it to review and act on complaints concerning the institution. It further states that the execution of a contract with the Bureau constitutes establishment by the state of

that institution to offer programs beyond secondary education in accordance with federal regulations.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “currently, when a nonprofit college merges with another, students face unnecessary fees and requirements that are not imposed on their peers at similar institutions. For example, following the 2022 merger between Mills College and Northeastern University, students at the Oakland campus have been required to declare a major upon enrollment and pay a fee that did not apply to former Mills students. SB 372 would narrowly authorize a highly qualified nonprofit research institution with a physical presence in California, but headquartered in another state, to be recognized as an independent institution of higher education under the Education Code. This designation would clarify an institution’s regulatory standing with peer institutions headquartered in California. Northeastern University is committed to maintaining and expanding academic programs at its Oakland campus indefinitely. SB 372 is a district bill. Such bill ensures that Northeastern University, a high quality nonprofit research institution, receives the same and fair regulatory treatment as other independent nonprofit higher education institutions in California, such as Stanford University, and Mills College prior to its 2022 merger.”
- 2) **Participation in federal aid program requires colleges to be legally authorized in each state in which they provide instruction.** Under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, an institution may be eligible to receive federal financial aid programs such as Pell Grants and federal loan programs provided they meet certain standards. The federal Higher Education Act establishes three eligibility criteria that institutions must fulfill. To ensure the quality and integrity of Title IV financial aid programs at eligible institutions, the three requirements that must be met are: 1) state authorization, 2) certification by the USDE; and 3) accreditation by an accrediting agency association recognized by the USDE. The states are responsible for providing primary protection for consumers and students, while the federal government oversees compliance to ensure the administrative and fiscal integrity of Title IV financial aid programs at higher education institutions. Accrediting agencies, on the other hand, focus on providing quality assurance for the education or training offered by these institutions.
- 3) **The role of California's Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education.** In California, the Bureau regulates private postsecondary educational institutions operating in the state. The Bureau’s roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Act established by AB 48 (Portantino, Chapter 310, Statutes of 2009). Its role is to protect consumers and students from fraud, misrepresentation, or other business practices at private postsecondary institutions that may lead to the loss of students’ tuition and related educational funds. It also sets and enforces minimum standards for ethical business practices and the health, safety, and fiscal integrity of postsecondary education institutions. Finally, it establishes and enforces minimum standards for instructional quality and institutional stability for all students in *any* private postsecondary educational and vocational institutions.

The Bureau approval not only authorizes institutions to operate and serve students in California but also enables institutions to meet requirements of state authorization to receive public funds through the federal Title IV financial aid programs.

- 4) **Exemptions.** AB 48, while establishing a foundation for regulation of private postsecondary educational institutions, contained numerous exemptions to state-level regulation, and these exemptions have since been expanded and increased to roughly 13 categories. As noted in the Senate Business, Professions, and Education Development Committee analysis, exemptions in the Act may serve as an artificial measure of quality, and in some cases, while the intention may have been to ensure that the Bureau's workload is focused on those schools that require attention, they may not benefit the public and provide accountability for public monies utilized at these institutions.
- 5) **WASC exemption.** WASC is a USDE-recognized institutional accrediting agency originally formed for accrediting higher education colleges and universities in the western region of the country. All of California's public universities and community colleges receive institutional accreditation from WASC, as do many of the state's independent non-profit colleges and universities. WASC-accredited private colleges and universities are exempt from Bureau oversight and the Act.
- 6) **New type of nonprofit institution seeking exemption.** This bill attempts to provide a narrow exemption from Bureau oversight and the Act for a non-WASC-accredited non-profit institution headquartered outside of California that merged with a California college. Mills College was founded in Benicia as the Young Ladies' Seminary. The school was moved to Oakland in 1872, after being purchased by two missionaries who were champions of women's rights. In 2021, amidst financial challenges and declining enrollment, the school announced that it would stop enrolling undergraduates after the fall of 2021. Mills College was accredited by WASC, and thus exempt from Bureau oversight. In June 2021, it was announced that Mills would merge with Northeastern University; the institution is now a Bureau-approved school. However, merged Northeastern University Oakland holds accreditation from a different regional accreditor, rendering the institution ineligible for an exemption. This bill establishes a new exemption for this particular university and would allow it to contract with the Bureau to meet the requirements for state authorization and thereby qualifying for federal aid programs. Higher education in this country is rapidly changing due to mergers, acquisitions, and consolidation of colleges across state lines as higher education institutions face declining enrollment. With these changes, come key decisions about state monitoring and regulation that the Legislature may wish consider in future legislation, such as whether to continue to exempting colleges from rules that are meant to safeguard California students.
- 7) **Double-referral.** This bill was previously heard by the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee, which has jurisdiction over bills relating to business and professional practices and periodically conducts sunset reviews of various boards and licensing agencies, including the Bureau. This bill was heard by the Senate Business Professions and Economic Development Committee on April 21, 2024.

- 8) **Amendment.** For purposes of clarifying provisions related to considering the institution as an independent institution of higher education as defined in the Education Code, only applying to the Act, **Committee staff recommends that the bill be amended** as follows:

- *For purposes of this chapter*, an institution exempted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be considered an independent institution of higher education as defined in Section 66010 and exempt from this chapter.

- 9) **Prior and related legislation.**

SB 790 (Cabaldon, 2025) requires the Governor to designate a state agency, department, or office as the principal state operating and coordinating entity for postsecondary education, with specified duties, including, implementation of an interstate reciprocity agreement for the authorization and oversight of distance education, as the portal entity, if the Governor enters into an interstate reciprocity agreement. Additionally, the bill strikes provisions that establish the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) and its duties from the Education Code. It further states legislative intent that the portal entity adopt as many of CPEC's duties and responsibilities. SB 790 is scheduled to be heard in this Committee April 30.

SB 1449 (Newman, 2024) would have authorized a nonprofit law school that is otherwise exempt from regulation under the Act and oversight by the Bureau and which has in the past executed a contract, to execute a contract with the Bureau to review and act on complaints concerning the institution. SB 1449 died in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 3167 (Chen, 2024) would have authorized, beginning July 1, 2025, a "highly qualified private nonprofit institution," as specified, to register with the Bureau. AB 3167 died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

Northeastern University (sponsor)
Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities
California Chamber of Commerce

OPPOSITION

None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 472

Hearing Date: April 30, 2025

Author: Stern

Version: April 21, 2025

Urgency: No

Fiscal: Yes

Consultant: Therresa Austin

Subject: Pupil instruction: Holocaust and genocide education: reporting and grant program.

SUMMARY

This bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to local education agencies (LEAs) for the purposes of providing Holocaust and genocide education and professional training. The bill would also require the SPI to adopt regulations for the grant program, as specified. Finally, the bill would require all LEAs, regardless of participation in the grant program, to submit an annual report to the State Department of Education (CDE) on Holocaust and genocide education that the LEA provides, as specified.

BACKGROUND

Existing Law

- 1) Requires LEAs that enroll students in grades 7 to 12 to offer courses in social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Requires instruction to provide a foundation for the relations of persons to their human and natural environment, Eastern and Western cultures and civilizations; human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, the Holocaust, and may include the Armenian Genocide; and, to the extent instruction is provided on the Spanish colonization of California or the Gold Rush Era, the treatment and perspectives of Native Americans during those periods; and contemporary issues. (Education Code (EC) § 51220)
- 2) With respect to students in grades 7 to 12, permits instruction in the subject of history-social science to include grade-level appropriate instruction on violence awareness and prevention, which may include personal testimony demonstrated through oral or video histories that illustrate the economic and cultural effects of violence within a city, the state, and the country for pupils in grades 7 to 12. (EC § 51220.3)
- 3) Requires instruction in social sciences to include the early history of California and a study of the role and contributions of people of all genders, Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities,

and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic status groups, to the economic, political, and social development of California and the United States of America, with particular emphasis on portraying the role of these groups in contemporary society. (EC § 51204.5)

- 4) Requires CDE to incorporate publications that provide examples of curriculum resources for teacher use those materials developed by publishers of nonfiction, trade books, and primary sources, or other public or private organizations, that are age appropriate and consistent with the subject frameworks on history and social science that deal with civil rights, human rights violations, genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust. (EC § 51226.3(a)(1))
- 5) The Legislature encourages CDE to incorporate into publications that provide examples of curriculum resources for teacher use those materials developed by publishers of nonfiction, trade books, and primary sources, or other public or private organizations, that are age appropriate and consistent with the subject frameworks on history and social science that deal with the Armenian, Cambodian, Darfur, and Rwandan genocides. (EC § 51226.3(a)(2))
- 6) The Legislature encourages all state and local professional development activities to provide teachers with content background and resources to assist them in teaching about civil rights, human rights violations, genocide, slavery, the Armenian Genocide, and the Holocaust. (EC § 51226.3(c))
- 7) The Legislature encourages the incorporation of survivor, rescuer, liberator, and witness oral testimony into the teaching of human rights, the Holocaust, and genocide, including, but not limited to, the Armenian, Cambodian, Darfur, and Rwandan genocides. (EC § 51226.3(b)(1))
- 8) Establishes the California Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education under the CDE's direction, and requires the Collaborative to (1) develop and provide curriculum resources on genocide and Holocaust education, and (2) provide a statewide teacher professional development program on genocide and Holocaust education. (EC § 51221.1)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the SPI to establish the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools for the purposes of providing Holocaust and genocide education and professional development on Holocaust and genocide education. Grants provided under this grant program shall be used to provide resources and opportunities related to Holocaust and genocide education, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Providing instructional materials on topics about the Holocaust and genocide.

- b) Hosting an event or organization at a schoolsite maintained by the LEA for the purposes of Holocaust and genocide education.
 - c) Financing teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust education.
 - d) Hiring substitute teachers to support teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education.
 - e) Financing faculty and staff time to plan and facilitate LEA or school based programs related to Holocaust and genocide education.
 - f) Financing transportation to events and educational opportunities related to Holocaust and genocide education.
- 2) Establishes the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program Fund in the State Treasury, upon appropriation, to be available to the SPI for purposes of the grant program.
 - 3) Requires the SPI to adopt regulations for the grant program, including programmatic details, application criteria and deadlines, and reporting requirements on how allocations were spent.
 - 4) Requires all LEAs, regardless of participation in the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program, to submit an annual report to the CDE on the following:
 - a) Whether Holocaust and genocide education is being taught; and
 - b) A brief description of how, and in which grades, instruction on Holocaust and genocide education was provided.
 - 5) Defines “Holocaust” and “Genocide” consistent with existing definitions in education code.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “In light of growing incidents of hate and discrimination, it has become more critical than ever to ensure that students are equipped with a full understanding of historical atrocities like the Holocaust and other genocides. California’s recent efforts to address the gaps in Holocaust and genocide education reflect the urgency of this issue. By introducing Senate Bill 472, I am championing a forward-thinking approach to combat intolerance by mandating both funding for school districts and a system for evaluating educational outcomes. This bill stands as a crucial step toward fostering empathy, promoting awareness, and preventing the repetition of past injustices. It is a vital investment in the education of future generations, ensuring they are not only informed but also empowered to create a more just and compassionate society.”

- 2) ***The Governor’s Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education.*** In 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom launched the Governor’s Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education. The Council was charged with assessing the status of Holocaust and genocide education in California schools; making recommendations and promoting best practices for how to improve Holocaust and genocide education; and sponsoring Holocaust and genocide remembrance. The Council is co-chaired by State Senator Henry Stern, Attorney General Rob Bonta, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, and Dr. Anita Friedman, Executive Director, Jewish Family and Children’s Services/Northern California. The Council’s general membership is made up of four elected officials as well as nine academics, advocates, and community organizations representing groups impacted by the Holocaust and genocide throughout history.

In January 2025, the Council released a report in partnership with WestEd entitled, “[Holocaust and Genocide Education in California: A Study of Statewide Context and Local Implementation](#),” which examines the current landscape of Holocaust and genocide education implementation across LEAs. Per the report, “the findings show that while some districts have developed robust programs, the overall landscape remains fragmented, with success often dependent on individual educator initiative. LEA representatives emphasized the need for state-level support—ultimately pointing to the necessity of a systematic, state-supported approach to ensure the kind of equitable, high-quality Holocaust and genocide education statewide that the Council envisions.” To this end, the report offered the following recommendations:

- Communicate California’s Vision for Holocaust and Genocide Education
- Revise the California History–Social Science Content Standards
- Revise the History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools
- Update, Distribute, and Provide Guidance for the Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide
- Continue to Create a Vetted Central Clearinghouse for Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Professional Learning
- Increase Direct Funding to Districts and Schools for Holocaust and Genocide Education
- Expand Existing Statewide Professional Learning on Holocaust and Genocide Education
- Monitor and Evaluate Educational Outcomes
- Continue to Conduct Additional Research to Inform the Council’s Future Actions

- Expand, Publicize, and Strengthen the Role of the Governor's Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education

3) ***The Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant.*** This bill seeks to advance and codify one of the report's recommendations by establishing a Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant Program to provide direct allocations to LEAs for the purposes of providing Holocaust and genocide education and professional learning. The SPI would be tasked with developing and adopting detailed regulations for the grant program including but not limited to programmatic details, application criteria and deadlines, and reporting requirements on how allocations are spent. Allowable uses for the allocations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Providing instructional materials on topics about the Holocaust and genocide.
- b) Hosting an event or an organization at a schoolsite maintained by the LEA for purposes related to Holocaust or genocide education.
- c) Financing teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education.
- d) Hiring substitute teachers to support teacher attendance at professional development opportunities focused on Holocaust and genocide education.
- e) Financing faculty and staff time to plan and LEA or school-based programs related to Holocaust and genocide education.
- f) Financing transportation to events and educational opportunities related to Holocaust and genocide education.

4) ***California Teacher's Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education.*** California has made significant investments to support educators in their efforts to teach about the sensitive topics of the Holocaust and genocide. For instance, the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education (Collaborative) established in 2021 as a statewide professional development program on genocide for school district, county office of education, and charter school teachers. The Collaborative was initially created by the Jewish Family and Children's Services (JFCS) Holocaust Center in San Francisco with support from the CDE, Marin County Office of Education, and the State of California and was later codified in Education Code with the passage of SB 1277 (Stern, Chapter 890, Statutes of 2024). The Collaborative also works in close collaboration with the Governor's Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education. The Collaborative received a state budget allocation of \$1.9 million in its first year and, in subsequent years, has received additional allocations of \$1.5 million (2023-24 State Budget) and \$5 million (2024-25 State Budget). The Collaborative's goals include:

- a) Creating new, standards-aligned lessons on the Holocaust and genocide for all 6-12th grade students in California;

- b) Empowering and unifying educators in teaching the lessons of history and about what happens when bias goes unchecked; and
- c) Combatting rising antisemitism and hate by creating more respectful and empathetic next generations.

In 2024, the Collaborative launched a website to serve as a central location to connect educators with digital resources including best practices and curricular materials, and information's about workshops, trainings, and conferences.

- 5) ***Annual Reporting.*** When a LEA voluntarily applies for and ultimately receives targeted grant funding from CDE, it is necessary and appropriate for those funds to be accompanied by certain reporting requirements to ensure those funds were spent responsibly and effectively. For funds awarded through the Holocaust and Genocide Education Grant proposed by this bill, the SPI is charged with developing those reporting requirements. However, this bill separately proposes to mandate that LEAs report on their Holocaust and genocide education annually, *irrespective of their participation in the proposed grant program*. The report would be comprised of the following:

- a) An indication of whether Holocaust and genocide education are taught within the LEA; and
- b) A description of how instruction on Holocaust and genocide education is provided and during which grade levels.

Committee staff has not been able to identify any other content area, subject, or topic where CDE currently requires annual stand-alone reporting on instruction in the manner proposed by this bill. This includes any instruction that is guided by California's nine curriculum frameworks ranging from Arts Education and Career Technical Education to Mathematics and English Language Arts.

This bill would establish precedent and may imply that these topics, as critically important as they are, hold priority above not only the other topics covered in the History-Social Sciences Framework but also any other topic contained within the breadth of the respective state adopted Content Standards and Curriculum Frameworks.

At present, reporting about curriculum is done more holistically. As part of California's accountability system and the priorities set in the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), LEAs must annually measure their progress in implementing state academic standards. LEAs must then report their results to their respective local governing board at a regularly scheduled meeting and report to stakeholders and the public through the California School Dashboard.

Holocaust and genocide education are included among the History-Social Sciences Content Standards for students in grade 10. Instructional materials that are developed by publishers in alignment with the state's core academic content standards of the appropriate subject framework are adopted at the local level for

grades 9 through 12. Each California public school is required to annually report and post publicly the list of materials adopted for instruction as part of its School Accountability Report Card (SARC). This includes the schools adopted materials for history and social science.

In 2024, the Legislature passed SB 1315 (Archuleta, Chapter 468, Statutes of 2024) which required the CDE to prepare a report on the number and types of reports that school districts, COEs, and charter schools are required to annually submit then provide recommendations for which reports can be consolidated, eliminated, or truncated. At the core of that measure was the concern voiced by LEAs that the amount of reports that they must submit to CDE annually has become burdensome in light of the staff time and resources it requires. While reporting is necessary to ensure LEAs are meeting the needs of students, it must be done in a productive and streamlined manner.

Mandating a stand-alone annual reporting requirement on Holocaust and genocide education may be onerous given the broader scope and volume of reporting requirements that LEAs must already complete. Further, while unintended, it may provide interested actors at various levels of government a critical tool to carry out threats on the availability of federal funding for schools or to exact immigration enforcement actions as have been witnessed in our higher education institutions—both in California and nationally.

*For these reasons, the **Committee recommends striking** the explicit stand-alone reporting requirement contained in subdivision (a) of the bill.*

6) ***How prevalent is Holocaust and genocide education in California schools?***

According to information provided by the author's office, the bill was in part brought about by the concern that, "a recent state-wide report outlined stark findings in implementation of the law, with only 26% of responding LEAs currently meeting the Holocaust and genocide education requirements." The report referenced is the Governor's Council for Holocaust and Genocide Education's report titled: "Holocaust and Genocide Education in California: A Study of Statewide Context and Local Implementation" (also referenced in Comment 2). The report included a voluntary survey that was sent out to all California LEAs and COEs. According to the report:

"The LEA survey, completed by 559 respondents representing 29 percent of California LEAs, revealed that only 26 percent (143 respondents) had a Holocaust and genocide education system in place. Of these, 72 percent (104 respondents) indicated that their programs are required, and 16 percent (23 respondents) said they are optional. City-designated and large LEAs were most likely to have established programs."

The report also stated the following: "For the purposes of this study, a Holocaust and genocide education system was defined as instruction or activities that are developed at the LEA level; any Holocaust and genocide education instruction or activity developed at the school level is not included in the study."

As mentioned previously, Holocaust and genocide education are included in the 10th grade History-Social Science Content Standards and Curriculum Framework. Staff notes that not all LEAs serve students in grade levels where Holocaust and genocide education are included in the Standards and Framework. For LEAs that serve high school students, and specifically students in 10th grade, instruction should be aligned with the state adopted standards and framework. While the report illustrated ways in which the respondents observed notable variations in the level of LEA-wide supports were available, it does not necessarily conclude that instruction itself, led by educators or even groups of educators at the school campus level was not occurring or was not meeting the adopted content standards.

7) ***Related Legislation.***

SB 1277 (Stern, Chapter 890, Statutes of 2024) established the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education, to establish a statewide professional development program on genocide for school district, COE, and charter school teachers.

SB 108 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 35, Statutes of 2024) appropriated \$5 million to the SPI for allocation to the Marin County Office of Education to contract with the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education to continue work developing and providing curriculum resources related to genocide and Holocaust education; and providing professional development, including educator trainings, on genocide and Holocaust education.

SB 693 (Stern, 2021) would have (1) established the Governor's Council on Genocide and Holocaust Education and required the council to develop best practices to facilitate the instruction on genocide and the Holocaust, identify available resources that are aligned to the best practices, and identify programs and resources to train teachers to provide education on genocide and the Holocaust; and 2) required the CDE to make available the best practices and approved lessons, resources, and materials to support the integration of instruction on genocide and the Holocaust, and to conduct a voluntary study to assess the impact of the instruction based on the best practices. *This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee, however, the Council went on to be launched by action of the Governor in October of 2021.*

SB 141 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 194, Statutes of 2023) appropriated \$1.5 million to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) for allocation to the California Teachers Collaborative for Holocaust and Genocide Education to continue work developing and providing curriculum resources related to genocide and Holocaust education; and providing professional development, including educator trainings, on genocide and Holocaust education.

AB 130 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 44, Statutes of 2021) appropriated \$2 million to the SPI for allocation to the Marin County Office of Education to contract with nonprofit organizations with subject matter expertise in genocide

and Holocaust education to develop and provide curriculum resources related to genocide and Holocaust education; and provide professional development, including educator trainings, on genocide and Holocaust education.

SB 1380 (Wyland, Chapter 441, Statutes of 2014) (1) required the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to consider including the Armenian Genocide in the recommended history-social science curriculum framework when the history-social science curriculum framework is revised as required by law; (2) specifies that the Legislature encourages the incorporation of survivor, rescuer, liberator, and witness oral testimony into the teaching of human rights, the Holocaust, and genocide, including the Armenian, Cambodian, Darfur, and Rwandan genocides; (3) defined oral testimony to mean firsthand accounts of significant historical events presented in a specified format; and (4) provided that the Legislature encourages certain actions relating to the instruction of genocide, including, among others, that content providers and teachers promote pupil analysis of genocides, including the ethnic, religious, and political causes.

SUPPORT

Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California (sponsor)

AJC - Los Angeles

AJC - San Diego

AJC Northern California

Anti Defamation League

Anti-Defamation League

Cambodian Genocide Resource Center

Central Valley Holocaust Educators' Network

End Uyghur Genocide

Hadassah

Holocaust Museum LA

Israeli-American Civic Action Network

JCC/Federation of San Luis Obispo

JCRC Bay Area

Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund

Jewish Community Relations Council, Santa Barbara

Jewish Democratic Club of Marin

Jewish Family and Children's Service of Long Beach and Orange County

Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties

Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles

Jewish Family Service of San Diego

Jewish Family Service of the Desert

Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley

Jewish Federation Los Angeles

Jewish Federation of San Diego

Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys

Jewish Free Loan Association

Jewish Long Beach

Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation

Jewish Public Affairs Committee
Jewish Silicon Valley
Raoul Wallenberg Jewish Democratic Club
Twige Project

OPPOSITION

Beyt Tikkun Synagogue
California Association of School Business Officials
CODEPINK Central Coast
International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network
Jewish Voice for Peace California
Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism
4 Individuals

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 510	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Richardson		
Version:	April 21, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: Pupil instruction: treatment of African Americans.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to consider, at the next regularly scheduled revision of the curriculum framework in history-social science or in the adoption of new instructional materials, including content on the historical, social, economic, and political contributions of African Americans during the Spanish colonization of California, the Gold Rush Era, and Antebellum, including, but not limited to, addressing African Americans' experience with discriminatory laws, barriers to land ownership, and their efforts to establish economic and social stability in California.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the IQC, during its next revision of the History-Social Science curriculum framework, to consider including instruction on the Election of President Barack Obama and the significance of the United States electing its first African American President. (Education Code (EC) §33543)
- 2) Requires the governing boards of school districts, in their adoption of instructional materials for use in the schools, to accurately portray the cultural and racial diversity of our society, including the role and contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic status groups in the total development of California and the United States. (EC § 60040)
- 3) Requires instruction in social sciences to include the early history of California and a study of the role and contributions of people of all genders, Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic status groups, to the economic, political, and social development of California and the United States of America, with particular emphasis on portraying the role of these groups in contemporary society. (EC § 51204.5)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the IQC to consider, at the next regularly scheduled revision of the curriculum framework in history-social science or in the adoption of new instructional materials, including content on the historical, social, economic, and political contributions of African Americans during the Spanish colonization of California, the Gold Rush Era, and Antebellum, including, but not limited to, addressing African Americans' experience with discriminatory laws, barriers to land ownership, and their efforts to establish economic and social stability in California.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "SB 510 is essential to ensure African American students receive a more accurate, inclusive, and honest education about California and U.S. history. For too long, the contributions, experiences, and struggles of African Americans have been minimized or left out of school curricula. This bill directly addresses that by requiring instruction on the harm California has done to African Americans, including during Spanish colonization, the Gold Rush Era, and through discriminatory laws and barriers to land ownership.

"SB 510 ensures that students learn about the economic, social, and political contributions of African Americans, as well as their resilience in the face of systemic oppression. By including African American perspectives in the broader context of history, economics, and civics, the bill helps foster greater understanding of the ongoing fight for equity and justice.

"This legislation is a step toward correcting historical omissions, empowering African American students with representation, and educating all students to be more informed and socially conscious citizens."

- 2) ***Instructional Quality Commission: How Curriculum, Standards, Frameworks, and Model Curricula Are Created and Adopted.*** The Legislature has vested the IQC and the State Board of Education (SBE) with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The IQC develops curriculum frameworks in each subject by convening expert panels, developing drafts, and holding public hearings to solicit input. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The SBE then adopts the frameworks in a public meeting. The SBE also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks for grades K-8. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional materials aligned to these standards and frameworks. This process has traditionally occurred on a regular schedule, giving schools a predictable timetable to plan and budget for changes to the curriculum. Local adoption of new curricula involves significant local cost and investment of resources and professional development.

These existing processes involve practitioners and experts who have an in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress.

- 3) ***African American perspectives and experiences in the History and Social Science Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade 12.*** California's History-Social Science Framework (Framework), adopted by the SBE in July 2019, features the experiences and perspectives of African Americans throughout the history of the United States. Examples of topics include:

- a) *Grade Four: California: A Changing State* – Recognizing the presence of people of African descent throughout much of California's history contributing to the Spanish exploration of California, the Spanish–Mexican settlement of the region, the founding of the Alta California settlements, California's subsequent development throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- b) *Grade Five: United States History and Geography: Making a New Nation* – Understanding the history and impact of slavery, both as a legal and economic institution and as an extreme violation of human rights; understanding how principles of the American Revolution (especially natural rights of freedom and the opportunity for democracy) motivated African Americans—both free and unfree—to try to secure those rights for all by their service in the war itself.
- c) *Grade Eight: United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict* – Examining the Antebellum South by studying the lives of plantation owners and other white Southerners; the more than 100,000 free African Americans in the South; as well as the laws, such as the fugitive slave laws of 1793 and 1850, that curbed their freedom and economic opportunity. Contextualizing the national abolitionist movement that arose during the nineteenth century and the opposition and risks faced by leaders like Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Harriett Jacobs, Charles Remond, Harriet Tubman, and Robert Purvis; how slavery was replaced by black peonage, segregation, Jim Crow laws, and other legal restrictions on the rights of African Americans, capped by the Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision in 1896.
- d) *Grade Nine: Elective Courses in History–Social Science – Modern California*: Understanding California's economic growth after World War II while recognizing how racial discrimination prevented African Americans from being part of certain neighborhoods as homeowners and banks found ways to deny entry.
- e) *Grade Eleven: United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in Modern United States History* – Understanding the first Great Migration of over a million African Americans from the rural South to the

urban North during and after World War I, which changed the landscape of Black America. Understanding how the continued flow of migrants and the practical restrictions of segregation in the 1920s helped to create the Harlem Renaissance, the literary and artistic flowering of Black artists, poets, musicians, and scholars recognizing how racial violence, discrimination, and segregation inhibited African Americans' economic mobility, opportunity, and political participation.

This bill would additionally require IQC to consider including content on the historical, social, economic, and political contributions of African Americans during the Spanish colonization of California, the Gold Rush Era, and Antebellum, including, but not limited to, addressing African Americans' experience with discriminatory laws, barriers to land ownership, and their efforts to establish economic and social stability in California.

4) **Prior legislation.**

AB 1078 (Jackson, Chapter 229, Statutes of 2023) makes various changes to the requirements on local school governing boards regarding the adoption of instructional materials for use in schools, including a provision that would prohibit a governing board from disallowing the use of an existing textbook, other instructional material, or curriculum that contains inclusive and diverse perspectives, as specified.

AB 48 (Leno, Chapter 81, Statutes of 2011) required California public schools to provide Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful representations of our diverse ethnic and cultural population in the K-12 grade history and social studies curriculum.

SUPPORT

California Faculty Association
Israeli-American Civic Action Network

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 631
Author: Richardson
Version: April 21, 2025
Urgency: No
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Hearing Date: April 30, 2025

Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Charter School Revolving Loan Fund.

SUMMARY

This bill makes various changes to the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund (CSRLF), including increasing the maximum loan amount for charter schools, expanding loan eligibility and establishing loan prioritization criteria, modifying repayment terms, and revising how the loan interest rate is calculated.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the CSRLF in the State Treasury, administered by the California School Finance Authority (CSFA), and authorizes loans to:
 - a) Chartering authorities on behalf of non-conversion charter schools, or;
 - b) Charter schools directly if they are incorporated and eligible for direct state funding.
- 2) Caps total loan amounts per charter school at \$250,000 over the school's lifetime.
- 3) Limits repayment terms to no more than five years, with equal annual payments automatically deducted from apportionments.
- 4) Gives priority for loans to new charter schools for startup costs.
- 5) Allows CSFA to consider various factors in approving loans, such as financial soundness, need, geographic distribution, and innovative fund uses.
- 6) Requires that loans carry an interest rate equal to the Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA) rate as of disbursement, and directs all interest into the Charter School Security Fund.
- 7) Provides additional support for charter school facilities and capital financing through other programs, including:

- a) Proposition 39 (2000), which requires school districts to provide reasonably equivalent facilities to eligible charter schools located within their boundaries. (Education Code (EC) § 47614)
- b) The Charter School Facility Grant Program, SB 740 (O'Connell, Chapter 892, Statutes of 2001), which provides rent/lease reimbursement to eligible charter schools. (EC § 47614.5)
- c) Charter school-specific set-asides within the School Facility Program for new construction and modernization projects. (EC § 17078.52 et seq.)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Raises the maximum lifetime loan amount per charter school from \$250,000 to \$500,000, whether issued directly or through the chartering authority.
- 2) Clarifies that loans may be made to one or more charter schools under the same chartering authority.
- 3) Clarifies that direct loans may be made only to charter schools established under the Charter Schools Act, rather than requiring incorporation specifically.
- 4) Replaces the single priority for new startup charter schools with a new priority order:
 - a) New charter schools (not conversions) for startup costs.
 - b) Charter schools impacted by Governor-proclaimed natural disasters.
 - c) All other charter schools.
- 5) Modifies the loan repayment terms for disaster-impacted charter schools by delaying repayment until the second fiscal year after the most recent full year of operation (with CSFA approval) and extending repayment to up to eight years.
- 6) Makes both a charter school and its managing entity liable for repayment in the event of default, whereas existing law only makes the school liable.
- 7) Modifies the interest rate structure to be the lesser of the following, but never to be less than three percent:
 - a) The rate paid on the PMIA (as under current law), or
 - b) 50% of the interest rate paid on the most recent sale of state general obligation bonds (computed using the true interest cost method).

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Applications for the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund have unfortunately decreased over the last handful of years due to the decline in new charter schools. Changes to the fund are needed to ensure the State Treasurer’s office is able to give out the \$27 million dollars that sit in the fund balance unused.”
- 2) ***Charter Schools and Facility Access Challenges.*** Charter schools are public schools operated independently of school districts under the oversight of a charter authorizer. They are governed by nonprofit boards and receive funding through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), similar to traditional public schools. However, charter schools do not have access to the same financing tools available to school districts, such as local general obligation bonds, and often face significant barriers when securing and paying for facilities. Unlike school districts, charter schools must typically lease or purchase facilities on the private market, and startup schools often face facility costs before receiving their first apportionment.
- 3) ***Available State Support for Charter School Facilities and Capital.*** To address these challenges, the state has developed several programs to support charter schools with facilities and capital needs:
 - a) *Proposition 39 (2000):* requires school districts to provide reasonably equivalent facilities to charter schools serving students who reside in the district. While this mandate helps some charter schools access district space at no cost, it does not guarantee long-term stability or availability.
 - b) *Charter School Facility Grant Program:* (also known as the SB 740 program) provides per-pupil reimbursements for rent and lease expenses for eligible charter schools, particularly those serving low-income students.
 - c) *School Facility Program:* includes dedicated set-asides for charter schools, allowing them to apply for state bond funds for new construction and modernization projects. These projects often require matching funds and significant upfront planning capacity.

These programs support long-term facility access, but they do not address short-term cash flow needs, particularly in the months leading up to a charter school’s opening. That is the purpose of the CSRLF.

- 4) ***Charter School Revolving Loan Fund: Purpose and Current Utilization.*** The CSRLF, created in 2000, provides low-interest loans—currently capped at \$250,000—to help new charter schools with early operational expenses, such as staffing, furniture, and temporary facility leases. Loans are administered by CSFA and repaid over up to five years through automatic deductions from apportionments. Direct loans are limited to incorporated charter schools, and priority is given to new schools that are not conversions of existing district schools.

In recent years, use of the program has declined significantly. CSFA reports that from 2014 to 2023, the number of annual applicants fell from 60 to just 7, with only three loans issued in each of the past two years. This decline has coincided with a reduction in new charter school openings and may also reflect the program's narrow eligibility rules. As a result, the fund currently holds a balance exceeding \$27 million.

- 5) ***Policy Shift and Fiscal Tradeoffs.*** This bill would broaden the scope of the CSRLF from a startup-focused fund to a more general-purpose loan program for charter schools. By increasing the loan cap to \$500,000, expanding eligibility beyond new schools, introducing a tiered priority system, and allowing longer repayment terms for disaster-impacted schools, the bill aims to revitalize a fund that has seen sharp declines in participation. Additional changes—including revised interest rate calculations and expanded liability in the event of default—may make the program more attractive while improving risk management.

However, the Committee may wish to consider whether these changes sufficiently preserve access for new and financially vulnerable schools and whether the expansion of this program remains a priority in the context of broader education budget constraints. While the CSRLF currently has a healthy fund balance, expanding its use is ultimately a fiscal policy decision that should be evaluated alongside other K-12 funding needs.

SUPPORT

California State Treasurer Fiona Ma (sponsor)
California Charter Schools Association
Charter Schools Development Center

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 584	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Limón		
Version:	April 10, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: Pupil instruction: civic engagement

SUMMARY

This bill (1) expands the existing California Serves Program to promote access to effective service learning for grades 1 through 12; (2) requires local education agencies (LEAs) to implement a Civic Engagement Pathways Program for pupils in grades 1 through 8; and (3) requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), during its next consideration for the revision of the history and social sciences framework, to include civic engagement experiences, as specified.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Serves Program under the State Department of Education (CDE) in collaboration with CaliforniaVolunteers, to promote access to effective service learning for pupils in grade 12 who are enrolled at participating LEAs, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) through service learning. (Education Code (EC) § 51475)
- 2) Establishes the California Serves Program for the purposes of awarding grants to promote access to effective service-learning for students in grade twelve, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining an SSCE through service-learning. Allowable uses for grants include:
 - a) Paid planning time for teachers to increase the use of service-learning in instruction.
 - b) Professional development on service-learning for administrators and teachers.
 - c) Purchase of instructional materials to help integrate service-learning in instruction.
 - d) Participation costs, including materials or travel expenses related to service-learning activities.
 - e) Personnel costs for coordinating service-learning at the LEA or a school site.

- f) Participation costs associated with grant program evaluation. (EC § 51475)
- 3) Establishes the SSCE, affixed to the diploma or transcript of an eligible pupil, to encourage, and create pathways for, pupils in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. (EC § 51475)
- 4) Requires the IQC to consider, during the next revision of the history-social science framework, how civics and history instruction, at all appropriate grade levels, includes, in addition to the acquisition of content knowledge, the application of that content to develop the competence and skills needed for civic engagement. (EC § 33540)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

California Serves Program

- 1) Expands the criteria for LEAs to apply for the existing California Serves Grant Program under the Department of Education (CDE) to explicitly include grades 1-12 for professional learning and instruction materials on civic engagement.
- 2) Requires CDE, in collaboration with CaliforniaVolunteers, to do the following:
 - a) Review the available evidence on ways to incorporate effective service learning for pupils in grades 1 through 12, and, on or before January 1, 2027, provide recommendations to the Legislature, consistent with the recommended criteria and implementation guidance for the SSCE on evidence-based strategies to expand access to high-quality service-learning programs in LEAs serving grades 1 through 12 and promote equitable access to these programs.
 - b) On or before January 1, 2027, develop and post on the CDE's and CaliforniaVolunteers' internet websites evidence-based strategies for expanding access to high-quality service-learning programs that may be used by teachers and LEAs for grades 1 through 12.
 - c) Develop model uniform metrics, based on the recommended criteria for the SSCE, for the measurement of pupil progress for grades 1 through 12, toward academic, civic engagement, and other learning objectives. Civic learning objectives shall include the final goal of awarding the SSCE.
 - d) Use the evidence, recommendations, and metrics identified above in the administration of the California Serves Program.

Civic Engagement Pathway

- 3) Requires school districts, county offices of education (COEs), and charter schools to do the following:
 - a) Implement a Civic Engagement Pathway Program for pupils in grades 1 through 8 to increase pupil awareness and civic engagement in democratic institutions at the local, state, and national levels.
 - b) Provide civic learning resources and support for teachers to implement programming described above.
- 4) Requires that the opportunities provided to pupils through the Civic Engagement Pathway be supportive of pupils earning the SSCE.
- 5) Encourages school districts, COEs, and charter schools to establish local recognition programs to recognize pupils participating in the Civic Engagement Pathway Programs based on locally developed criteria.

Instructional Quality Commission: History-Social Sciences Framework Revision

- 6) Requires the IQC, during its next revision to the history and social sciences framework, to consider how civics and history instruction includes civics education and requires consideration of that instruction to include civic engagement experiences with governmental institutions that are supportive of pupils earning the SSCE.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “SB 584 furthers existing law by creating pathways for students in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged at the local, state, and national levels of government. Civic education provides students with critical thinking and collaboration skills and empowers students with knowledge to become active participants in their communities and government. It is imperative to introduce them early to civic education and systems of government to create clear pathways towards a lifetime of civic engagement.”
- 2) ***California Serves Program.*** The California Serves Program was established through the 2022 State Budget Act as a collaboration between the CDE and California Volunteers to promote access to effective service-learning for high school students and support them in obtaining an SSCE through service-learning.

At the onset of the program, CDE and California Volunteers were tasked with reviewing the available evidence on ways to incorporate effective service-learning for pupils in grades 9 through 12, and to providing recommendations to the Legislature consistent with the recommended criteria and guidance for the SSCE, on evidence-based strategies to expand access to high-quality service-learning programs. The final report, published in January 2024, issued the following recommendations:

- a) Establish effective standards and indicators to guide the development of equitable, high-quality service-learning programs;
- b) Incorporate curriculum and strategies that encourage deep civic learning;
- c) Ensure teacher access to ongoing professional development and learning;
- d) Prioritize efforts to track who earns the SSCE; and
- e) Design meaningful infrastructure that promotes service-learning at all levels.

The California Serves Grant Program was also established in the 2022 Budget Act with an annual ongoing allocation of \$5 million to provide grants to eligible LEAs to help cover specified costs incurred in the development and facilitation of service-learning programs and to expand access for high school graduates in obtaining an SSCE. To apply for this grant, applicant LEAs must (1) have at least 55 percent of their student enrollment be unduplicated pupils as defined in statute and (2) serve students in grade 12. While promoting access to effective service-learning for students in grade 12 is the focus and eligibility criteria, the grant program provides LEAs with the flexibility to also support such programming for students as early as grade 9.

Since its pilot year in the 2022-23 school year, the California Serves Grant Program has awarded 23 LEAs with award amounts ranging from roughly \$24,000 to \$500,000—the maximum allowable under statute. The grant program is currently in its third cycle of funding and is anticipated to post the final award amounts for the most recent co-hort in the final week of April.

This bill would expand the eligibility criteria for the California Serves Grant Program to LEAs serving students in grades 1 through 12, inclusive, rather than just grade 12. The bill would also require CDE, in partnership with California Volunteers, to provide an updated set of recommendations to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2027, reflecting the expanded grade level range.

- 3) **Civic Engagement Pathways Program.** This bill requires LEAs to implement a Civic Engagement Pathway Program for students in grades 1 through 8 to increase student awareness and civic engagement in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. As part of the program, LEAs would be encouraged to establish local recognition programs to recognize pupils participating in Civic Engagement Pathway Programs based on locally developed criteria.

According to the author's office, LEAs would have flexibility in developing and implementing the newly required local programs but could refer to the existing resources developed by the State and other entities. Examples include the recommendations set forth in the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning's "Revitalizing K-12 Civic Learning in California: A Blueprint for Action" and the Power of Democracy Civic Learning Initiative.

The recognition programs referenced in the bill are intended to model after the Biliteracy Pathways Recognition Program—aligned with the State Seal of Biliteracy-- which helps LEAs recognize preschool, kindergarten, elementary, and middle school students who have demonstrated progress toward proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. The Biliteracy Pathway Recognition Program is an optional program and participation is voluntary. CDE provides optional criteria, guidance, and certificate templates as a resource. LEAs may choose to use or modify the materials and criteria to ensure they reflect the LEAs' respective program goals.

The Committee may wish to consider whether the existing resources provide sufficient support to school districts, COEs, and charter schools to establish and implement a newly required program. While some school districts and COEs have had success in voluntarily establishing programs that support civic engagement and service learning, concerns have been raised about the fiscal and administrative impacts that a statewide requirement for such a program may have without additional resources.

- 4) ***Civic Education Included in History-Social Science Curriculum Framework.*** California's History-Social Science Framework (Framework), adopted by the SBE in July 2016, addresses civic engagement throughout the document. According to CDE, the adopted Framework adds considerable information on civic learning, consistent with the work of the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning. It maintains its consistent focus on the founding documents of the United States, while also promoting the development of the habits and skills of good citizens. Suggestions for lessons and activities include simulations of government, student-led debates and research projects, voter education, and service learning that bring students into an active role in their local communities. Classroom examples featured in the Framework include several with a civic focus, such as:

- a) Kindergarten: Being a Good Citizen.
- b) Grade Three: Classroom Constitution.
- c) Grade Five: The Preamble.
- d) Grade Eight: The Civic Purpose of Public Education.
- e) Grade Twelve: Judicial Review.

The Framework also features an appendix titled "Practicing Civic Engagement: Service-Learning in the History–Social Science Framework" which outlines examples of service-learning projects throughout elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. These examples range from developing crosswalk safety solutions by working with school administrators to partnering with city leadership and local transit authorities to address bus overcrowding and improve transit availability.

- 5) **California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning of 2014 (Task Force).** In 2014, the Chief Justice of California and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) formed the Task Force to develop a set of recommendations to improve civic learning in our schools to address the need to revitalize civic learning in our state. To this end, the Task Force made the following system-wide recommendations to improve civic learning in every district, in every school, for every child:
- a) Revise the California History-Social Science Content Standards and accompanying curriculum frameworks to incorporate an emphasis on civic learning, starting in kindergarten, so that all students acquire the civic knowledge, skills, and values they need to succeed in college, career, and civic life.
 - b) Integrate civic learning into state assessment and accountability systems for students, schools, and districts. Civic knowledge, skills, values, and whether students are receiving learning opportunities that promote these outcomes must be assessed and linked to revised California History-Social Science Content Standards and relevant Common Core State Standards. This will enable periodic reporting to the Legislature and the public on the state of students' civic learning.
 - c) Improve professional learning experiences for teachers and administrators to help them implement civic learning in schools. Connect professional learning in civics to Common Core State Standards professional learning experiences.
 - d) Develop an articulated sequence of instruction in civic learning across all of K-12, pegged to revised standards. At each grade level, civic learning should draw on the research-based and include work that is action-oriented and project-based and that develops digital literacy.
 - e) Establish a communication mechanism so community stakeholders can easily connect with teachers and students on civic education and engagement. Students need to get out of the school building to practice civic engagement, and civic leaders need to come into schools to engage students.
 - f) Provide incentives for local school districts to fund civic learning in Local Control Accountability Plans under the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).
- 6) **State Seal of Civic Engagement.** On September 10, 2020, the SBE adopted criteria and guidance to award an SSCE to California students who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. To be eligible for the SSCE, students must:
- a) Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;

- b) Demonstrate a competent understanding of the United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;
- c) Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;
- d) Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection; and
- e) Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community, and/or society.

Successful completion of the requirements would be reflected by a seal affixed to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion. According to CDE's 2023-24 school year data, of the 345 schools that participate in the SSCE, 15,627 seals have been awarded to students.

7) ***Related legislation.***

SB 745 (Ochoa Bogh, 2025) would require, beginning with students graduating in the 2032–33 school year, the course in American government and civics to be a one-year course (rather than one semester) unless the governing board or body of a school district, COE, or charter school, as applicable, through a formal action at a publicly noticed meeting, elects to require only a one-semester course in American government and civics. SB 745 also requires the CDE, in collaboration with the SBE, to enter into a contract with a COE or a consortium of COEs for the purpose of developing a model curriculum for the one-year course in American government and civics. *SB 745 is scheduled to be heard by this Committee on April 30.*

AB 422 (Jackson, 2025) would require the SPI, by January 1, 2027, to recommend revised criteria to the SBE for awarding the SSCE, including a demonstrated understanding of the importance of preserving democracy and its vital institutions. *AB 422 is currently in Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

8) ***Prior legislation.***

SB 1094 (Limon, 2024) would have required further defined the social sciences course of study for grades one through 12 to include civic engagement experiences with governmental institutions and instruction in principles of democracy and the State and Federal Constitutions. *SB 1094 was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

AB 24 (Eggman, Chapter 604, Statutes of 2017) established the SSCE, to be affixed to the diploma of qualifying high school graduates, based on a demonstration of excellence in civics education and participation.

SB 521 (Wyland, 2013) would have required the SBE and the CDE to request that the IQC review and revise, as necessary, the course requirements in the history-social science framework to ensure that minimum standards for courses in American government and civics include the comparative differences between the rights of citizens in America and those in other countries, and the connection of civics and American government to western civilizations. *SB 521 was held in the Senate Education Committee.*

SUPPORT

Los Angeles County Office of Education (co-sponsor)
Sacramento County Board of Education (co-sponsor)
California Chamber of Commerce
California Council for the Social Studies
California County Superintendents
California Environmental Voters
California State PTA
Californians for Civic Learning
Generation Citizen
Glenn County Office of Education
iCivics
League of Women Voters of California
News Literacy Project

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 612	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Valladares		
Version:	April 10, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: Pupil instruction: high school graduation requirements: career technical education.

SUMMARY

This bill requires students to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in career technical education (CTE) in order to graduate from high school beginning with students graduating in the 2031-32 school year.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires a student to complete all of the following while in grades 9-12 in order to receive a diploma of graduation from high school (each course having a duration of one year unless otherwise specified):
 - a) Three courses in English.
 - b) Two courses in mathematics.
 - c) Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences.
 - d) Three courses in social studies, including United States history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics.
 - e) One course in visual or performing arts, world language, *or, until July 1, 2027, CTE*.
 - f) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has been exempted, as specified.
 - g) A one-semester course in ethnic studies beginning with students graduating in the 2029–30 school year.
 - h) A separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance, that shall not be combined with any other course, beginning with students graduating in the 2030–31 school year.

- i) Other coursework requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district. (Education Code (EC) § 51225.3)
- 2) Defines a course in CTE as a course in a district-operated CTE program that is aligned to the career technical model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE), including courses through a regional occupational center or program operated by a county superintendent of schools or pursuant to a joint powers agreement. (EC § 51225.3)
- 3) Requires a local educational agency (LEA), if it elects to allow a CTE course to satisfy the graduation requirement, before offering that alternative to students, to notify parents, teachers, students, and the public at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing board of all of the following:
 - a) The intent to offer CTE courses to fulfill the graduation requirement.
 - b) The impact that offering CTE courses to fulfill the graduation requirement will have on the availability of courses that meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC), and whether the CTE courses to be offered are approved to satisfy those eligibility requirements
 - c) The distinction, if any, between the high school graduation requirements of the school district or county office of education, and the eligibility requirements for admission to the CSU and the UC. (EC § 51225.3)
- 4) Beginning July 2, 2027, the high school graduation requirements no longer allow CTE as an option to fulfill the graduation requirement instead of visual/performing arts or world language. (EC § 51225.3)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires students to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in CTE that is not combined with any other course, in order to graduate from high school beginning with students graduating in the 2031-32 school year.
- 2) Requires high schools to offer at least a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in CTE that is not combined with any other course, beginning in the 2028-29 school year.
- 3) Authorizes the stand-alone one-semester course to be a CTE course offered at a community college pursuant to a partnership agreement between the LEA and a community college district.
- 4) Authorizes LEAs to require a separate, stand-alone one-year course in CTE that is not combined with any other course, at its discretion.

- 5) Authorizes LEAs to elect to eliminate one or more locally required courses in order to accommodate the requirement to complete a separate, stand-alone course in CTE.
- 6) Prohibits CTE courses from being used to satisfy the visual/performing arts or world language graduation requirement if the new stand-alone one-semester CTE graduation requirement is operative.
- 7) Eliminates existing requirements relative to providing notice about the impact of using CTE to satisfy the visual/performing arts or world language graduation requirements (such as not counting as an A-G course).
- 8) Conditions the requirements of this bill upon an appropriation for these purposes.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “SB 612 will expand the presence of Career Technical Education opportunities for high school students by requiring a one-semester standalone course of true CTE to the graduation requirements. Current California law does not explicitly require a standalone CTE course, but instead to be used as an option for an extracurricular course. Additionally, when CTE is used in classrooms, it is often used interchangeably with college prep courses. SB 612 will remedy this issue by providing students hands-on, skill-based training in trade and vocational fields. The shift from true CTE courses in the classroom to college readiness has marginalized students who do not intend to pursue the traditional 4-year college path. Reintroducing true CTE courses in the classroom has the potential to reduce the accumulation of student loan debt and college dropout rates as well.”
- 2) ***CTE courses that meet A-G requirements vs CTE courses that are not approved as meeting A-G.*** So called “A-G” represents the courses that students must successfully complete while in high school in order to be eligible for freshman admission to the CSU or the UC. The A-G requirements are as follows:
 - **A** – two years of **history** that include one year of world history, cultures or historical geography, and one year of U.S. history or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American government.
 - **B** – four years of college-preparatory **English** that include frequent writing, from brainstorming to final paper, as well as reading of classic and modern literature.
 - **C** - three years of college-preparatory **mathematics** that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry; a fourth year of math is strongly recommended. A geometry course or an integrated math course with a sufficient amount of geometry content must be completed. Approved integrated math courses may be used to fulfill part or all of this requirement, as may math courses taken in the seventh and eighth grades if the high school accepts them as

equivalent to its own courses.

- **D** - two years of college-preparatory **science**, including or integrating topics that provide fundamental knowledge in two of these three subjects: biology, chemistry, or physics. One year of approved interdisciplinary or earth and space sciences coursework can meet one year of the requirement. A third year of science is recommended. Computer Science, Engineering, Applied Science courses can be used in area D as an additional science (i.e., third year and beyond).
- **E** - two years, or equivalent to the 2nd level of high school instruction, of the same **language other than English** are required. Courses should emphasize speaking and understanding, and include instruction in grammar, vocabulary, reading, composition and culture. American Sign Language and classical languages, such as Latin and Greek, are acceptable, as are Native American languages. Courses taken in the seventh and eighth grades may be used to fulfill part or all of this requirement if the high school accepts them as equivalent to its own courses.
- **F** - one year-long course of **visual and performing arts** chosen from the following disciplines: dance, music, theater, visual arts or interdisciplinary arts.
- **G** - one year (two semesters) chosen from courses specific to the **elective** subject area or courses beyond those used to satisfy the requirements of the A-F subjects.

CTE courses that are used to fulfill high school graduation requirements must be aligned to the career technical model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the SBE, including courses through a regional occupational center or program operated by a county superintendent of schools or pursuant to a joint powers agreement. *CTE courses are not required to be aligned with A-G.* If a LEA chooses to align a CTE course with A-G, the course must either fit within a specific subject area such as science, or within the G category for electives.

The state does not require high school graduation requirements to align with the A-G requirements (some high schools do align their graduation requirements to A-G). To be eligible for freshman admission to the UC or the CSU, a student must complete, in addition to the state graduation requirements, two additional courses in mathematics (the fourth is strongly recommended), one additional course in the subjects of English and science (recommended), either one to three years of world languages and one year of visual and performing arts (depending upon the choices of the student in meeting state graduation requirements), and one elective course. These “A-G” courses must meet college preparatory standards, and for admission to UC, 11 of these courses must be taken before a student’s senior year of high school.

A reason to align CTE courses with A-G is to enable students who complete such

courses to also meet course requirements for admission to the CSU or UC. A reason not to align CTE courses with A-G is that each course must meet specific requirements and standards dictated by UC that may not be relevant for students who do not plan to seek admission to the CSU or UC (potentially preventing students from taking the CTE course).

- 3) ***How will a new graduation requirement improve or change CTE course offerings?*** The author raises concerns with existing CTE courses as being “college prep” extracurricular courses, and as a result marginalize students who do not intend to seek admission to the CSU or UC. This bill is meant to provide students with “hands-on, skill-based training in trade and vocational fields” and a reintroduction of “true CTE courses” in the classroom.

While this bill prohibits the new stand-alone one semester course in CTE from being combined with any other course, it does not prohibit the course from being an A-G eligible course. Many existing CTE course are approved as meeting the G requirement (one year of electives); however, the G requirement may be met by taking two one-semester courses, and those courses do not have to be in the same subject. As a result, the new stand-alone one semester course in CTE could be an A-G eligible course and may not necessarily be hands-on, skill-based training in trade and vocational fields (but could certainly be both A-G eligible and hands-on). The decision about which type of CTE course, and in which industry sector, would remain with LEAs.

If existing CTE courses are not meeting the needs of students, LEAs currently have the authority to modify those courses. If existing CTE courses, whether they meet A-G requirements or not, are not meeting industry needs, LEAs currently have the authority to modify those courses.

To the extent this bill requires LEAs to offer a stand-alone one semester course in CTE that is hands-on, skill-based training in trade and vocational fields, LEAs not currently offering such courses may need to hire appropriately trained, experienced, and credentialed teachers in those fields. Other fiscal challenges may persist relating to facilities and specialized equipment.

- 4) ***Adding high school graduation requirements.*** The state requires a minimum of a total of 13 year-long courses. Two additional graduation requirements will become effective in the coming years:
- Beginning with the graduating class of 2029–30, students will also be required to complete a one-semester course in ethnic studies as a condition of graduation.
 - Beginning with the graduating class of 2030–31, students will also be required to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance as a condition of graduation.

This committee will also consider SB 745 (Ochoa Bogh, 2025) which extends the existing graduation requirement for one-semester course in American government and civics to be a year-long course, beginning with the graduating

class of 2032-33 (unless LEA governing boards decide to only offer the existing one-semester course).

The committee may wish to consider whether students have room in their schedules for additional coursework. Depending upon a student's choices, a student taking seven classes in each of the four years of high school (many students do not) who plans to meet both state and UC/CSU requirements, has a maximum of six or seven elective course choices over four years. Students who do not take as many courses each year have fewer. Students who have other constraints on their schedules, including English learners and students with special needs, may have even fewer choices.

The committee may wish to consider whether LEAs want additional state graduation requirements (existing law authorizes additional local graduation requirements).

The committee may wish to consider whether the current, incremental approach to establishing graduation requirements is serving students and schools well, or if a comprehensive review of state graduation requirements is needed.

5) ***Recent coalition letter regarding legislation on curriculum and instruction.***

On April 16, 2025, a coalition of statewide education organizations and LEAs including the Association of California School Administrators, California School Board Association, California Association of School Business Officials, Alameda County Office of Education, Riverside County Office of Education, Small School Districts Association, Los Angeles Unified School District, and San Diego Unified School District, issued a joint letter citing concerns about the Legislature's introduction of a large number bills this year that amend required curriculum and state curriculum frameworks and that create new graduation requirements. The letter also cites concerns about legislative efforts in recent years that have added new requirements without removing or revising existing standards. The letter states the following, in part:

"When implementing new changes, timing is critical. It is not feasible for schools to amend their curriculum every year to address changing legislative requirements. Annual changes are a challenge for all districts but are particularly difficult for smaller districts which may lack the capacity to review and incorporate new material regularly. To the greatest extent possible, new requirements must be accompanied by sufficient time and funding to develop curriculum and provide professional development and administrative and coordinative supports. New requirements should also be aligned with comprehensive state policy frameworks, including the Governor's Master Plan for Career Technical Education released April 2, 2025.

"Students already receive a broad liberal arts education that prepares them to pursue a variety of career and life goals upon graduation. While well-intentioned, every additional required class removes the opportunity for a student to pursue an elective, career technical education, or advanced learning in a field of interest. Constricting options for students by mandating additional required classes further complicates master schedules at high schools and decreases the flexibility

necessary to increase enrollment in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment options for students. Additional required classes also compound scheduling challenges for students who need to complete English Language Development in addition to English Language Arts, students who need to retake classes to graduate, and other students who may fall behind the typical curriculum schedule.”

- 6) ***Existing CTE programs and initiatives.*** The following are existing state-supported CTE initiatives and programs that assist LEAs in offering high-quality CTE courses that meet industry needs:

The Career Technical Education Incentive Grant (CTEIG) Program was originally established in 2015 as a one-time investment of \$900 million to cover a three-year span and acted as a bridge for LEAs to support CTE programs until the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was fully funded. It was created as a state education, economic, and workforce development initiative to provide K-12 students with the knowledge and skills necessary to transition from secondary education to postsecondary education and living-wage employment. The purpose of the program is to encourage, maintain, and strengthen the delivery of high-quality CTE programs. Grants are awarded under the CTEIG program by CDE, in consultation with the SBE, in response to applications submitted by LEAs outlining the ways in which they meet the statutorily defined requirements, including a 2:1 match of local to state funding.

The K-12 Strong Workforce Program (SWP) was established in 2018 as a component of the Community Colleges’ SWP to create, support, or expand high-quality CTE programs at the secondary level that are aligned with the workforce development efforts occurring through the SWP. As is the case for CTEIG, the K-12 SWP is meant to support the overall development of high-quality K-12 CTE programs, courses, course sequences, programs of study, and pathways. The program is administered by the Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. The program is currently funded at \$150 million annually. Unlike the CTEIG program, which is administered at the state level, the Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office allocates K-12 SWP grant funding to eight regional consortia according to a statutory formula. Each regional consortium is required to administer a competitive grant program it receives to LEAs in the region.

The Golden State Pathways Program was established in 2022 to promote pathways in high-wage, high-skill, high-growth areas that allow students to advance seamlessly from high school to college and career; encourage collaboration between LEAs, institutions of higher education, local and regional employers, and other relevant community interest holders to develop, or expand the availability of, innovative college and career pathways that simultaneously align with an LEA’s local or regional labor market needs; and, enable more students to access postsecondary education opportunities and workforce training opportunities, or to obtain gainful employment in an industry that simultaneously aligns with local, regional, or state labor market needs. \$470 million was provided via grants for the 2024-25 school year.

California’s Master Plan for Career Education was released by the Governor on

April 2, 2025, to provide “a framework for responding to the complex, multifaceted challenges confronting California’s labor market and educational landscape. This plan, which builds on the 1960 plan, acknowledges the shifting demographics of college attendees and the changing nature of work—with automation and artificial intelligence reshaping job categories and skill requirements—and provides flexibility to address new challenges that will emerge in the future. In addition to identifying priority areas for future action, it provides examples of work already underway that could be scaled and replicated to attain shared goals.”

This new master plan includes several recommendations, including:

- a) A new statewide planning and coordinating body should be created that brings together the state’s education segments, workforce training providers, and employers. The coordinating body should evaluate changing economic needs and demand for skills, develop sector-based and cross-sector strategies, create statewide goals, align federal and state plans, coordinate efforts to maximize funding, coordinate implementation of specific federal and state programs, co-design programs to address workforce opportunities, and connect with regions.
- b) Pushing for universal availability and implementation of pathways programs would provide students from all backgrounds with clear roadmaps to gainful employment and career advancement. These pathways can be designed to provide experiential learning opportunities, shorten the time to a career, alleviate financial pressures, and empower individuals to actualize their dreams, all while contributing to social and economic mobility within communities.

The Master Plan for Career Education does not recommend adding a stand-alone course in CTE as an additional high school graduation requirement. [2025-CA-Master-Plan-for-Career-Education.pdf](#)

Also noteworthy is current legislation related to CTE, as described in # 7 below. LEAs have several existing ways to improve CTE course offerings and advance the benefits of such coursework.

7) ***Related legislation.***

AB 821 (Gipson, 2025) extends into perpetuity the existing authority for CTE courses to be used to satisfy the visual/performing arts or world language graduation requirement. AB 821 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 745 (Ochoa Bogh, 2025) extends the existing graduation requirement for one-semester course in American government and civics to be a year-long course, beginning with the graduating class of 2032-33 (unless LEA governing boards decide to only offer the existing one-semester course). SB 745 is scheduled to be heard by this committee on April 30.

SB 638 (Padilla, 2025) creates the Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program, administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), to support LEAs serving high-need areas. This bill also establishes the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity (Coordinating Entity) within the Government Operations Agency to serve as the statewide planning and coordinating body for CTE, career pathways, and workforce development. SB 638 is scheduled to be heard by this Committee on April 30.

SB 845 (Perez, 2025) makes several changes to the state's framework for CTE and work-based learning, including: (1) revising the process for updating model CTE curriculum standards by requiring consultation with CTE teachers and labor representatives; (2) expanding the authority of LEAs, including state special schools, to offer and award credit for work-based learning activities beginning in grade 10; (3) establishing an interagency workgroup to develop occupational frameworks for youth apprenticeships; and (4) requiring the California Department of Education (CDE) to collect data on work-based learning participation, subject to an appropriation. SB 845 is pending in the Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee.

SUPPORT

California Agricultural Teachers' Association
California Chamber of Commerce
College Board
Northern California Youth Policy Coalition
State Building and Construction Trades Council

OPPOSITION

Alameda County Office of Education
Association of California School Administrators
Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 531	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Rubio		
Version:	February 20, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: Course of study: mental health education.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the health area of study within the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6 and grades 7 to 12 to include mental health education, as specified.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, to include instruction, beginning in grade 1 and continuing through grade 6, in specified areas of study that include health, including instruction in the principles and practices of individual, family, and community health. (Education Code (EC) § 51210)
- 2) Requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), during the next revision of the publication “Health Framework for California Public Schools” (Health Framework), to consider developing and recommending for adoption by the State Board of Education (SBE), a distinct category on mental health instruction to educate pupils about all aspects of mental health. (EC § 51900.5)
- 3) Specifies, for purposes of (2) above, that “mental health instruction” shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Reasonably designed and age-appropriate instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health.
 - b) Defining common mental health challenges such as depression, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, and anxiety, including post-traumatic stress disorder.
 - c) Elucidating the services and supports that effectively help individuals manage mental health challenges.
 - d) Promoting mental health wellness, which includes positive development, social connectedness and supportive relationships, resiliency, problem solving skills, coping skills, self-esteem, and a positive school and home environment in which pupils feel comfortable.

- e) Ability to identify warning signs of common mental health problems in order to promote awareness and early intervention so pupils know to take action before a situation turns into a crisis. This should include instruction on both of the following:
 - i) How to appropriately seek and find assistance from mental health professionals and services within the school district and in the community for themselves or others.
 - ii) Appropriate evidence-based research and practices that are proven to help overcome mental health challenges.
 - f) The connection and importance of mental health to overall health and academic success, as well as to co-occurring conditions, such as chronic physical conditions and chemical dependence and substance abuse.
 - g) Awareness and appreciation about the prevalence of mental health challenges across all populations, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses, including the impact of culture on the experience and treatment of mental health challenges.
 - h) Stigma surrounding mental health challenges and what can be done to overcome stigma, increase awareness, and promote acceptance. This shall include, to the extent possible, classroom presentations of narratives by peers and other individuals who have experienced mental health challenges, and how they coped with their situations, including how they sought help and acceptance. (EC § 51900.5)
- 4) Requires the IQC, during the normal course of recommending curriculum frameworks to the SBE, to ensure that one or more experts in the mental health and educational fields provide input in the development of the mental health instruction in the Health Framework. (EC §51900.5)
 - 5) Requires each school district, COE, state special school, and charter school that offers one or more courses in health education to pupils in middle school or high school to include instruction in mental health in those courses, as specified. (EC § 51925)
 - 6) Requires that, on or before January 1, 2024, the California Department of Education (CDE) develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California public schools. (EC § 51929)
 - 7) Establishes the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) to be administered by the California Health and Human Services Agency (Cal HHS) to transform California's behavioral health system in which all children and youth 25 years of age and younger, regardless of payer, are screened, supported, and served for emerging and existing behavioral health needs. (Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) § 5961)

- 8) Establishes the Mental Health Student Services Act as a grant program for the purpose of establishing mental health partnerships between a county's mental health or behavioral health departments and school districts, charter schools, and the COE within a county. Requires the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission to award grants to fund partnerships, subject to an appropriation being made for this purpose. (WIC § 5886)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) This bill requires the health area of study within the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6 and grades 7 to 12 to include mental health education. Mental health education shall include the following:
 - a) Reasonably designed and age-appropriate instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health.
 - b) Defining common mental health challenges such as depression, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, and anxiety, including post-traumatic stress disorder.
 - c) Elucidating the services and supports that effectively help individuals manage mental health challenges.
 - d) Promoting mental health wellness, which includes positive development, social connectedness and supportive relationships, resiliency, problem solving skills, coping skills, self-esteem, and a positive school and home environment in which pupils feel comfortable.
 - e) Ability to identify warning signs of common mental health problems in order to promote awareness and early intervention so pupils know to take action before a situation turns into a crisis. This should include instruction on both of the following:
 - i) How to appropriately seek and find assistance from mental health professionals and services within the school district and in the community for themselves or others.
 - ii) Appropriate evidence-based research and practices that are proven to help overcome mental health challenges.
 - f) The connection and importance of mental health to overall health and academic success as well as to co-occurring conditions, such as chronic physical conditions and chemical dependence and substance abuse.
 - g) Awareness and appreciation about the prevalence of mental health challenges across all populations, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses, including the impact of culture on the experience and treatment of mental health challenges.

- h) Stigma surrounding mental health challenges and what can be done to overcome stigma, increase awareness, and promote acceptance. This shall include, to the extent possible, classroom presentations of narratives by peers and other individuals who have experienced mental health challenges, and how they coped with their situations, including how they sought help and acceptance.
- 2) Adds findings and declarations related to the need for mental health intervention in California schools.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “As a teacher, I’ve seen first-hand the many challenges that students and young adults face today. Students are facing unprecedented mental health challenges, from social media and the aftereffects of COVID-19 to fears and trauma around wildfires, school threats, and changes in immigration policy. Mental health education is crucial for increasing awareness, tackling stigma, and encouraging health-seeking behavior. I’m proud to introduce SB 531, which ensures that students receive age-appropriate mental health education in schools.”
- 2) ***Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.*** In May 2019, the SBE adopted the Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, to provide instructional guidance and support to California teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, other educators, and school boards for implementation of the health education content standards. The framework covers six content areas of health education: nutrition and physical activity; growth, development, and sexual health; injury prevention and safety; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; mental, emotional, and social health; and personal and community health.

While mental, emotional, and social health education are included as one of the six standalone content areas, they also link to other content in health education as a part of substance use prevention, healthy eating and physical activity, healthy relationships and body image, violence prevention, personal health, and seeking health services.

The chart below summarizes the minimum recommended grade-level assignments for each of the six content areas. Mental, Emotional, and Social Health standards are included in kindergarten, grades 2, 3, and 6, middle, and high school:



Grade-Level Emphasis	Nutrition and Physical Activity	Growth, Development, and Sexual Health		Injury Prevention and Safety	Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs	Mental, Emotional, and Social Health	Personal and Community Health
		Growth and Development	Sexual Health				
Kindergarten	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 1		✓		✓			✓
Grade 2	✓				✓	✓	
Grade 3		✓				✓	✓
Grade 4	✓			✓	✓		
Grade 5	✓	✓	✓				✓
Grade 6				✓	✓	✓	
Grades 7 and 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High School (Grades 9 Through 12)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Developed by the Orange County Department of Education in partnership with the CDE

After a new curriculum framework is adopted, the SBE typically adopts instructional materials for kindergarten through grade 8, which align with the framework and content standards, and local education agencies (LEAs) typically adopt instructional materials for use by students in transitional kindergarten and grades nine through twelve (see Comment 7). However, according to CDE, the SBE canceled the 2020 state adoption of health instructional materials due to a lack of publisher interest.

In the absence of statewide adoption, schools have used the [Health Education Instructional Materials Evaluation Toolkit](#) and the [Mental Health Education Instructional Materials Assessment Tools](#)—both resources developed by the Orange County Department of Education in partnership with the CDE to help local districts in their evaluation and adoption of new instructional materials that align with the 2008 Health Education Standards, the 2019 Health Education Curriculum Framework, and California Education Code.

- 3) **Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative.** Launched in July 2021, CYBHI is a multiyear, multi-billion-dollar effort focused on improving the behavioral health and well-being of children, youth, and families. The CYBHI is the core of the Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health, the state's \$4.7 billion investment to overhaul its mental health system and enhance the pathways connecting families with the needed services. According to the CYBHI's 2024 annual report, CYBHI investments have taken form in the following work streams in educational settings:

- a) *Safe Spaces Trauma Informed Training* – A free, online training designed to help individuals working with children and youth recognize and respond to signs of trauma and stress.
 - b) *CalHOPE Mindfulness, Resilience, and Well-being Supports* – Providing no-cost mental health and wellness resources to schools across the state. The website contains resources that focus on creating trusted spaces, building resilience, and recognizing the signs of mental stress and duress in colleagues, students, and family members.
 - c) *Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program* – Addressing behavioral health access barriers for Medi-Cal students through targeted interventions that increase access to preventive, early intervention, or other behavioral health services provided by school-affiliated behavioral health providers for TK-12 children in public schools.
 - d) *School-Linked Partnership and Capacity Grants* - Providing COEs and LEAs, as well as institutions of higher education (IHEs), with critical resources to build infrastructure and partnerships and achieve a long-term and sustainable funding model for student behavioral health services. These one-time grants aim to increase operational readiness to engage in the CYBHI Fee Schedule program through supporting Medi-Cal enrollment, building service delivery and billing infrastructure, establishing data collection and documentation processes, and supporting collective impact efforts.
 - e) *CYBHI Fee Schedule Program* - Increases access to school-linked behavioral health services. The program establishes a sustainable reimbursement source from Managed Care Plans, commercial health insurance, and disability insurers. Covered services include outpatient mental health or substance use disorder services for students under 26 years of age. The Fee Schedule creates a more approachable billing model for LEAs and public IHEs, easing burdens related to contracting, rate negotiation, and navigation across delivery systems, and reducing uncertainty around students' health insurance coverage.
 - f) *Transforming Together* - Supported by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, Transforming Together (T2) brings together a cross-sector Collaborative Leadership Working Group to align and integrate systems efforts for a re-imagined, youth-centered behavioral health ecosystem. Work is conducted in close partnership with CDE's California Community Schools Partnership Program and piloted in four demonstration counties.
- 4) ***Existing Requirements for Mental Health Education.*** In 2021, California passed SB 224 (Portantino, Chapter 675, Statutes of 2021), requiring each LEA, COE, state special school, and charter school that offers one or more courses in health education to students in middle or high school to include instruction in mental health within those course offerings. This requirement went into effect on January 1, 2022.

- 5) ***Mental Health Instruction Expansion Education Plan.*** In addition to the instructional requirements outlined in Comment 3 above, SB 224 (Portantino, Chapter 675, Statutes of 2021) required the CDE to develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California schools. Since the passage of the bill, CDE has published its [Mental Health Instruction Expansion Education Plan](#) alongside a series of webinars to help LEAs:
- a) Understand that mental health education is a universal support and a part of California Health Education;
 - b) Identify resources to analyze, expand, and enhance current mental health education efforts, including scope and sequence, instructional strategies, instructional materials, and professional development opportunities; and
 - c) Make a plan to enhance and expand their mental health education to address the well-being of students in an effort to ensure all students thrive in a safe and supportive learning environment.
- 6) ***Joint Curriculum Policy: Course of Study.*** On March 19, 2025, the Senate and Assembly Committees on Education adopted a joint curriculum policy that discourages the introduction of measures which require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum through changes to the curriculum frameworks or the course of study which require that specific curriculum be taught.

This bill requires a modification to the course of study for the health area of instruction in grades 1 through 12 to require the inclusion of mental health education, as specified. *SB 531 is in violation of the jointly adopted curriculum policy.*

While the intent of the bill is laudable in light of the true mental health crisis faced by California's students, the practical effect is not achieved through the manner by which the bill was drafted, as a "course of study" does not necessarily reflect the instruction that is ultimately provided in the classroom. Instead, instruction is guided by content standards and curricular frameworks that are developed and adopted by the IQC and SBE as outlined in Comment 7.

- 7) ***The Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education.*** The Legislature has vested the IQC and the SBE with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The IQC develops curriculum frameworks through a process involving practitioners and experts who have in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The frameworks are then adopted by the SBE in a public meeting. The SBE also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks for grades K-8. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional

materials aligned to these standards and frameworks. This process has traditionally occurred on a regular schedule, giving schools a predictable timetable to plan and budget for changes to the curriculum. Local adoption of new curricula also involves significant local cost and investment of resources for professional development.

Legislation requiring the curriculum frameworks or the course of study to contain specific content overrides this careful and deliberate process. Because legislation forces the inclusion of content without the benefit of thorough review and benefit of context, it can also inadvertently displace other important content in the curriculum.

In light of the most recent changes to mental health instructional requirements established by SB 224 (Portantino, Chapter 675, Statutes of 2021), *the Committee may wish to consider whether further expansion of required mental health education would benefit from more comprehensive information on how mental health education has been integrated into health instruction so far.*

8) ***Recent coalition letter regarding legislation on curriculum and instruction.***

On April 16, 2025, a coalition of statewide education organizations and LEAs, comprised of the Association of California School Administrators, the Small School Districts Association, the California Association of School Business Officials, the California School Board Association, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the San Diego Unified School District, Riverside County Office of Education, and the Alameda County Office of Education, issued a joint letter citing concerns about the Legislature's introduction of a large number of bills this year that amend required curriculum and state curriculum frameworks and that create new graduation requirements. The coalition also cites concerns about legislative efforts in recent years that have added new requirements without removing or revising existing standards. The letter states the following, in part:

"We believe that the existing State Board of Education process is the appropriate mechanism for new curriculum to be incorporated into existing frameworks, rather than piecemeal efforts. The Legislature has an existing opportunity to inform these discussions, since there are Legislators appointed to serve on the Instructional Quality Commission. Given the fixed amount of instructional time to meet all mandated curriculum, no required element should be added unless another element can be identified to be removed or amended to meet the new requirement. We urge the Legislature to recommend to the State Board of Education that during its next curriculum framework updates to consider what elements of the curriculum are outdated or no longer a priority and may be removed to make room for more modern curriculum."

9) ***Related legislation.***

AB 86 (Boerner, 2025) would require the SBE to, on or before July 1, 2028, adopt instructional materials for health education. *AB 86 is currently in Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

AB 1034 (Ávila Farías, 2025) would require the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), The bill would also require the CTC to include in its teacher performance assessment an assessment of a teacher credential candidate's knowledge of youth mental health. *AB 1034 is currently in Assembly Education Committee.*

10) ***Prior legislation.***

SB 509 (Portantino, 2023) would have (1) required, by July 1, 2027, a LEA serving students in grades 7 to 12 to certify to the CDE that 100 percent of its certificated employees and 40 percent of its classified employees have received youth behavioral health training identified by the CDE; and (2) added mental health to the course of study for grades 1 to 6. *SB 509 was vetoed by Governor Newsom with the following message:*

“I share the author’s goal of ensuring that school staff are equipped with the tools to recognize and offer appropriate support to students experiencing mental health challenges. However, I have concerns with some aspects of the bill as written, including the appropriate scope of the required, one-time training and the lack of an appropriate mechanism to fund the bill via the Gun Violence Prevention and School Safety Fund (AB 28, Chapter 231, Statutes of 2023).”

SB 224 (Portantino, Chapter 675, Statutes of 2021) requires schools that offer one or more courses in health education to pupils in middle school or high school to include in those courses instruction in mental health, as specified. SB 224 also required the CDE to develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California public schools.

SB 330 (Padilla, Chapter 481, Statutes of 2013) requires the IQC, during the next revision of the Health Framework, to consider developing a distinct category on mental health instruction to educate pupils about all aspects of mental health.

SUPPORT

California Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (co-sponsor)
 California Alliance of Child and Family Services (co-sponsor)
 National Alliance on Mental Illness-California (co-sponsor)
 National Center for Youth Law (co-sponsor)
 The Children’s Partnership (co-sponsor)
 Alameda County Office of Education Youth Advisory Board
 Aldea Children & Family Services
 Association of California Healthcare Districts
 Beach Cities Health District
 California Alliance of Caregivers
 California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions
 California Association of Mental Health Peer Run Organizations
 California Association of Student Councils
 California Behavioral Health Association
 California Coalition for Behavioral Health

California Family Life Center
California Psychological Association
California School-Based Health Alliance
California Youth Empowerment Network
Californians for Justice
Children's Institute
County Behavioral Health Directors Association
Helpline Youth Counseling
Hillsides
Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties
Lincoln Families
Maryvale
Napa County Office of Education
National Center for Youth Law
Occupational Therapy Association of California
Public Advocates
Public Works Alliance
Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition
Seneca Family of Agencies
St. Anne's Family Services
Sycamores
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
United Parents
What We All Deserve
1 Individual

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 638
Author: Padilla
Version: April 22, 2025
Urgency: No
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Hearing Date: April 30, 2025

Fiscal: Yes

Subject: California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity: Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program.

SUMMARY

The bill creates the Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program, administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), to support local educational agencies (LEAs) serving high-need areas. This bill also establishes the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity (Coordinating Entity) within the Government Operations Agency (GovOps) to serve as the statewide planning and coordinating body for career technical education (CTE), career pathways, and workforce development.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program (CTEIG) to support high-quality CTE programs in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, through ongoing state funding, in partnership with LEAs and regional consortia. (Education Code (EC) §§ 53070–53076)
- 2) Establishes the K-12 Strong Workforce Program (SWP) to expand high-quality CTE in K-12 schools through regional planning and funding aligned with California’s community college SWP. (EC § 88827)
- 3) Establishes the Golden State Pathways Program to promote college and career readiness by funding partnerships between K-12 schools and community colleges that integrate academic coursework with college credit and workforce preparation. (EC § 53010 et seq.)
- 4) Establishes the Teacher Residency Grant Program, which provides funding to LEAs to develop and implement teacher residency programs in partnership with institutions of higher education. These programs support teacher candidates in completing coursework while receiving intensive mentoring in a school setting. (EC § 44393)
- 5) Establishes the School Counselor Residency Grant Program, modeled after the teacher residency framework, which provides grants for LEAs to develop and

support school counselor preparation programs that integrate academic coursework with on-site training. (EC § 44394)

- 6) Creates the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) as the state's primary workforce policy board, responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing California's workforce development strategy. (Unemployment Insurance Code § 14010 et seq.)
- 7) Creates the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to provide leadership and technical assistance to the state's 116 community colleges and administer programs that enhance access to higher education and vocational training. (EC §§ 78015–78017)
- 8) Creates the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems, as California's two public university systems, providing undergraduate, graduate, and professional education across dozens of campuses. Both systems offer CTE-aligned programs, particularly in fields such as education, health care, and engineering, and participate in efforts to expand access to applied learning and workforce training. (EC § 66010 et seq.)
- 9) Creates the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE), within the Department of Consumer Affairs, to license and regulate private postsecondary institutions in California. (EC § 94800 et seq.)
- 10) Creates the California Cradle-to-Career Data System to link educational, social service, and workforce data to support student success, policy analysis, and program improvement. (EC §§10850–10889)
- 11) Creates GovOps, responsible for improving government efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. (Government Code § 12803.2)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program, which:
 - a) Directs the SPI to administer a new grant program for LEAs serving high-unemployment or high-poverty areas.
 - b) Allows grant funds to be used for apprenticeships, dual enrollment, earn and learn, pre-apprenticeships, service learning, and work-based learning.
 - c) Requires LEAs to demonstrate collaboration with labor and business partners, report student outcome data annually, and partner with a community college district to establish or expand career pathways.
 - d) Prioritizes funding for applicants serving historically underrepresented populations and providing holistic support services.

- 2) Creates the Coordinating Entity within GovOps.
- 3) Establishes the Coordinating Entity's membership, including representatives or designees from each of the following:
 - a) UC;
 - b) CSU;
 - c) CCCCCO;
 - d) Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU);
 - e) BPPE;
 - f) State Board of Education (SBE);
 - g) CWDB;
 - h) California Student Aid Commission;
 - i) Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz);
 - j) A representative of a local workforce development board;
 - k) A student enrolled at a CSU, UC, or a CCC campus;
 - l) A representative of the California Apprenticeship Council;
 - m) A student enrolled in a postsecondary career technical education program;
 - n) A labor representative with workforce development experience, appointed by the Governor;
 - o) The SPI, or their designee.
- 4) Assigns responsibilities to the Coordinating Entity, including:
 - a) Streamlining rules, allocations, and reporting for programs such as the Golden State Pathways Program, teacher and counselor residency grants, and apprenticeship programs.
 - b) Evaluating intersegmental programs (dual enrollment, cross-enrollment, etc.) for regulatory feasibility.
 - c) Assessing student costs and recommending improvements in financial aid access and coordination with benefit programs.

- d) Coordinating interagency program administration and issuing related guidance or regulations.
- e) Developing a state CTE/workforce plan in consultation with education segments and the CWDB, resolving conflicts among segmental plans, and reporting findings to the Legislature.
- f) Providing policy advice to the Governor and Legislature, including during the budget process.
- g) Reviewing and aligning program priorities and proposing statutory changes as needed.
- h) Creating a review process for approval and disestablishment of programs to align with state priorities.
- i) Identifying future educational and workforce needs, including regional and demographic analysis.
- j) Building and maintaining a centralized database for CTE and workforce development data, compatible with existing education data systems.
- k) Ensuring data privacy, particularly regarding student information.
- l) Consulting with education segments, including public, independent, and private institutions.
- m) Reporting annually to the Governor and Legislature and issuing additional reports as needed.
- n) Requiring prioritization of duties in the event of insufficient funding, with a minimum requirement to streamline program rules and reporting.
- o) Entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Office of Cradle-to-Career Data for purposes of accessing the tools and data stored in the Cradle-to-Career Data System.
- p) Within three months of its first meeting, developing a strategic plan to guide it in performing its duties pursuant to this section.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Too many Californians are struggling to access a high quality job. Seventy percent of Californians think that when children in California today grow up, they will be worse off financially than their parents. At the same time, if current trends continue, about 40% of jobs in California will require at least a bachelor’s degree by 2030. Our state is at a critical juncture – more Californians need access to a pathway that leads to a quality job and our economy needs a workforce ready to meet the needs of a rapidly changing labor market. Although the need for more education and

training is clear, accessing education and training is hard because of an antiquated workforce development system that is too difficult to access. By establishing the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity, we can improve effectiveness of programming by reducing inefficiencies, increasing access by reducing bureaucratic hurdles, increasing the number of career pathways, and improving the evaluation of education and workforce development programming.”

- 2) ***Fragmentation in CTE and workforce programs is real—but is this the fix?*** California’s CTE and workforce development systems are widely recognized as fragmented. Programs are administered across multiple education segments, workforce agencies, and funding streams, including the CTEIG, K–12 SWP, and Golden State Pathways Program. This bill proposes to address those longstanding concerns by establishing a new statewide coordinating entity within GovOps, charged with resolving programmatic inconsistencies, aligning plans, and streamlining regulations.

However, the bill’s approach raises a structural question: will the creation of a new entity reduce fragmentation, or contribute to it? The Coordinating Entity would exist alongside the CWDB, the CCCCCO, the Cradle-to-Career Data System, and existing regional and cross-segmental bodies. Several of its proposed responsibilities—such as issuing regulatory guidance, coordinating state-adopted programs, and developing a unified state plan—overlap with those of existing agencies. Without clear integration mechanisms or statutory authority to align or override existing plans, the risk of duplicative or parallel efforts remains.

- 3) ***New grant program amidst a crowded and reforming funding landscape.*** The bill establishes a new grant program to fund career pathways and work-based learning in high-poverty or high-unemployment areas, targeting many of the same objectives as the CTEIG, SWP, and Golden State Pathways Program. The allowable uses—apprenticeships, dual enrollment, work-based learning, and earn-and-learn models—are already supported by existing programs with significant state investment.

The Governor’s proposed Career Education Master Plan is expected to consolidate and align existing CTE and workforce funding streams. In that context, it is unclear how the proposed new grant program would fit into broader efforts to reduce duplication and streamline access. The addition of another standalone program, absent a strategy for integration, may run counter to current state priorities.

- 4) ***Scope of responsibilities may exceed practical capacity.*** The range of duties assigned to the Coordinating Entity is broad, including program oversight, regulatory action, stakeholder consultation, data infrastructure, and student access analysis. Although the bill allows prioritization of duties in the event of limited funding, successfully carrying out even a portion of these responsibilities will require significant resources, staffing, and interagency cooperation. Without sustained support and clearly defined authority, the Coordinating Entity may struggle to move beyond high-level planning to operational impact.

- 5) ***Equity considerations and nontraditional students.*** This bill correctly highlights the importance of reaching student populations who are often underserved by traditional systems, such as adult learners, parenting students, and first-generation college-goers. These groups face structural and logistical barriers to participation in education and training programs. However, the Coordinating Entity's role in addressing those barriers appears largely advisory. It is unclear whether the entity would have the authority to compel institutional or programmatic changes that would meaningfully improve access or outcomes for these learners.
- 6) ***Lessons from California's previous higher education coordinating body.*** California previously had a statewide coordinating body for higher education—the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC)—established in 1973 to advise the Governor and Legislature on long-range planning and coordination across the UC, CSU, and community college systems. While its mission was broadly aligned with the goals of this bill, CPEC faced challenges related to limited authority, insufficient funding, and questions about its relevance in a changing policy environment. The state defunded CPEC in 2011, and it was formally eliminated in 2013. The Coordinating Entity proposed by this bill is similar to some of CPEC's original purposes—such as data integration, intersegmental coordination, and systemwide planning—but does not directly address the conditions that limited CPEC's effectiveness. If the Coordinating Entity is to succeed where previous efforts fell short, it will need clearly defined authority, strong interagency relationships, and long-term support from both the executive and legislative branches.
- 7) ***Overlap with SB 790 (Cabaldon), which proposes a postsecondary coordinating entity.*** SB 790 (Cabaldon, 2025) proposes to designate a single state agency as the principal state operating and coordinating entity for postsecondary education. That entity would be responsible for implementing and evaluating the Governor's forthcoming Master Plan for Career Education, as well as coordinating intersegmental policies and major initiatives such as dual enrollment, the Golden State Pathways Program, and the Cradle-to-Career Data System.

This bill proposes a separate statewide coordinating entity, also within the executive branch, and also tasked with overseeing intersegmental planning, alignment of career education programs, and streamlining of state CTE grant programs. While the two bills focus on overlapping objectives, this bill does not reference or align with the structure proposed in SB 790, nor does it clarify whether the Coordinating Entity it creates would be subordinate to, housed within, or entirely independent from the coordinating entity to be designated under SB 790.

Absent clarification or integration, there is a risk that the state could create two competing statewide coordinating entities—one focused broadly on postsecondary implementation and another narrowly on CTE and workforce programs, with overlapping mandates and unclear lines of authority. Clarifying the relationship between the two entities, or consolidating them into a single

structure, may be necessary to avoid undermining the goals of alignment and simplification that both bills seek to achieve.

SUPPORT

Aspire Public Schools
Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities
Calbright College
California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy
Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations
GRACE - End Child Poverty CA
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Jobs for the Future
John Burton Advocates for Youth
National University
The California Alliance for Student Parent Success
Unite-LA

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 644	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Blakespear		
Version:	March 25, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: Political Reform Act of 1974: contribution limits.

SUMMARY

This bill applies, beginning January 1, 2027, the existing contribution limitations for state elective offices to candidates for judicial, school district, or community college district elections.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) and makes it responsible for the impartial, effective administration and implementation of the Political Reform Act of 1974 (PRA). (Government Code (GOV) § 83100 et seq.)
- 2) Authorizes a special district, school district, or community college district to limit campaign contributions in elections to district offices. (Election Code § 10544; Education Code § 35177 and § 72029)
- 3) Establishes contribution limits for *state elective office* (other than from a small contributor committee or political party committee), and requires the FPPC to adjust the contribution limitations every other year. See Comment # 2 for current limit amounts. (GOV § 85301 and § 85316)
- 4) Authorizes a county or city, by ordinance or resolution, to impose a limit on contributions to a candidate for *elective county or city office* that is different than limits for state offices. Existing law also authorizes the limitation to be imposed by means of a county or city initiative measure. (GOV § 85702.5)

ANALYSIS

This bill applies, beginning January 1, 2027, the existing contribution limitations for state elective offices to candidates for judicial, school district, or community college district elections. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Applies the existing contribution limitations on candidates seeking state elective offices (such as the State Senate or State Assembly) to candidates seeking

elective offices to the judiciary, a county, city, school district, or community college district.

- 2) Extends to the Judicial Council, school districts, and community college districts the authority to impose (by ordinance, resolution or initiative measure) a limit on contributions that is more restrictive than limits for state offices (similar to the existing authority for a county or city to impose a limit on contributions for elective county or city office that is different than limits for state offices).
- 3) Clarifies that a *county or city's* limit on contributions that is in effect on January 1, 2021, is deemed to be the contribution limit.
- 4) Deems a school district's or community college district's limit on contributions that is in effect on January 1, 2027, as the contribution limit. This allows time for the development of their own contribution limits before the provisions of this bill would apply.
- 5) Authorizes the Judicial Council, a school district, or community college district to adopt enforcement standards for a violation of the contribution limit, which may include administrative, civil, or criminal penalties.
- 6) Provides that the FPPC is not responsible for the administration or enforcement of a contribution limit adopted by the Judicial Council, a school district, or a community college district pursuant to # 2.
- 7) Requires the FPPC to issue guidance for the implementation of this bill.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "A recent Pew Research Center report finds that 77% of the public believes there should be limits on the amount of money individuals and organizations can spend on political campaigns. Yet, currently there are no limits on campaign contributions for judicial, school district, and community college elections.

"In Senate District 38, the Orange County Board of Education received up to \$50,000 in donations, much more than allowed for city or county campaigns. SB 644 would ensure campaign contribution limits for judicial, school district elections align with existing limits for all other local elective offices. This bill would place reasonable limits on the money in these races to help ensure fairness in local elections."

- 2) ***State contribution limits don't apply to local governments with their own limits or to school board and community college elections.*** The existing contribution limits that apply to candidates for elective state office were enacted via Proposition 34 on the November, 2000 ballot through passage of SB 1223 (Burton, Chapter 102, Statutes of 2000). These limits are adjusted by the FPPC biennially. While Proposition 34 established new campaign contribution limits for elections to *state* office, it did not contain contribution limits for elections to *local*

office. Subsequent legislation in 2020 established a contribution limit for elective county or city office at the level for a candidate for elective state office, but did not impose a limit for candidates for school districts, community college districts, or the judiciary.

This bill applies the existing contribution limitations for state elective offices to elections for school districts, community college districts, and judicial offices that don't have their own limits in place before January 1, 2027.

The limits on contributions by individuals contained in Proposition 34 ranged from \$3,000 (for candidates for Assembly and Senate) to \$20,000 per election (for candidates for Governor), and are required to be adjusted for inflation every two years – these limits were adjusted in January 2025. The 2025-26 contribution limits range from \$5,900 per election for candidates for Assembly and Senate to \$39,200 for candidates for Governor. [State Contribution Limits and Voluntary Expenditure Ceilings](#)

- 3) **Local Campaign Ordinances.** Under existing law, local government agencies have the ability to adopt campaign ordinances that apply to elections within their jurisdictions. Aside from some restrictions in the PRA, local government agencies generally have had a significant amount of latitude when developing local campaign finance ordinances that apply to elections in those agencies' jurisdictions.

The FPPC's website currently includes campaign finance ordinances from 23 counties, 160 cities, and three special districts. The campaign ordinances adopted by local governments in California vary significantly in terms of their scope. In some cases, the ordinances include campaign contribution limits, reporting and disclosure requirements that supplement the requirements of the PRA, and voluntary public financing of local campaigns, among other provisions.

According to a 2016 report prepared by California Common Cause, approximately 23 percent of cities and 28 percent of counties in the state have adopted local campaign contribution limits. Of the 124 local jurisdictions identified in the report as having adopted local campaign contribution limits, only one (Alameda County) has a limit on campaign contributions from individuals that is higher than the \$4,700 per election limit for state offices; more than 90 percent of the cities that have adopted contribution limits have limits of \$1,000 or less.

- 4) **What about candidates to county boards of education?** This bill specifically applies to contributions to candidates for school district, community college district, or judicial elections. *While it appears that this bill would also apply to elections for county boards of education, the author may wish to clarify moving forward.*
- 5) **Technical amendment.** This bill was heard by the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee on April 29; the vote is not available at the time of the completion of this analysis. The author agreed to technical amendments while this bill was in the Senate Elections and Constitutional

Amendments Committee; these amendments are to be adopted by this Committee due to timing:

On page 15, strike lines 35-37, strike the authority for school districts or community college districts to also impose contribution limits by means of an initiative measure.

6) ***Prior legislation.***

SB 328 (Dodd, 2023) was very similar to this bill. SB 328 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1089 (Mullin, 2017) would have imposed default contribution limits for all levels of local government (including school districts and special districts). AB 1089 was held on the Assembly Appropriations Committee's suspense file.

AB 2523 (Mullin, 2016) was substantially similar to AB 1089. AB 2523 failed passage on the Senate Floor.

SUPPORT

California Clean Money Campaign
California Common CAUSE

OPPOSITION

California Teachers Association
CFT- A Union of Educators & Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 751	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Becker		
Version:	April 28, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Veterans and Former First Responders Research Pilot Program.

SUMMARY

This bill requests the University of California (UC) to establish local pilots in up to five counties to allow for the research and development of psilocybin services for target populations. It further requests UC to partner with and oversee institutions within UC that are to be responsible for protocol design, institutional review board approvals, administration, data collection, and reporting. Lastly, the bill establishes a special fund in the State Treasury for Veterans and First Responders Research Pilot.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes, under the California Constitution, the UC as a public trust to be administered by the Regents of the UC with full powers of organization and government, subject only to such legislative control as may be necessary to insure the security of its funds and compliance with the terms of the endowments of the university, and such competitive bidding procedures as may be made applicable to the university for construction contracts, selling real property, and purchasing materials, goods and services. (Constitution of California, Article IX, Section 9)
- 2) States, under the California Constitution, that the university be entirely independent of all political or sectarian influence and kept free therefrom in the appointment of its regents and in the administration of its affairs. (Constitution of California, Article IX, Section 9 (f))
- 3) Provides that statutes related to UC (and most other aspects of the governance and operation of UC) are applicable only to the extent that the Regents of UC make such provisions applicable. (Education Code (EC) § 67400)
- 4) Declares the UC as the primary state-supported academic agency for research. (EC § 66010.4 (c))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requests the UC to establish local pilots in up to five counties to allow for the research and development of psilocybin services for target populations and to oversee each university partner.
- 2) Requires university partners to be responsible for protocol design, institutional review board approvals, administration, data collection, and reporting.
- 3) Requires that the university partner overseeing each local pilot to maintain strict protocols following the most recent guidelines from the United States Food and Drug Administration related to clinical trials for psychedelics.
- 4) Requires psilocybin to be provided by, or under the supervision of, a practitioner who has experience in providing or overseeing psilocybin or other psychedelic therapy services.
- 5) Requires the local pilot to partner with Pilot Program providers that provide services and care to the target population.
- 6) Requires each local pilot to ensure that each person being considered for the Pilot Program meets, at a minimum, all of the following criteria:
 - a) Is part of the target population.
 - b) Has a documented qualifying condition pursuant to this bill.
 - c) Is 21 years of age or older.
 - d) Has been given an initial assessment by the practitioner described in # 4 to determine the person is appropriate to participate in the Pilot Program.
- 7) Provides that the purpose of the assessment is to understand each participant's goals and expectations, and to assess their mental and physical health history for any concerns that require further intervention or information before receiving psilocybin therapy services and an integration session after receiving psilocybin therapy services.
- 8) Requires each local pilot to ensure that, prior to being enrolled in the Pilot Program, each person in the target population has been informed about, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - a) The implications of being treated with psilocybin and any possible or documented side effects or immediate and lasting aftereffects.
 - b) Other treatments that may be effective if the person has not previously been treated.
 - c) The option to speak to a peer or other counselor prior to accepting participation in the Pilot Program, as well as future opportunities to speak to a peer or other counselor.

- d) The option to withdraw from the Pilot Program at any time, and their right to receive aftercare, if necessary, upon ending treatment with psilocybin.
- 9) Requires each local pilot to collect and provide data, including how each person in the target population inquired about, was referred to, or learned about the Pilot Program, as well as longitudinal data after treatments have concluded, that is relevant to the outcomes of the Pilot Program to the university partner, as determined with input from the university partner.
 - 10) Requests UC to enter into an agreement with each university partner approved for participation in the Pilot Program. The bill requires that the agreement specify, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - a) The amount of funding available to the local pilot.
 - b) The conditions under which payments will be made.
 - c) Data collection and sharing requirements.
 - d) Reporting requirements.
 - 11) Provides that the sharing of health information, records, and other data with and among pilot entities and participating entities be permitted to the extent necessary for the activities and purposes of the pilot program.
 - 12) Requests UC to research whether national data-sharing programs or practices-based research networks exist for psychedelic research, and to encourage university partners to participate in those programs if they are operational and consistent with quality standards for similar collaborative research networks in the other health fields.
 - 13) Requests university partners to submit mid-year and annual reports to the office of the President of UC, in accordance with schedules and guidelines established by the office of the President.
 - 14) Requests university partners to confer and choose a single independent entity to conduct a peer-reviewed study of the statewide efficacy of the Pilot Program and the community impacts of the local pilots to be completed by January 15, 2029. The bill further requests that the study be submitted to the Legislature and the Secretary of California Health and Human Services by January 15, 2029.
 - 15) Requests UC, by January 15, 2030, to compile and submit the pilot program outcomes, data analysis, and recommendations from the university partners into a comprehensive report to the Legislature, the Secretary of California Health and Human Services, and the Governor's office.
 - 16) Establishes the Veterans and Former First Responders Research Pilot Special Fund in the State Treasury, as specified.

- 17) Requests UC to apply for and accept grants, donations, and federal funding for the purpose of the bill to be deposited into the special fund.
- 18) Requires that moneys in the Special Fund be used for, but are not limited to, all of the following purposes:
 - a) Program administration and oversight.
 - b) Training of medical staff and research supervisor.
 - c) Data collection, analysis, and reporting.
 - d) Community engagement and education initiatives.
 - e) Requested peer or other counseling services by any person in the target population either prior to, during, or after participating in the local pilot.
- 19) Provides that the provisions of this bill apply to UC to the extent that the UC Regents, by appropriate resolution, make these provisions applicable.
- 20) Sunsets the provisions of this bill on January 1, 2031.
- 21) States that it is the purpose of this Act to establish a Pilot Program to develop and study protocols for providing psilocybin in strict compliance with United States Food and Drug Enforcement Administration regulations, for the benefit of certain target populations.
- 22) Defines the following terms for purposes of the bill:
 - a) Agency to mean the California Health and Human Services Agency.
 - b) Community-based providers to mean licensed health care and community-based providers, including, but not limited to, mental health clinics, hospice organizations, veterans organizations, and other therapeutic care organizations.
 - c) Veterans and First Responders Research Pilot Program refers to a structured initiative designed to provide regulated and investigational psilocybin services for adults within a target population with qualifying conditions, compliant with United States Food and Drug Administration and United States Drug Enforcement Administration regulations.
 - d) Local pilot refers to the operation of the Veterans and First Responders Research Pilot Program within each of the participating counties.
 - e) Psilocybin to mean a naturally occurring psychedelic compound derived from specific species of fungi.
 - f) Target population to refer to veterans and inactive first responders

with post-traumatic stress disorder, end-of-life distress, or other specified conditions, as determined by program criteria and local needs.

- g) University partner refers to accredited institutions within the UC system responsible for overseeing Veterans and First Responders Research Pilot Program activities.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “The mental health crisis among California’s veterans and first responders requires immediate action. These brave individuals face alarmingly high rates of PTSD, depression, and suicide due to the trauma they experience in the line of duty. Given the gravity of the situation, we have a responsibility to explore every treatment option that could offer relief—the need for innovative solutions has never been more critical.

Senate Bill 751 would establish a research pilot program through a partnership between the University of California, CalHHS, and community-based organizations in select counties. The program will explore the use of psilocybin and psilocin as treatments for severe mental health conditions among veterans and first responders, ensuring our heroes have access to the care they seek.”

- 2) **Hallucinogens and potential benefits.** According to the Senate Committee on Health analysis, “Hallucinogens are a diverse group of drugs that alter a person’s perception or awareness of their surroundings. Some hallucinogens are found in plants and fungi and some are synthetically produced. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), hallucinogens are commonly split into two categories: classic hallucinogens and dissociative drugs. Both types can cause hallucinations, and dissociative drugs can cause the user to feel disconnected from their body or environment. Hallucinogens can be consumed in a variety of ways, including swallowed as tablets, pills, or liquid, consumed raw or dried, snorted, injected, inhaled, vaporized, smoked, or absorbed through the lining of the mouth using drug-soaked pieces of paper. Common hallucinogens include LSD, DMT, psilocybin, peyote, mescaline, and ketamine. Many hallucinogenic substances, including LSD, DMT, mescaline, and psilocybin are classified as Schedule I substances under California’s Uniform Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I controlled substances are defined as having no medical utility and a high potential for abuse. There is research, however, that indicates some of these substances have therapeutic benefits. In recent years, the FDA has granted breakthrough therapy designation to two formulations of psilocybin being studied as potential medical treatments for depression. This designation is a process to expedite the development and review of drugs that are intended to treat a serious condition, and preliminary clinical evidence indicates that the drug may demonstrate substantial improvement over available therapy on a clinically significant endpoint. According to NIDA, ketamine was approved many years ago as an anesthetic for painful medical procedures, and in March 2019, the FDA approved esketamine as a treatment for severe depression in patients that do not respond to other treatments. It is limited to administration in medical facilities as a nasal spray, however, because of its potential for abuse. Psilocybin is also being studied in clinical trials for its potential to treat severe depression.” This bill seeks

to provide regulated and investigational psilocybin services for veterans and inactive first responders with post-traumatic stress disorder, end-of-life distress, or other specified conditions through UC in five counties to allow for the research and development of those services.

- 3) **Codifies request for UC research.** Given the UC's constitutional autonomy as noted in the background of this analysis, this bill *requests* that the UC establish local pilots in up to five counties. Currently, psychedelic research is already underway at five UC campuses, which include UC Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco. The extent to which UC would assume the responsibilities specified in the bill is unclear, particularly in the absence of state funding. Notably, this bill establishes a special fund for Pilot Program administration and oversight, among other things. If UC chooses to participate, presumably those funds, when available, could be used to administer the pilot program.
- 4) **University of Washington pilot program.** According to information provided by the author's office, the state of Washington in 2023 enacted legislation similar to this bill to establish a state-funded psilocybin therapy services pilot program for veterans and first responders overseen by researchers at the University of Washington. It mandated that the University of Washington School of Medicine facilitate a study to explore the potential therapeutic value of the psychedelic compound found in mushrooms. The trial includes military veterans and first responders who have documented problems with post-traumatic stress and alcohol use disorders. The University of Washington pilot program has not yet concluded.
- 5) **Double referral.** This bill was previously heard by the Health Committee, which has jurisdiction over bills relating to behavioral health (including substance use disorder), public health, and prescription drugs among other things. This bill was heard by the Health Committee on April 23, 2025.
- 6) **Related and prior legislation.**

SB 803 (Becker, 2024) would have established the Heal Our Heroes Act and the Psychedelic-Assisted Facilitation Pilot Program in the City and County of San Francisco, the County of San Diego, and the County of Santa Cruz to establish and operate psychedelic-assisted facilitation centers. SB 803 was not heard at the request of the author in the Assembly Health Committee.

SB 1012 (Wiener, 2024) would have established the Regulated Psychedelic Facilitators Act and Regulated Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy Act administered by three new state entities: a Division of Regulated Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy; a Board of Regulated Psychedelic Facilitators and; a Regulated Psychedelic Substances Oversight Committee, which would have been required to determine, define, and establish standards for psychedelic facilitation in California. SB 1012 was held on the Senate Appropriations Suspense file.

AB 941 (Waldron, 2024) would have required CalHHS to convene a workgroup to study and make recommendations on a framework governing psychedelic-

assisted therapy. AB 941 was not heard at the request of the author in the Senate Health Committee.

SB 58 (Weiner, 2023) would have, among other things, decriminalized the use of certain psychedelics for personal use by those 21 years of age or older, and created a workgroup to study and recommend a framework for governing the therapeutic use of psychedelics. SB 58 was vetoed by Governor Newsom whose message read in part,

“California should immediately begin work to set up regulated treatment guidelines - replete with dosing information, therapeutic guidelines, rules to prevent against exploitation during guided treatments, and medical clearance of no underlying psychoses ... I urge the Legislature to send me legislation next year that includes therapeutic guidelines.”

SB 519 (Wiener of 2022) was substantially similar to SB 58. SB 519 was subsequently amended only to create the workgroup and was never taken up on the Assembly Floor.

AB 2150 (Lackey, 2022) would have required the Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research, if the Regents of the UC accept by appropriate resolution, to establish a study examining the effects of cannabis products that are currently in the commercial cannabis market, and appropriates \$2 million for this purpose. AB 2150 was pulled from hearing at the request of the author in the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee.

SUPPORT

Law Enforcement Action Partnership (co-sponsor)
The S.I.R.E.N. Project (co-sponsor)
California Association of County Veterans Service Officers
1 Individual

OPPOSITION

California Family Council
California Narcotic Officers' Association
Riverside County Sheriff's Office

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 640	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Cabaldon		
Version:	April 21, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Public postsecondary education: admission, transfer, and enrollment.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the California State University (CSU) direct admission program between participating CSU campuses and local educational agencies (LEAs). It further requires the California Community Colleges (CCC) to promote the CSU dual admission transfer program and requires the creation of at least five transfer model curricula (TMC) that are unrelated to existing Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT).

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the CSU under the administration of the Trustees of the CSU, the University of California (UC), under the administration of the Regents of the UC, the CCC, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, and independent institutions of higher education as four segments of postsecondary education in the state. (Education Code (EC) § 66010, § 70900, § 66600, and California Constitution, Article IX, Section 9)
- 2) Until the 2026–27 academic year, requires the trustees to offer for first-time freshman applicants meeting certain criteria a dual admissions program, and authorizes eligible first-time freshman applicants to enter into a dual admissions agreement with the CSU that guarantees the student's admission to a specific campus of the segment selected by the student at the time of the agreement if the student completes transfer requirements, which may include completion of an ADT or another established course of study for transfer within two academic years at a CCC. (EC § 66744.1)
- 3) Establishes the Student Transfer Achievement Reform (STAR) Act, which, in part, requires, commencing with the fall term of the 2011-12 academic year, a student that receives an ADT to be deemed eligible for transfer into a CSU baccalaureate degree when the student meets specified requirements. Requires a granting of this degree when a student:
 - a) Completes 60 semester or 90 quarter units eligible for transfer to the CSU, and that includes the CSU General Education Breadth program for the general education transfer curricula, and a minimum of 18 semester or 27

quarter units in a major area of emphasis as determined by the district;
and,

- b) Obtains a minimum grade point average of 2.0. (EC § 66745, et seq.)
- 4) Establishes, until July 1, 2027, the ADT Intersegmental Implementation Committee for specified purposes, including to serve as the primary entity charged with the oversight of the ADT. (EC § 66749.8)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

Direct Admission

- 1) Establishes the CSU Direct Admission program and requires the CSU Chancellor to designate one or more CSU campuses as university participants in the program.
- 2) States the Legislature's intent that the CSU Chancellor designate each CSU campus with available enrollment capacity to be a university participant.
- 3) Authorizes the governing board or body of a LEA to authorize the LEA to participate in the program.
- 4) Requires a participating LEA to notify the CSU Chancellor by February 1 of the prior academic year if the LEA intends to participate in the program.
- 5) Requires that the reporting available on the CaliforniaColleges.edu platform be used to provide the data required to determine program eligibility upon the implementation of transcript-information pupil accounts for pupils in grades 9 to 12, on the platform.
- 6) Requires that program eligibility be based on the coursework completed by the end of grade 11 and on-track completion of A-G courses with a qualifying A-G CSU grade point average.
- 7) Requires, by September 1 of each year, a participating LEA to identify each pupil who is deemed eligible for the program.
- 8) Requires, by September 1 of each year, the California College Guidance Initiative, on behalf of the CSU, to transmit a letter to identified pupils that notifies them of their direct admission. The bill requires that the letter describe the enrollment procedures the pupil needs to complete to be successfully enroll.
- 9) Specifies that upon accepting an offer of admission to one of the university participants, a pupil is required to complete the necessary procedures for enrollment.

Dual admission

- 10) Modifies provisions related to the CSU dual admission transfer pathways program for first-time freshman applicants by:
 - a) Extending the sunset date from the 2025-26 academic year to 2035-36 academic year.
 - b) Expands the period of time from two to three years for which a student is to complete an ADT or other established course of study for transfer to be granted guaranteed admission.
 - c) Requires the CCC to promote the dual admission program to new students, as specified.

Associate Degree for Transfer

- 11) Requires the ADT Intersegmental Implementation Committee to create no fewer than five TMCs that are not related to existing ADTs.
- 12) Requires the Committee, once the TMC is finalized, to submit it to the CCC Chancellor's Office to make the TMC available to community college districts and requires the community college district to create an ADT based on the TMC made available by the CCC Chancellor's Office.
- 13) Requires, once a TMC is created each CSU campus determine if there is a baccalaureate degree in a similar major to the TMC. The determination of similarity is to ensure that the students who earn the ADT that is created under the parameters of the TMC are guaranteed admission in that similar major at a CSU campus offering that major and be required to complete no more than 60 units after transfer to earn baccalaureate degree that is deemed similar to the ADT major if the students stays on that ADT pathway.
- 14) Defines various terms for the purposes of the bill including university participant to mean a campus of the CSU that is designated to participate in the CSU Direct Admission Program.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, "It should be as easy and seamless to go from 12th grade to college as it is to go from 10th grade to 11th grade. Tens of thousands of California students are fully qualified to go to CSU, but don't jump the hurdles of the admissions process. At the same time, nearly half of CSU's campuses have substantial available enrollment capacity and need more students to sustain their high quality academic programs. High schools and community colleges already have all the transcript information they need in order to validate that a graduating student is CSU-admissible. SB 640 seals the cracks through which too many students fall and gets a coveted letter of admission to thousands of qualified students.

“Additionally, SB 640 will enhance California’s transfer pathways by requiring the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office to develop at least five Associate Degrees for Transfer in high-opportunity career fields. These pathways will ensure community college graduates transition smoothly to four-year institutions and secure well-paying jobs in innovative industries that provide for social mobility.”

- 2) **Streamlining pathways for students.** This bill attempts to streamline CSU admission for high school students by requiring a LEA that has elected to participate to identify eligible pupils for the proposed direct admission program. Eligibility is to be based on the coursework completed by the end of grade 11 and on-track completion of A-G courses with a qualifying A-G CSU grade point average. CaliforniaColleges.edu will identify students who meet the CSU admission requirements once their transcript-informed accounts are in place. The California College Guidance Initiative, on behalf of the CSU, is required to transmit a letter with the Chancellor’s signature to an eligible student that they have been directly admitted into a participating CSU. Presumably, meeting the requirements for CSU admission as outlined in the bill could qualify students for admissions into other CSU campus locations that are not participating in the direct admission program. As the bill moves forward, the author may wish to clarify whether the notice to students regarding their direct admission is limited to participating CSU campuses or whether information can be expanded to notify students of their eligibility for other CSUs within the system. The author may also wish to consider how participation from one or two CSU campuses may be balanced with a high volume of eligible students.
- 3) **Dual Admissions.** This bill additionally aims to extend and promote an existing CCC to CSU transfer program. Current law establishes the Dual Admissions Pathway at CSU for first-time freshman applicants starting in the 2023-24 through the 2025-26 academic year. The dual admission agreement guarantees that a student will 1) be admitted to their chosen campus if they complete transfer requirements, which may include completion of an ADT or another established course of study for transfer within two academic years at a CCC, and 2) have access to library, counseling, and other services from the CSU campus nearest to their primary residence. It further requires CSU to report by April 1, 2026, on the program, including college participants, a description of services, and information on program applicants and student outcomes. This bill extends the dual admissions program until the 2035-36 academic year and expands eligibility to students who have completed an ADT or another established course of study for transfer within three rather than two years. The bill additionally requires that the CCCs promote the CSU dual admissions program to new students each fall term.
- 4) **Benefits of ADT pathways for students.** In an effort to address standing issues and concerns about the need to ensure a clearer, transparent, and more navigable transfer process between the CCC and the CSU, the Legislature and Governor enacted SB 1440 (Padilla, Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010), the STAR Act. Since its enactment, the ADT has made significant strides in streamlining the transfer process for students and has become a successful pathway to earning a

bachelor's degree. Specifically, the Act requires CCC districts to develop and grant a transfer associate degree that deems the student eligible for transfer into the CSU when the student meets certain course requirements. Completion of an ADT guarantees a student:

- a) Admission with junior status to a CSU campus but not to a specific campus or major.
- b) No additional lower-division CSU coursework.
- c) No more than 60-semester units of upper-division CSU coursework to complete a bachelor's degree, in addition to the 60 units completed at community college, results in a 120-unit pathway to a bachelor's degree.
- d) Priority admission at CSU.

Additionally, since developing the ADT, the CCC system has also entered into new transfer agreements with the UC and private nonprofit universities, some of which now also guarantee admission and junior standing to students with an ADT. In October 2020, it was reported that over 280,000 CCC students have earned an ADT since implementation in 2012, and over 40 ADT pathways exist at CCC.

- 5) **Transfer Model Curricula.** The Academic Senates for CCC and CSU developed a faculty-led, statewide, concerted effort to identify the course content for new associate degrees for transfer. The process of creating an ADT begins with developing a structure for the central component (i.e., major or area of emphasis) of an associate degree. This faculty-developed structure, known as a TMC, is vetted intersegmentally and adopted statewide and is then used by the CCC Chancellor's Office to create a template (Chancellor's Office Template or COT) that local colleges complete when submitting their TMC-aligned degrees to the Chancellor's Office for approval. As such, the process begins with statewide faculty development of a TMC and ends with local implementation of that TMC in the form of an ADT. This measure would require the creation of no fewer than five TMCs for a field of study with high opportunity for social mobility that is not related to existing ADTs. As the bill moves forward, the author may wish to consider providing additional details about the fields of study that led to high-opportunity social mobility to ensure that the bill's provisions align with the intended objective.
- 6) **Amendment.** Due to a technical error, this bill tasks the Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Committee to create TMC. **Staff recommends, and the author agrees, that the bill be amended** to strike references to the Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee and correct the error in assigning responsibility to the Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee for creating TMCs. Instead, reinstate the bill's original provisions that state the "office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall establish, in collaboration with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and the California State University, an intersegmental curriculum workgroup. The workgroup shall be composed of

California Community College and California State University faculty who teach courses in fields of study with high opportunity for social mobility. The purpose of the workgroup is to create no fewer than five TMCs that are not related to existing ADTs, in collaboration with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.”

SUPPORT

California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy
California State University Employees Union
Fresno Unified School District
1 Individual

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 790	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Cabaldon		
Version:	April 10, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Postsecondary education: postsecondary education coordinating entity: interstate reciprocity agreements for distance education: out-of-state postsecondary educational institutions.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Governor to designate a state agency, department, or office as the principal state operating and coordinating entity for postsecondary education, with specified duties, including, implementation of an interstate reciprocity agreement for the authorization and oversight of distance education, as the portal entity, if the Governor enters into an interstate reciprocity agreement. Additionally, the bill strikes provisions that establish the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) and its duties from the Education Code. It further states Legislative intent that the portal entity adopt as many of CPEC's duties and responsibilities.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009 (the Act) until January 1, 2027, and requires the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (Bureau) to, among other things, review, investigate and approve private postsecondary institutions, programs and courses of instruction pursuant to the Act and authorizes the Bureau to take formal actions against an institution/school to ensure compliance with the Act and even seek closure of an institution/school if determined necessary. The Act requires unaccredited degree granting institutions to be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE). The Act also provides for specified disclosures and enrollment agreements for students, requirements for cancellations, withdrawals and refunds, and that the Bureau shall administer the Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) to provide refunds to students affected by the possible closure of an institution/school. (Education Code (EC) § 94800 *et seq.*)
- 2) Provides numerous exemptions from the Act and oversight by the Bureau, including, but not limited to schools that are accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Requires an independent institution of higher education that is otherwise exempt from the Act to comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including laws relating to fraud,

abuse, and false advertising and authorizes these types of institutions to execute a contract with the Bureau for the Bureau to review and, as appropriate, act on complaints concerning the institution, according to specified requirements and subject to a fee of \$1,076. Requires the Bureau to establish a process through which an institution exempt from the Act may request and obtain verification that the institution is exempt. Specifies that the verification is valid for a period of up to two years, as long as the institution maintains full compliance with the requirements of the exemption. (EC §§ 94874 (i), 94874.9, and 94874.7)

- 3) Defines “out-of-state private postsecondary educational institution” as a private entity without a physical presence in this state that offers distance education to California students for an institutional charge, regardless of whether the institution has affiliated institutions or institutional locations in California. (EC § 94850.5)
- 4) Requires an out-of-state private postsecondary educational institution (other than a nonpublic higher education institution that grants undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, formed as nonprofit corporation and accredited by an agency recognized by the USDE to register with the Bureau, pay a fee and provide evidence of accreditation; evidence that the institution is approved to operate in the state where the institution maintains its main administrative location; and a copy of the institution’s catalog and sample enrollment agreement. Requires these institutions to comply with STRF requirements and disclosures. Prohibits an institution from operating in California for failure to comply with the registration requirements. Establishes the validity of a Bureau registration for two years. (EC § 94801.5)
- 5) Authorizes the Bureau to establish thresholds of California-based activity that constitute limited physical presence, with those institutions subject to registration requirements defined through regulation, and minimal levels of California-based activity that do not require institutional approval by, nor registration with, the Bureau. Specifies that an institution is considered to have a physical presence in the state if it offers instruction or core academic support services from a physical location owned, operated, or rented by or on behalf of the institution in California. (EC § 94801.7)
- 6) Requires the Bureau to adopt regulations establishing minimum operating standards to ensure that the content of each educational program reach its stated objective; maintain specific written standards for student admissions for each educational program; ensure the facilities, instructional equipment and materials are sufficient to meet the educational program’s goals; maintain a withdrawal policy and provide refunds; provide qualified personnel; provide upon successful completion of an educational program a degree or diploma; maintain and disburse adequate records and transcripts to students; and follow all other applicable ordinances and laws. (EC §94885 (a)(1-9)).
- 7) Establishes an Office of Student Assistance and Relief (Office or OSAR) for the purpose of advancing and promoting the rights of prospective students, current students, or past students of private postsecondary educational institutions. Tasks the Office with: conducting outreach and providing information and assistance to students who have been affected by the unlawful activities or closure of an

institution; serving as a primary point of contact to address the needs of private postsecondary education students and working in consultation with state and federal agencies, including, but not limited to, California Student Aid Commission, the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the USDE. Authorizes the Office to provide outreach to students and prospective students to provide them with, among other information, information on making informed decisions in selecting postsecondary educational institutions, student rights regarding school performance disclosures, enrollment agreements, and cancellation and refund policies, how to contact the office and the Bureau for assistance, student loan rights and assistance, and free nonprofit community based resources. (EC §§ 94949.7 - 94949.73)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

Higher Education Coordinating Body

- 1) Strikes CPEC from the Education Code.
- 2) Requires the Governor to designate a state agency, department, or office as the principal state operating and coordinating entity for postsecondary education, with all of the following duties:
 - a) Implementation, coordination, and evaluation of the Master Plan for Career Education.
 - b) Coordination and evaluation of postsecondary implementation of intersegmental state policies and initiatives, including, but not limited to, College and Career Access Pathways and other dual enrollment programs, the Golden State Pathways Program, the Regional K-16 Education Collaborative Grant program, and the California Cradle-to-Career Data System.
 - c) Implementation of an interstate reciprocity agreement for distance education as the portal entity if the Governor enters into an interstate reciprocity agreement, as specified.
- 3) States that Legislative intent that the portal entity adopt as many of the duties and responsibilities of the former CPEC, created in current law, as it read on December 31, 2025.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement for Distance Education

- 4) Authorizes the Governor to enter into one or more interstate reciprocity agreements through a compact on behalf of the state, upon issuing a written finding of all the following:

- a) The interstate reciprocity agreement and its implementation will not interfere with, and does not affect, the authority of the Attorney General (AG) or any other state or local agency to enforce any statutes or regulations prohibiting consumer fraud and unfair or deceptive business practices or the authority of the state to suspend or terminate the operation in the state of any entity subject to the interstate reciprocity agreement provided in state law.
- b) The interstate reciprocity agreement does not prevent the AG or any other state or local agency from applying and enforcing state law with respect to out-of-state postsecondary educational institutions that participate in the reciprocity agreement.
- c) The interstate reciprocity agreement allows the state, despite any reciprocal authorization, to require an out-of-state postsecondary educational institution, upon providing notice of at least six months, to register, pay fees, and be subject to the related state law to protect students, prevent misrepresentation to the public, or prevent the loss of funds paid from public resources or student tuition.
- d) The interstate reciprocity agreement does not apply to a course offered onsite to students at a military installation in the state, even if the course at the physical location is offered to students at other locations.
- e) The commission and national coordinating council are committed to preserving standards and protections that have been promulgated by the federal government and are the basis of the interstate reciprocity agreement, even if those standards or protections are subsequently diminished or withdrawn by the federal law or action of the USDE, and the commission is committed to developing meaningful performance metrics and frameworks for best practices with regard to individual state authorization activities.
- f) Within one year of the effective date of the state's entry into the interstate reciprocity agreement, the Bureau will establish a process to ensure that postsecondary educational institutions exempt from the Act can participate in the interstate reciprocity agreement without impacting the postsecondary educational institution's exempt status.
- g) Participating states have the necessary authority and resources to investigate complaints and take appropriate action.
- h) The reciprocity agreement does not prohibit the state from accepting complaints from California students that have not first been submitted to the institution that is the subject of the complaint.
- i) The interstate reciprocity agreement does not delegate independent legal authority over the state or its participating postsecondary educational institutions to any other entity or otherwise authorize assumption of that

have not first been submitted to the institution that is the subject of the complaint.

- j) The interstate reciprocity agreement does not delegate independent legal authority over the state or its participating postsecondary educational institutions to any other entity or otherwise authorize assumption of that legal authority by any other entity other than the state or its subdivisions, including by providing any non-state entity with the authority to reverse or veto a decision by the state to suspend or terminate an in-state's institution's certification to participate in a reciprocity agreement.
- k) The interstate reciprocity agreement may be modified by the commission only with the approval of the Governor.

Approval to operate under the reciprocity agreement

- 5) Authorizes a postsecondary educational institution to apply to the portal entity for approval to operate under an interstate reciprocity agreement using a standard application developed in accordance to the interstate reciprocity agreement.
- 6) Authorizes the portal entity to establish a reasonable fee as specified to be paid by a participating postsecondary educational institution.
- 7) Requires the portal entity to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the University of California (UC) President upon resolution by the UC Regents, California State University (CSU) Chancellor, the California Community College (CCC) Board of Governors, the presidents of the independent California colleges and universities as represented by the state association representing the largest number of those members, and, if appropriate, the Bureau. It requires each entity to promptly report a complaint or concern to the postsecondary educational institution, the portal entity, and, where appropriate, the accrediting agency.
- 8) Requires that the MOU executed by the portal entity delegate functions and responsibilities among the parties and provide for reimbursement of expenses. It further prohibits the MOU from weakening existing student privacy and confidentiality protections.
- 9) Requires the CCC Board of Governors to investigate and resolve complaints involving participating community colleges that may arise pursuant to the interstate reciprocity agreement, as specified.
- 10) Requires the Bureau to investigate and resolve complaints that may arise pursuant to the interstate reciprocity agreement involving participating private postsecondary educational institutions that are either approved to operate or exempt from the Act but elect to participate in the interstate reciprocity agreement pursuant to terms and conditions established by the Bureau, as specified.

- 11) Requires the portal entity to ensure that it and participating postsecondary educational institutions have clear and well-documented policies for addressing catastrophic events in a manner that protects students as consumers including the protection of student records. The bill states that the Act and related regulations, constitutes those policies for participating private postsecondary educational institutions approved to operate by the Bureau.

Changes to the California Private Postsecondary Education Act

- 12) Authorize the Bureau after receipt of any of the notifications required of an out-of-state institution registering with the Bureau that enrolls a California student or after determining that such notifications should have been provided, to seek additional information and notify the institution regarding whether it should suspend enrolling new students, and whether other actions are needed to protect California residents while the Bureau continues to investigate.
- 13) Strikes “private” from the type of postsecondary educational institution required to register with the Bureau but specifies that before January 1, 2028, the requirement shall not apply to a higher education institution that grants undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that is either formed as a nonprofit corporation and is accredited by an agency recognized by the USDE, or is a public institution of higher education. Beginning January 1, 2028, specifies that the registration requirement shall not apply to a public or nonprofit higher education institution approved pursuant to an interstate reciprocity agreement to which the state is a party.
- 14) Makes out-of-state public institutions subject to provisions that prohibit an institution from deceptive practices including using California’s state seal on a diploma or false advertisement, as specified.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “Enrollment in online higher education courses surged during the pandemic and today remains above pre-2020 levels. Most college students now take some classes online, with one-third enrolling in out-of-state programs.

“Tens of thousands of Californians study online through institutions in other states. However, California is the only state not participating in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, which gives students in member states protection, institutional oversight, and rights even when the educational institution is approved in another state. Instead, out-of-state schools must register with California’s Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education, where they are subject to limited regulation.

“Meanwhile, California institutions face major disadvantages. They must apply and pay fees in every single online program they offer to out-of-state students. At times, it only takes a few out-of-state students enrolling in a CSU or community college class to help meet class minimums, so excluding out-of-state students can mean that courses are not available for California students.

Senate Bill 790 requires the Governor to designate a new state entity to oversee postsecondary education policy and authorizes the Governor to join an interstate reciprocity agreement for distance education if the agreement meets specific consumer protection standards.

Joining an interstate reciprocity agreement would promote educational access, regulatory efficiency, and economic growth while allowing California to better safeguard its students enrolled online in out-of-state schools.”

- 2) **CPEC.** The 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education in California articulated basic state policies on higher education, such as assigning missions to the different higher education segments, specifying eligibility targets, and expressing the state’s intent that higher education remain accessible, affordable, high-quality, and accountable. In addition, the Master Plan created an oversight body, the CPEC, tasked with providing fiscal and policy recommendations to the Governor and Legislature; monitoring and coordinating public institutions; and ensuring comprehensive statewide planning for higher education and effective use of resources.

Although Governor Brown vetoed funding for CPEC in the 2011-12 budget, his veto message acknowledged the well-established need for coordinating and guiding state higher education policy and requested that stakeholders explore alternative ways that these functions could be fulfilled. This bill proposes to delete CPEC from the Education Code and states legislative intent that the portal entity designated by the Governor adopt as many of its duties and responsibilities as possible and be the principal state operating and coordinating entity for postsecondary education. Staff notes that several legislative proposals introduced in 2025 attempt to establish educational coordinating entities including, AB 95 (Fong, 2025), SB 638 (Padilla, 2025), and the budget trailer bill establishing the California Education Interagency Council under the Government Operations Agency. Unlike the related legislation, this measure stops short of identifying or forming a coordinating body, rather it calls on the Governor to assign coordinating responsibilities to any entity of the Governor’s choosing. It is unclear how the various educational coordinating proposals are to be reconciled moving forward.

- 3) **Participation in federal aid programs requires public or private colleges to be legally authorized in each state in which instruction is provided.** Under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, an institution may be eligible to receive federal financial aid programs such as Pell Grants and federal loan programs provided they meet certain standards. The federal Higher Education Act establishes three eligibility criteria that institutions must fulfill. To ensure the quality and integrity of Title IV financial aid programs at eligible public and private institutions, the three requirements that must be met are: 1) state authorization, 2) certification by the USDE; and 3) accreditation by an accrediting agency association recognized by the USDE. The states are responsible for providing primary protection for consumers and students, while the federal government oversees compliance to ensure the administrative and fiscal integrity of Title IV financial aid programs at higher education institutions. Accrediting agencies, on

the other hand, focus on providing quality assurance for the education or training offered by these institutions.

- 4) **The role of California's Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education.** In this state, the Bureau regulates private postsecondary educational institutions operating in California. The Bureau's roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Act established by AB 48 (Portantino, Chapter 310, Statutes of 2009). Its role is to protect consumers and students from fraud, misrepresentation, or other business practices at private postsecondary institutions that may lead to the loss of students' tuition and related educational funds. It also sets and enforces minimum standards for ethical business practices and the health, safety, and fiscal integrity of postsecondary education institutions. Finally, it establishes and enforces minimum standards for instructional quality and institutional stability for all students in *any* private postsecondary educational and vocational institutions.
- 5) **Out-of-state institutions.** The Bureau has traditionally regulated only those institutions with a "physical presence" in California. As a growing number of public and private institutions organized or incorporated outside California serve California students through online and hybrid instruction, the need for Bureau oversight increased. The Legislature expanded some areas of oversight, providing a registration process for out-of-state private institutions, requiring their participation in STRF, and compliance with other requirements. Out-of-state accredited private nonprofit institutions without a physical presence in California, however, remain outside of the Bureau's purview, and increasingly, private nonprofit and public institutions are adopting methods of program delivery modeled after for-profit institutions. Under this bill, out-of-state for-profit institutions would continue to register with the Bureau, while out-of-state nonprofit and public institutions could be authorized through the reciprocity agreement. It further specifies that California would retain its ability to require an out-of-state institution to register directly with the Bureau with the appropriate notice.
- 6) **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).** In response to concerns over the complexity and cost of navigating differing requirements for state authorization in multiple states, a group of institutions, states, and policy organizations came together in 2013 to develop the SARA. SARA provides that accredited, degree-granting private and public institutions approved by an oversight body in one participating state will be deemed automatically to have met approval requirements in other participating states.

General concerns remain about online programs that are offered by some institutions perceived as providing fraud and debt rather than knowledge and skills. In some states, institutions offering distance education programs to California students have entered into settlements with those states after being accused of undertaking misleading online recruiting practices, including deceiving prospective students by leading them to believe that online education degrees would allow them to become licensed professionals. A number of institutions that have been the focus of complaints by state and federal agencies continue to have robust distance education programs and are actively enrolling students.

Institutions that participate in SARA are approved for participation by their home state, and states that join SARA must accept that approval – regardless of the effectiveness of the home state’s oversight. Once a state enters SARA, it does not retain authority to enforce its applicable laws. Concerns about the practical impacts of ceding authority to a third-party have been at the root of failed efforts in the past to require California to join SARA, particularly the fact that the state would no longer be able to impose some of the important student protections contained in the Act. SARA would still allow the AG to take action based on general laws (fraud, deception, etc.), but provisions in the Act would not be applicable. Once a state is approved to join SARA, institutions that are operating under the compact are able to enroll students in their distance education programs.

This bill authorizes California’s participation in a reciprocity agreement like SARA only if certain conditions are met, including if it is confirmed that joining will not interfere with California’s ability to enforce consumer protection laws or stop any entity involved from operating in this state. Opponents of the measure argue that, despite the consumer protections proposed by SB 970, the bill does not go far enough to ensure that California students who attend out-of-state schools online receive the strongest protections.

- 7) **Includes California public colleges and universities.** Under this measure, California’s public colleges and universities may submit an application to participate in the reciprocity agreement entered into by the Governor. It essentially streamlines the process for California’s public colleges and universities to offer online instruction across state lines. The bill would further authorize the portal entity to enter into an agreement with the UC, CSU, and CCC Chancellor to delegate functions and responsibilities related to the reciprocity agreement. It further requires each segment to document and report complaints related to the reciprocity agreement where appropriate. This bill further charges the CCC Board of Governors to investigate and resolve complaints involving participating community colleges that may merge.
- 8) **Joint legislative hearing to review and include public input.** This bill grants the Governor sole responsibility for viewing and determining whether to enter into a reciprocity agreement. This approach raises questions about whether the public or Legislature will have an opportunity to review the agreement prior to its execution. For this reason, ***staff recommends that the bill be amended*** to do the following:
 - *The Governor shall not enter into an agreement until the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature have held a joint hearing on the agreement at which a representative from the commission shall testify and members of the public shall be encouraged to testify on the agreement and the Governor’s written findings.*
 - *The policy committees shall hold the joint hearing upon completion of the Governor’s written findings.*

- *Define appropriate policy committees to include the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development, Senate Education, Assembly Business and Professions, and Assembly Higher Education Committees.*

9) **Prior and related legislation.**

SB 638 (Padilla, 2025) creates the Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program, administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, to support local educational agencies (LEAs) serving high-need areas. This bill also establishes the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity within the Government Operations Agency to serve as the statewide planning and coordinating body for career technical education (CTE), career pathways, and workforce development. SB 638 is set to be heard in this Committee April 30.

AB 95 (Fong, 2025) subject to an appropriation, establishes in the Government Operations Agency the California Education Interagency Council, composed of specified state officers for purposes of evaluating workforce and economic changes in the state, integrating and aligning education and employment systems, maximizing funding impact, supporting adult skill development, coordinating regional education and workforce needs, and serving as a forum for discussions of intersegmental and cross-sector policy issues. It further requires the council, among other duties, to adopt a strategic plan, report to the Governor and the Legislature on the outcome of its work and recommendations to advance intersegmental student pathway efforts aligned to careers, establish a faculty and employer advisory committee, and provide advice and recommend tools designed to support students across their educational careers. The bill, establishes the Office of the California Education Interagency Council in the Government Operations Agency as a neutral administrative body tasked with supporting the California Education Interagency Council. AB 95 is pending hearing in the Assembly Higher Education Committee.

SB 634 (Block, 2015) would have authorized the Department of Consumer Affairs to enter into a regional state authorization reciprocity agreement with other states through a compact on behalf of this state. SB 634 was pulled from hearing at the request of the author.

SUPPORT

American Jewish University
 Antioch University
 Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities
 Azusa Pacific University
 Biola University
 California Baptist University
 California College of the Arts
 California Indian Nations College
 California State University, Office of the Chancellor
 Claremont Lincoln University

Concordia University Irvine
Dominican University of California
EDvance College
Golden Gate University
John Paul the Great Catholic University
Keck Graduate Institute
Life Pacific University
Loma Linda University
Los Angeles Pacific University
Loyola Marymount University
Mattos & Associates
Minerva University
National University
Notre Dame de Namur University
Otis College of Art and Design
Palo Alto University
Pepperdine University
Point Loma Nazarene University
Reach University
Saint Mary's College of California
Samuel Merritt University
Santa Clara University
Saybrook University
Southern California University of Health Sciences
Stanford University
The Chicago School
University of California
University of Redlands
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco
University of Southern California
University of the Pacific
Vanguard University of Southern California
Western University of Health Sciences
Westmont College
William Jessup University
4 Individuals

OPPOSITION

University of Phoenix

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 745

Hearing Date: April 30, 2025

Author: Ochoa Bogh

Version: April 1, 2025

Urgency: No

Fiscal: Yes

Consultant: Therresa Austin

Subject: High school graduation requirements: American government and civics:
model curriculum: State Seal of Civic Engagement.

SUMMARY

This bill (1) requires students to complete a one-year course in American government and civics in order to graduate from high school, beginning with students graduating in the 2032-33 school year; (2) authorizes the governing board of a school district, county office of education (COE), or charter school to adopt a formal action to revert back to the existing one-semester requirement; (3) requires the State Department of Education (CDE) in consultation and subject to the approval of the State Board of Education (SBE), to enter into a contract with a COE, or a consortium of COEs, to develop a model curriculum for the one-year course in American government and civics; and (4) requires school districts participating in the State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) to deem the completion of a one-year course in American government and civics as satisfying a specified criterion for receiving the SSCE.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

High school graduation requirements

- 1) Requires a student to complete all of the following while in grades 9-12 in order to receive a diploma of graduation from high school (each course having a duration of one year unless otherwise specified):
 - a) Three courses in English.
 - b) Two courses in science, including biological and physical science.
 - c) Two courses in mathematics.
 - d) Three courses in social sciences, including United States History and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics.
 - e) One course in visual or performing arts, world language, or until July 1, 2027, career technical education.

- f) Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been exempt, as specified.
 - g) A one-semester course in ethnic studies beginning with students graduating in the 2029-2030 school year.
 - h) A separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance that shall not be combined with any other course, beginning with students graduating in the 2030-2031 school year.
 - i) Other coursework requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district. (Education Code (EC) § 51225.3)
- 2) With respect to (i) above, authorizes the governing board of a school district to, at its discretion, adopt a policy to exempt students from any additional coursework requirements it adopts. Establishes that it is the intent of the Legislature that the policy include a consultation with the student and the educational rights holder for the student regarding any impact of not fulfilling locally required coursework on the student's ability to gain admission to an institution of higher education. (EC § 51225.3(a)(2)(B))

State Seal of Civic Engagement

- 3) Establishes the SSCE, affixed to the diploma or transcript of an eligible student, to encourage, and create pathways for, students in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels. (EC § 51475)
- 4) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), on or before January 1, 2020, to recommend to the SBE criteria for awarding a State Seal of Civic Engagement to students who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and have demonstrated an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. (EC 51470)
- 5) Requires the SBE, on or before January 31, 2021, to adopt, reject, or modify the criteria. (EC 51471)
- 6) States that school district participation in this program is voluntary. (EC 51471)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

New graduation requirement: One-year course in civic education

- 1) Extends the one-semester American government and civics course requirement to a one-year requirement beginning with students graduating in the 2032–33 school year.

- 2) Authorizes school districts, COEs, or charter schools to revert back to the one-semester American government and civics course requirement if the governing board of the respective school district, COE, or charter school takes a formal action to that effect at a publicly noticed meeting.

Model curriculum for a one-year course in American government and civics

- 3) Upon appropriation, requires the CDE, in collaboration with, and subject to the approval of, the executive director of the SBE, to enter into a contract with a COE or a consortium of COEs for the purpose of developing a model curriculum for the one-year course in American government and civics. The model curriculum shall include, but is not limited to all of the following:
 - a) Fundamentals on the responsibilities of federal departments and agencies.
 - b) Fundamentals on California state government institutions, including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, along with state agencies and departments.
 - c) Fundamentals on local government institutions, including city councils, county boards of supervisors, and other local bodies.
 - d) Fundamentals on special districts in California, including their purpose and membership.
 - e) Fundamentals on Tribal governments in California, including their purpose and membership.
 - f) Fundamentals on direct democracy in California, including ballot initiatives, referenda, and the recall process.
 - g) How to participate in the decisionmaking of federal, state, local, and special district institutions, including, but not limited to, how to contact representatives, how to attend state and local public meetings, and understanding pathways of influence.
 - h) The role of advocacy and interest groups in government decisionmaking.
 - i) All of the following related to voting:
 - i) Eligibility for, and requirements relating to, registering to vote.
 - ii) The various methods for registering to vote, including the ability to preregister to vote.
 - iii) Acquiring official, nonpartisan election and voter information from county and state elections officials, including, but not limited to, accessing county and state elections internet websites.

- iv) Understanding the electoral systems used at the federal, state, and local level.
 - v) How to complete and submit a ballot through various methods, including vote by mail and in person at a polling place or vote center.
 - vi) An individual's rights as a voter.
- j) Tools for constructive political dialogue, including methods and techniques such as Socratic seminars and structured classroom debates, to teach pupils how to engage in respectful disagreements.

State Seal of Civic Engagement

- 4) Requires school districts participating in the SSCE program to deem a student's successful completion of a one-year course in American government and civics as satisfying a specified criterion among the SBE's adopted criteria.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "SB 745 aims to establish a strong foundation of government and civics education for students, enabling them to understand key issues, engage in informed discussions, and recognize the importance of their vote.

"Greater knowledge and understanding of state and local government processes increases the likelihood of civic engagement and may help reverse current trends and statistics among young voters.

"Allowing county offices of education to develop curriculum guides gives school districts more control and discretion over curriculum. Ultimately, a comprehensive course in government and civics will empower our next generation of voters to be better informed and active citizens.

"Ultimately, a comprehensive course in government and civics will empower our next generation of voters to be better informed and more politically active citizens."

- 2) ***California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning of 2014 (Task Force).*** In 2014, the Chief Justice of California and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) formed the Task Force to develop a set of recommendations to improve civic learning in our schools to address the need to revitalize civic learning in our state. To this end, the Task Force made the following system-wide recommendations to improve civic learning in every district, in every school, for every child:

- a) Revise the California History-Social Science Content Standards and accompanying curriculum frameworks to incorporate an emphasis on civic

learning, starting in kindergarten, so that all students acquire the civic knowledge, skills, and values they need to succeed in college, career, and civic life.

- b) Integrate civic learning into state assessment and accountability systems for students, schools, and districts. Civic knowledge, skills, values, and whether students are receiving learning opportunities that promote these outcomes must be assessed and linked to revised California History-Social Science Content Standards and relevant Common Core State Standards. This will enable periodic reporting to the Legislature and the public on the state of students' civic learning.
 - c) Improve professional learning experiences for teachers and administrators to help them implement civic learning in schools. Connect professional learning in civics to Common Core State Standards professional learning experiences.
 - d) Develop an articulated sequence of instruction in civic learning across all of K-12, pegged to revised standards. At each grade level, civic learning should draw on the research-based and include work that is action-oriented and project-based and that develops digital literacy.
 - e) Establish a communication mechanism so community stakeholders can easily connect with teachers and students on civic education and engagement. Students need to get out of the school building to practice civic engagement, and civic leaders need to come into schools to engage students.
 - f) Provide incentives for local school districts to fund civic learning in Local Control Accountability Plans under the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).
- 3) ***Civic Education within California's History-Social Science Curriculum Framework.*** California's History-Social Science Framework (Framework), adopted by the SBE in July 2016, provides considerable information and instructional support on civic learning, consistent with the work of the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning. The Framework serves as a guide for instruction to ensure that students acquire the essential tools needed for meaningful participation in democratic institutions. It focuses on building foundational knowledge about state and local governments, markets, courts and legal systems, civil society, the systems and practices of other nations, international institutions, and the methods available to citizens for preserving and transforming society.

Suggestions for lessons and activities include simulations of government, student-led debates and research projects, voter education, and service learning that bring students into an active role in their local communities. Classroom examples featured in the Framework include several with a civic focus, such as:

- a) Kindergarten: Being a Good Citizen.

- b) Grade Three: Classroom Constitution.
 - c) Grade Five: The Preamble.
 - d) Grade Eight: The Civic Purpose of Public Education.
 - e) Grade Twelve: Judicial Review.
- 4) ***State Seal of Civic Engagement.*** On September 10, 2020, the SBE adopted criteria and guidance to award an SSCE to California students who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. To be eligible for the SSCE, students must:
- a) Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;
 - b) Demonstrate a competent understanding of the United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;
 - c) Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;
 - d) Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection; and
 - e) Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community, and/or society.

Successful completion of the requirements would be reflected by a seal affixed to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion. According to CDE's 2023-24 school year data, of the 345 schools that participate in the SSCE, 15,627 seals have been awarded to students.

This bill would require school districts participating in the SSCE program to deem a student's successful completion of a one-year course in American government and civics as satisfying criterion (b) listed above. A student who successfully completes a one-year course in American government and civics would still be required to satisfy all other criteria adopted by the state board in order to receive the State Seal of Civic Engagement.

- 5) ***Model curricula for a one-year course in American government and civics.*** This bill would require the CDE, in collaboration with the SBE, to enter into a contract with a COE or consortium of COEs to develop a model curriculum for a one-year course in American government and civics. In previous years, the CDE

has partnered with a number of COEs to develop model curricula. For instance, the 2022 State Budget allocated funding for the development and maintenance of model curricula relating to the Vietnamese American refugee experience, the Cambodian genocide, Hmong history and cultural studies, and Native American studies. The CDE selected the Orange County Department of Education to lead the development of three model curriculum projects centering on the Cambodian, Hmong, and Vietnamese American histories, culture, and refugee experience. The CDE selected Humboldt COE and San Diego COE to jointly serve as the lead agencies in developing the Native American Studies Model Curriculum (NASMC). Work on these projects began in 2022 and will conclude by September 2025.

*In order to ensure compliance with the Joint Curriculum Policy adopted by the Senate and Assembly Education Committees, the **Committee recommends amending** provisions of the bill referencing a model curriculum to instead reference a curriculum guide.*

- 6) **Expanding high school graduation requirements.** The author raises concerns that “the existing one-semester requirement does not give sufficient time to study state and local government processes” and that “inadequate civics education leads to lower voting turnouts, lack of advocacy, and diminished ability to discern incorrect information.” However, it is worth noting that extending the existing semester-long course requirement would not be without consequence.

At present, the state requires a minimum of 13 year-long courses. Two additional graduation requirements will become effective in the coming years:

- a) Beginning with the graduating class of 2029–30, students will also be required to complete a one-semester course in ethnic studies as a condition of graduation.
- b) Beginning with the graduating class of 2030–31, students will also be required to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance as a condition of graduation.

This Committee will also consider SB 612 (Valladares, 2025), which requires students to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in CTE in order to graduate from high school, beginning with students graduating in the 2031-32 school year. While SB 745 distinguishes itself by allowing schools to revert back to the one-semester requirement through formal action of their governing board, the bill still makes the extended one-year requirement the default.

Under existing law, a governing board of a school district has the authority to adopt additional local graduation requirements beyond what the state requires. As such, nothing prevents a school district from extending the one-semester American government and civics course requirement into a one-year requirement.

The Committee may consider whether additional graduation requirements limit the flexibility of students to complete required coursework. Depending upon a student's choices, a student taking seven classes in each of the four years of high school that plans to meet both state and UC/CSU requirements has a maximum of six or seven elective course choices over four years. Students who do not take as many courses each year have fewer. Students with other constraints on their schedules, including English learners and students with special needs, may have even fewer choices.

7) **Recent coalition letter regarding legislation on curriculum and instruction.**

On April 16, 2025, a coalition of statewide education organizations and LEAs, comprised of the Association of California School Administrators, the Small School Districts Association, the California Association of School Business Officials, the California School Board Association, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the San Diego Unified School District, Riverside County Office of Education, and the Alameda County Office of Education, issued a joint letter citing concerns about the Legislature's introduction of bills this year that amend required curriculum and state curriculum frameworks and that create new graduation requirements. The coalition also cites concerns about legislative efforts in recent years that have added new requirements without removing or revising existing standards. The letter states the following, in part:

"Students already receive a broad liberal arts education that prepares them to pursue a variety of career and life goals upon graduation. While well-intentioned, every additional required class removes the opportunity for a student to pursue an elective, career technical education, or advanced learning in a field of interest. Constricting options for students by mandating additional required classes further complicates master schedules at high schools and decreases the flexibility necessary to increase enrollment in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment options for students. Additional required classes also compound scheduling challenges for students who need to complete English Language Development in addition to English Language Arts, students who need to retake classes to graduate, and other students who may fall behind the typical curriculum schedule."

8) **Committee Amendments.** The Committee staff recommends the following amendments:

- a) Revert "model curriculum" back to "curriculum guide" to ensure compliance with the Joint Curriculum Policy adopted by the Senate and Assembly Education Committees.
- b) Strike the bill's provisions pertaining to the extended graduation requirement of a one-year course in American government and civics.

9) **Related legislation.**

SB 584 (Limon, 2025) (1) expands the existing California Serves Program to promote access to effective service learning for grades 1 through 12; (2) requires

LEAs to implement a Civic Engagement Pathways Program for pupils in grades 1 through 8; and (3) IQC, during its next revision of the history and social sciences framework, to consider including instruction specifically on civic engagement experiences with governmental institutions that are supportive of pupils earning the SSCE. *SB 584 is scheduled to be heard by this Committee on April 30.*

SB 612 (Valladares, 2025) requires students to complete a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in career technical education (CTE) in order to graduate from high school beginning with students graduating in the 2031-32 school year. *SB 584 is scheduled to be heard by this Committee on April 30.*

AB 422 (Jackson, 2025) would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), by January 1, 2027, to recommend revised criteria to the State Board of Education (SBE) for awarding the State Seal of Civic Engagement, including a demonstrated understanding of the importance of preserving democracy and its vital institutions. *AB 422 is currently in Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

10) ***Prior legislation.***

SB 1094 (Limon, 2024) would have required further defined the social sciences course of study for grades one through 12 to include civic engagement experiences with governmental institutions and instruction in principles of democracy and the State and Federal Constitutions. *SB 1094 was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

AB 2937 (McCarty, Chapter 37, Statutes of 2024) added personal finance as a high school graduation requirement, commencing the 2030-31 school year, as a separate stand-alone one-semester course, and requires the IQC to develop, by May 31, 2026, a curriculum guide and resources for a separate stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance for adoption by the SBE.

AB 24 (Eggman, Chapter 604, Statutes of 2017) established the State Seal of Civic Engagement, to be affixed to the diploma of qualifying high school graduates, based on a demonstration of excellence in civics education and participation.

SB 521 (Wyland, 2013) would have required the SBE and the CDE to request that the IQC review and revise, as necessary, the course requirements in the history-social science framework to ensure that minimum standards for courses in American government and civics include the comparative differences between the rights of citizens in America and those in other countries, and the connection of civics and American government to western civilizations. *SB 521 was held in the Senate Education Committee*

SUPPORT

America Undivided (sponsor)
California Council for the Social Studies
Legal Eagles

Los Angeles County Office of Education
Northern California Youth Policy Coalition
United Nations Association of the USA - San Diego Chapter
Voters of Tomorrow
Youth Power Project

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 837	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Reyes		
Version:	March 26, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Student financial aid: online technology platforms: guidance: training: media campaign.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC), by July 1, 2027, to develop guidance as specified for local educational agencies (LEA) and public libraries on how to use online technology platforms to assist low-income, foster youth, and undocumented families in accessing student financial aid. It also requires CSAC to offer a training program on the developed guidance and implement a multimedia campaign to raise awareness of available online technology platforms relating to that guidance.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes CSAC as the state agency charged with administering state financial aid programs to qualifying students enrolled in qualifying institutions of higher education throughout the state. It requires CSAC to prescribe the use of standardized student financial aid applications for California. (Education Code (EC) § 69510 et seq. and EC § 69433)
- 2) Requires each University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), California Community College (CCC) campus, each independent institution of higher education, and each private postsecondary education subject to the California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009 (Act) that participates in federal financial aid or veterans financial aid programs to provide students with the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet (Shopping Sheet) developed by the United States Department of Education (USDE) to inform admitted or potential students about financial aid award packages. (EC § 66021.3, § 69514 and § 94912.5)
- 3) Authorizes the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) to provide its services to all LEAs and requires LEAs to submit students' grade point average and transcript information to the CCGI. It further requires LEAs to ensure that 11th graders complete financial aid lessons on CaliforniaColleges.edu platform. (EC § 60900.5, EC § 51225.8 (b) and EC § 60900 (f))
- 4) Establishes California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) to be administered by CSAC to improve access to postsecondary education and financial aid for low-income and first-generations students in underserved regions

including pupils who are from mixed immigration status households or who themselves are immigrants and pupils who are current or former foster youth. It further states that the Cal-SOAP projects are to primarily do various things including increasing the availability of information for these pupils on the existence of postsecondary education, the total cost of attending postsecondary educational institutions, and financing options, including grants, scholarships, student loans and work opportunities. (EC § 69561)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires CSAC, by July 1, 2027, to develop guidance for LEAs and public libraries on how to use online technology platforms to assist low-income students, foster youth, and undocumented families in accessing student financial aid and requires that the guidance include, but not be limited to, information on how to use online technology platforms that do all of the following:
 - a) Provide clear, accurate, and comprehensive information about the cost of colleges and universities and the availability of financial aid that is specifically tailored to the student's unique educational and financial circumstances.
 - b) Highlight colleges and universities that meet 100 percent of the demonstrated financial need for qualifying students.
 - c) Compare costs for living on-campus versus off-campus and grants versus loans.
 - d) Include specific tools for foster youth and undocumented students to ensure equitable access, with required display of specific results for foster youth and students eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.
 - e) Provide information in multiple languages and include financial counseling, videos, and guidance resources to faculty, parents, and students.
 - f) Track their progress toward meeting the minimum course requirements for admission to the CSU and UC.
 - g) Include direct links to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the CSS Profile, and the California Dream Act application (CADAA).
- 2) Requires CSAC, by July 1, 2027, to do both of the following:
 - a) Offer a training program for school counselors, administrators, and community-based organizations based on the guidance developed pursuant to the bill.
 - b) Implement a multilingual media campaign targeting underserved

communities to raise awareness of available online technology platforms relating to the guidance developed pursuant to the bill.

- 3) Defines for purposes of the bill “local educational agency” to mean a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “California is home to a diverse and vibrant population of students, many of whom face systemic barriers to accessing higher education. Among these students are undocumented youth, low-income students, foster youth, and those experiencing homelessness. Despite being eligible for tuition-free college, many of these students remain unaware of or unable to utilize available financial aid opportunities due to financial misconceptions, complicated processes, and a lack of targeted resources. SB 837, the Equitable College Access and Financial Aid Awareness Act, seeks to remove these barriers by expanding access to financial aid and providing clear, accessible information about college costs and resources.

“This bill requires the California Student Aid Commission to create guidelines for school districts to use technology platforms that offer accurate financial aid information, highlight colleges that meet 100% of financial need, and support foster youth and undocumented students. By improving access to financial aid, SB 837 will help more students pursue higher education without the burden of debt.”

- 2) **Duplicative of existing efforts.** The California Department of Education partners with the CCGI to ensure students have an account on CaliforniaColleges.edu. This platform provides students with access to planning tools and content related to career exploration, college planning, and financial aid. CCGI reports that, currently 2.2 million of the total 3.1 million students are enrolled in LEAs that partner with CCGI to provide transcript-informed partner accounts. Those students additionally have access to tools on CaliforniaColleges.edu that enable them to track progress towards CSU and UC eligibility and import their A-G courses into CSU and UC applications. Existing law requires all LEAs serving 9-12th grade students to enter into partnership with the CCGI by January 2026, which will make those transcript-informed accounts available to all public high school students. It charges CCGI with the following:
 - a) Ensuring California’s 6 – 12 grade public school students have accounts on CaliforniaColleges.edu.
 - b) Developing college, career, and financial aid lessons and tools that facilitate college and career planning for students, families, and the educators serving them.
 - c) Pre-populating applications to the CCC, CSU, and UC systems with students’ courses, grades, and demographic information.

- d) Providing final transcripts to the public higher education systems and transcript-level data to the CSAC.
- e) Supporting LEAs to plan for and monitor the use of planning tools and curriculum.

This bill mandates that CSAC create guidance on an unspecified online technology platform that helps students with accessing student financial aid. This requirement seems to duplicate the efforts of CCGI.

- 3) **CSAC's related work.** The bill further calls on CSAC, among other things, to offer training programs for counselors, administrators, and community-based organizations using the guidance that it developed. It also requires the agency to implement a multilingual media campaign. CSAC already administers a training program and offers its resources in multiple languages. In addition to these efforts, both CSAC's Cash for College and Cal-SOAP outreach programs are designed to provide personalized guidance on financial aid and college admissions to families, including undocumented students and foster youth. Imposing requirements on CSAC for tasks it is already undertaking, regardless of the existence of any online platform, may not be necessary. CSAC has additionally raised implementation concerns with many of the bill's provisions.
- 4) **Amendments.** Given the investment in CCGI as the state's online college planning and financial aid advising tool and for purposes of ensuring the bill's provisions are implementable, **committee staff recommends, and the author agrees, that the bill be amended** as follows:
 - *Insert "On or before July 1, 2027, the commission shall develop guidance for local educational agencies on how to assist low-income pupils, foster youth, and undocumented families in accessing student financial aid."*
 - *Delete remaining provisions.*
- 5) **Related legislation.**

SB 305 (Reyes, 2025) requires the CCC, under the Student Success Act, to provide, commencing with the 2026–27 academic year, students with specified information related to completing and submitting the FAFSA and CADAA, and to confirm, commencing with the 2027–28 academic year, that students who have not opted out have completed and submitted the FAFSA or the CADAA, as specified. SB 305 is set for hearing in Senate Appropriations May 5, 2025.

SB 323 (Perez, 2025) requires the CSAC, commencing with the 2026–27 financial aid cycle, to amend the CADAA and any of its grant processing systems to clarify and ensure that the CADAA can be used by any student eligible for state financial aid programs, regardless of their eligibility for federal financial aid. It also requires CSAC to consult the segments of postsecondary education in promoting the CADAA in a manner that maximizes the amount of federal aid that students may access while apprising students of the choices available regarding

which application they and their families may use. SB 323 is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 416 (Perez, 2025) requires the CSAC to convene a working group to standardize and create a template for financial aid offer letters sent by postsecondary educational institutions to students. It further requires, as a condition of being a qualifying Cal Grant user, the financial aid offer letter template created by the work group. SB 416 is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

LA Cooperativa Campesina De California (co-sponsor)
Los Amigos De LA Comunidad (co-sponsor)
California Chamber of Commerce
California Human Development
Central Valley Opportunity Center
First Day Foundation
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Kathryn Barger, Supervisor, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Proteus, Inc.
Stars
Victor M. Gordo, Mayor, City of Pasadena

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SJR 4	Hearing Date:	April 30, 2025
Author:	Laird, et al.		
Version:	April 10, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	No
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: Research and education: federal funding cuts: the National Institutes of Health and postsecondary educational institutions.

SUMMARY

This resolution calls on the administration of President Donald J. Trump and the Congress of the United States to rescind cuts to funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and cease the attacks on our postsecondary educational institutions.

BACKGROUND

The NIH is within the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and is the nation's medical research agency. The NIH is comprised of 27 different institutes and centers, each with a specific research agency (such as the National Cancer Institute and the Center for Scientific Review). According to its website, the NIH "is the largest public funder of biomedical research in the world. The NIH invests most of its nearly \$48 billion budget in medical research seeking to enhance life and to reduce illness and disability. NIH-funded research has led to breakthroughs and new treatments helping people live longer, healthier lives, and building the research foundation that drives discovery."

On February 7, 2025, the NIH issued a notice titled "Supplemental Guidance to the 2024 NIH Grants Policy Statement: Indirect Cost Rates" ([Notice Number: NOT-OD-25-068](#)). Effective February 10, 2025, this guidance establishes a standard indirect cost rate of 15 percent for all NIH grants, replacing the previously negotiated rates that varied by institution. The new 15 percent indirect cost rate is intended to apply to both new and existing grants, with the cap effective for expenses incurred from February 10, 2025, onward.

Indirect costs are expenses that are necessary for the overall research environment but cannot be directly attributed to a single project, also known as costs for "facilities" and "administration." According to federal regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, § 75.414), "Facilities" is defined as depreciation on buildings, equipment and capital improvement, interest on debt associated with certain buildings, equipment and capital improvements, and operations and maintenance expenses. "Administration" is defined as general administration and general expenses such as the director's office, accounting, personnel and all other types of expenditures not listed specifically under one of the subcategories of "Facilities" (including cross allocations from other pools, where applicable).

An institution's indirect cost rate is determined by taking the ratio of total indirect costs to total direct costs. Following further negotiation between the institution and the federal government, this rate then is applied to project-specific budgets to determine indirect costs.

Variation in indirect costs can be driven by a number of factors, including:

- Type of research: Universities conducting clinical trials and other medical research in high-tech laboratories may have higher indirect costs than institutions conducting basic geological research using computer models.
- Geography: Some universities in high-cost living areas or with expensive research facilities may have higher rates.
- Type of agreement: Rates may differ depending on whether the grant is from the NIH, Department of Defense, or another agency.
- Institution size: Larger research universities with greater infrastructure may secure higher rates compared to smaller institutions.

ANALYSIS

This resolution:

- 1) Includes several "whereas" statements relative to the importance and benefits of NIH funding for California's institutions of higher education and the associated research.
- 2) Resolves that California has long invested in education and research and affirms its continued commitment to its postsecondary educational institutions.
- 3) Resolves that the California State Legislature is deeply concerned about the harm these changes will inflict on our state's public and private institutions, the scientific community nationwide, the biotechnology industry, and patients awaiting new cures and treatments.
- 4) Calls on the administration of President Donald J. Trump and the Congress of the United States to rescind the cuts and cease the attacks on our postsecondary educational institutions.
- 5) Resolves that the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor, to the Attorney General, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the resolution.*** According to the author, “The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is a cornerstone of the nation’s biomedical research infrastructure. The cuts announced on February 7, 2025 pose a direct threat to the health and well-being of millions of Americans, including vulnerable patients who depend on lifesaving research for treatment and cures.

“California is home to some of the nation’s leading research universities and medical institution, collectively receiving over \$5 billion of NIH dollars. A conservative estimate suggests the proposed cuts could result in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of funding for California universities. California students and researchers contribute to groundbreaking research that global impact. These cuts would disrupt education, lead to job losses, and stall national leadership in global health. SJR 4 calls on the federal government to reaffirm its commitment to health, education, and innovation by restoring NIH funding.”

- 2) ***How caps on indirect costs affect California’s research institutions.*** In 2023, the NIH, the main funder of biomedical research, awarded more than \$35 billion in grants to more than 2,500 institutions. This funding is divided into “direct” costs, such as researcher salaries and laboratory supplies, and “indirect” costs, such as administrative and facility costs needed to support the work.

California is the largest recipient of NIH funds in the nation, receiving over \$5 billion in funding to the state’s public and private research institutions. In the 2023 fiscal year, the University of California (UC) received over \$2 billion in NIH contract and grant funding, and, in the last audited year, the California State University received approximately \$158,000,000 in NIH funds. California’s independent institutions of higher education receive nearly \$125 million in NIH funds.

As noted in the background section of this analysis, on February 7, 2025, the NIH made a significant reduction in grants reserved for research institutions and announced that it will now limit the amount granted for indirect funding, which helps cover institutions’ overhead and administrative expenses, to 15 percent. Indirect funding previously averaged nearly 30 percent and some universities received more than 60 percent.

According to the UC, the reduction in allowed indirect costs “will gut UC funding by hundreds of millions of dollars annually. As the world’s leading public research institution, we depend on NIH funds to perform our vital mission. A cut this size is nothing short of catastrophic for countless Americans who depend on UC’s scientific advances to save lives and improve healthcare.”

- 3) ***Lawsuits to halt funding reductions.*** California’s Attorney General announced on February 10, 2025, filing a lawsuit as part of a coalition of 22 attorneys general against the Trump Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the NIH. This lawsuit was filed in the United States District Court for Massachusetts. Two additional lawsuits related to the cancellation of NIH

grants have been filed by academic institutions and non-profit groups.

On March 5, 2025, the United States District Court for Massachusetts issued a preliminary injunction to temporarily halt implementation of the proposed cap on indirect costs. On April 4, 2025, the United States District Court for Massachusetts ruled in favor of plaintiffs and granted a permanent injunction, which blocks implementation of the proposed cap on indirect costs. The NIH is appealing this decision.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received

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