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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Connie Leyva, Chair

2019 - 2020 Regular

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**Bill No:** AB 1062 **Hearing Date:** June 5, 2019  
**Author:** Limón  
**Version:** May 6, 2019  
**Urgency:** No **Fiscal:** No  
**Consultant:** Brandon Darnell

**Subject:** Pupil instruction: community emergency response training.

### SUMMARY

This bill authorizes the governing board of a school district, if it requires the completion of community service hours as a high school graduation requirement from high school, to provide a pupil with credit towards the community service hours required for graduation commensurate with the hours required for completion of a course in community emergency response training.

### BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes statewide high school graduation requirements, which include all of the following one-year courses, unless identified as a one-semester course:
  - a) Three courses in English.
  - b) Two courses in mathematics, including one year of Algebra I.
  - 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, foreign language, or commencing with the 2012-13 school year, career technical education.
  - f) Two courses in physical education. (Education Code § 51225.3)
- 2) Authorizes other coursework requirements for graduation adopted by the governing board of the school district. (EC § 51225.3)
- 3) Authorizes the governing board, with the active involvement of parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils, to adopt alternative means for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study that may include practical demonstration of skills and competencies, supervised work experience or other outside school experience, career technical education classes offered in high schools, courses

offered by regional occupational centers or programs, interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a postsecondary educational institution. (EC § 51225.3)

- 4) Requires the requirements for graduation and specified alternative modes for completing the prescribed course of study to be made available to pupils, parents, and the public. (EC § 51225.3)

## ANALYSIS

This bill authorizes the governing board of a school district, if it requires the completion of community service hours as a high school graduation requirement from high school, to provide a pupil with credit towards the community service hours required for graduation commensurate with the hours required for completion of a course in community emergency response training.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “While many schools have taken measures to provide for site security analysis and equipment, more effort is needed to train staff and students in school security and emergency response procedures, and to involve youth in the state’s overall emergency preparedness and response plans. Existing law only requires, through the adopted course of study, that schools provide instruction at the appropriate grade levels on personal and public safety and accident prevention, emergency first aid instruction, and CPR when appropriate equipment is available.

Natural or manmade disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, wildfires, explosions, or hazardous materials accidents can affect all aspects of a community, from government services to private enterprise to civic activities. These events can oftentimes severely restrict or overwhelm our response resources, communications, transportation, and utilities and can leave many individuals and neighborhoods cut off from outside support.

At the same time, damaged roads and disrupted communications systems can also restrict the access of emergency response agencies into critically affected areas leaving communities to fend for themselves for a period of time. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), having basic Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training can impact the quality of survival and the ability to help others safely and effectively.”

- 2) ***Health Education Content Standards.*** The California Health Education Content Standards for High School (grades nine through twelve), adopted in 2008, include the following standards related to emergency preparedness and response:
  - a) 1.3.S: Analyze emergency preparedness plans for the home, the school, and the community.

- b) 1.10.S: Describe procedures for emergency care and lifesaving, including CPR, first aid, and control of bleeding.
  - c) 1.11.S: Identify ways to stay safe during natural disasters and emergency situations (e.g., landslides, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, electrical storms, winter storms, and terrorist attacks).
- 2) **Community Emergency Response Training.** As noted by the Assembly Education Committee analysis, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is the most widely-known community emergency response training, and was created as a part of the Citizen Corps. Following the events of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush launched Citizen Corps to capture and standardize local service efforts following the terrorist attacks.

CERT is a Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sponsored a nationwide program of trained volunteers. According to the FEMA, “The CERT Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area. Community members are trained in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, incident command, and disaster medical operations. Using skills learned in classroom training, drills, and exercises, CERT members can assist others after an event and before first responders can arrive on the scene.

The Teen CERT concept was created to address preparedness and response capabilities from within high schools. Teen CERT aims to train students in emergency preparedness and basic response to ensure that they have the skills needed to protect themselves, and assist others, in the event of an emergency.”

The Teen CERT Program takes approximately 20 to 30 hours to complete. The Teen CERT Program training materials suggest the trainings take place afterschool, on the weekends, or as a camp during the summer months. During the training students learn how to:

- Extinguish small fires.
- Conduct light search and rescue.
- Assist those that are injured.
- Setup medical treatment areas.
- Assist emergency responders.
- Identify and anticipate hazards.
- Reduce fire hazards in the home and workplace.
- Help reduce survivor stress.

- 3) ***Does the bill unintentionally undermine as existing process?*** As indicated above, existing law authorizes the governing board of a school district to both: 1) impose additional graduation requirements, and 2) adopt alternative means for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study, with the active involvement of parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils. This bill simply restates an existing authorization and but may undermine the involvement of parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils in adopting alternative means for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study by specifically authorizing this credit towards the community service hours required for graduation without reference to input from parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils in adopting this alternative means. Accordingly, ***staff recommends that the bill be amended*** to clarify that if a school district elects to use this authority to provide credit for this alternative means, it still must include the active involvement of parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils, as required by Section 51225.3.

**SUPPORT**

California Professional Firefighters

**OPPOSITION**

None received

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