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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair  
2015 - 2016 Regular

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**Bill No:** AB 1846  
**Author:** Lopez  
**Version:** May 27, 2016  
**Urgency:** No  
**Consultant:** Kathleen Chavira  
**Hearing Date:** June 15, 2016  
**Fiscal:** Yes

**Subject:** Adult Education Block Grant Program: report

## SUMMARY

This bill expands existing reporting requirements on the use of Adult Education Block Grant funds, and outcomes for adults, to include information on the extent to which funds provided to Adult Education Consortia were insufficient to address demand for Adult Education.

## BACKGROUND

Existing law establishes the Adult Education Block Grant Program (AEBGP) under the administration of the Chancellor of the Community Colleges and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to support the effective provision of services that address the education needs of adults in all regions of the state. The Chancellor and SPI were required to divide the state into adult education regions (regional consortia) for this purpose. Existing law also provides for the use and apportionment of funds based upon plans developed by the regional consortia. Existing law also requires, as a condition of funding, approval of an adult education plan that includes specified information for that fiscal year. This information includes an evaluation of adult education needs in the region, a list of entities that provide these services, an evaluation of current levels and types of service, and an evaluation of all funds available to consortium members and other entities, among other things. (Education Code § 84900- 84913)

Existing law requires the Chancellor and the SPI to submit specified information on the use of Adult Education Block Grant funds, and outcomes for adults statewide and in each region, in order to inform actions taken by the Governor and the Legislature related to adult education. (EC § 84917)

## ANALYSIS

This bill expands existing reporting requirements on the use of Adult Education Block Grant funds and outcomes for adults. It:

- 1) Requires the Chancellor and the SPI to include a summary of the extent to which Adult Education Block Grant funds provided to consortia were insufficient to address demands for adult education within each consortium's service area.
- 2) Requires the summary to be based upon an assessment by each consortium.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

- 1) **Need for the bill.** The author notes, California's long standing commitment to adult education, and notes the significant cuts to these programs associated with the recent recession, including the permanent closure of 65 schools between the years 2008-2013. The author also cites the 2015 Adult Education Regional Planning Report (required under the provisions of AB 86) which estimated that 15.3 million adults are in need of these programs. The report made several recommendations including increasing service levels to meet the demand for adult education.
  
- 2) **History.** In a December 2012 report, *Restructuring California's Adult Education System*, the Legislative Analyst's Office identified several weaknesses with the existing adult education system, a bifurcated system in which both K-12 and community colleges offered courses subject to distinctly different policies. In 2013 the Governor proposed, and the Legislature approved, AB 86 (Budget Committee, Chapter 48, Statutes of 2013) which charged the SPI and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with jointly implementing an adult education planning process. AB 86 also appropriated \$25 million to distribute to regional consortia, composed of at least one K-12 Adult and one community college district, to develop joint plans for serving adult education students in their region. Across the state, 70 consortia were formed, representing all 72 community colleges and 320 K-12 school districts. In September 2014, the Legislature also passed SB 173 (Liu, Chapter, Statutes of 2014) which required the California Department of Education and Chancellor's Office to develop joint recommendations for assessment and placement practices, accountability, and fees.

Among other things, consortia were asked to develop plans to address the five program areas specified in AB 86 (elementary and basic skills, English as a second language, citizenship and workforce preparation for immigrants, programs for adults with disabilities, short-term Career Technical Education (CTE) programs with high employment potential, and programs for apprentices). Each consortium was also required to identify current adult education services and service gaps and to develop a joint plan to address them.

- 3) **Adult Education needs.** According to the *2015 Adult Education Regional Planning Report* required by AB 86 and SB 173, there is a significant and growing demand for adult education in California. The report notes that about 15.3 million adults are in the population groups targeted by the five AB 86 adult education program areas. These include:
  - a) 5.2 million adults without a high school diploma or GED.
  - b) 8 6.2 million adults with limited English proficiency.
  - c) 1.1 million adults eligible for citizenship courses.
  - d) 1.9 million adults with disabilities.

- e) About 500,000 unemployed adults lacking a high school diploma, and over 500,000 young adults (age 20-24) who are unemployed.

The report notes that other factors driving demand for adult education include layoffs related to the 2008 recession and immigration reform at the national level. Immigration reform is projected to add 5.2 million to those seeking adult education nationally, with 1.5 million of these individuals in California.

- 4) ***Shouldn't we consider all funds?*** The reforms of adult education in California were implemented in an effort to ensure a more coordinated and efficient use of various fund sources for this purpose at the regional level. This bill, in an effort to highlight the extensive unmet need for adult education programs, focuses on the Adult Education Block Grant exclusively. Current law requires, as a condition of funding, that consortia plans annually include an evaluation of funds available to the consortium and other entities that provide education and workforce services for adults in the region, including funds other than Adult Education Block Grant funds. Shouldn't a review of the sufficiency of funding include examination of all entities that receive funding for these education and workforce services?

**Staff recommends** the bill be amended on page 3 to replace (a)(6) with the following "A summary, based upon a review of the annual adult education plan required pursuant to section 84906, of the extent to which funds provided pursuant to this article, in combination with funds available to the consortium and other entities that provide education and workforce services for adults in the region, were insufficient to address the demands for adult education within the service area of the consortium."

**SUPPORT**

None received.

**OPPOSITION**

None received.

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