
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: SB 1050
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Version: April 7, 2016
Urgency: No
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Hearing Date: April 20, 2016
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Postsecondary education: college readiness

SUMMARY

This bill, in order to increase the number of California students that meet college eligibility requirements to earn a bachelor's degree:

- 1) Establishes the K-12 College Readiness Block Grant, contingent upon funding via statute or the annual budget act, to provide one-time funding to K-12 districts to prepare high school pupils, particularly those traditionally underrepresented at the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU), for admission into a postsecondary education institution.
- 2) Requires, as a condition of annual budget act funding, as specified, that the UC develop and implement a plan and timeline for increasing the enrollment of students from high schools with a 75 percent or greater "unduplicated pupil count", pursuant to Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) calculations.
- 3) Requests that the UC establish a California subject matter project (CSMP) to provide administrators, counselors and teachers with strategies for improving college readiness, as specified.

BACKGROUND

Existing law implements the LCFF which, among other things, provides for a calculation of the amount of funding to be provided for an "unduplicated pupil." An "unduplicated pupil" is defined for this purpose as a student enrolled in a school district or a charter school who is either classified as an English learner, eligible for a free or reduced-price meal, or is a foster youth. A pupil is only counted once for purposes of this calculation even if a single pupil is classified as an English learner, is eligible for a free or reduced-price meal and is a foster youth. A school district or charter school is required to annually report records for enrolled students in these categories to the Superintendent of Public Instruction using the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). (Education Code § 42238.02)

Existing law authorizes the UC to establish and maintain Subject Matter Projects for the purpose of developing and enhancing teachers' subject matter knowledge in the following six specified areas: writing, reading and literature, mathematics, science, history-social science, and world history and international studies. The Regents of the UC with the approval of an intersegmental Concurrence Committee to establish and

maintain the projects with funds appropriated in the Budget Act. Current law authorizes the UC to establish other subject matter projects (CSMP) and prohibits funds allocated in the Budget Act from being used for subject matter projects not specified in law. Current law makes the CSMP inoperative on June 30, 2107 and repeals the CSMP on January 1, 2018. Current law requires a report on the CSMP to the Governor, Legislature, and appropriate policy and fiscal committees by January 1, 2016. (Education Code § 99200 - 99206)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the K-12 Readiness Block Grant, contingent upon funding via statute or the annual Budget Act, for purposes of preparing California's high school pupils to be eligible for admission into a postsecondary institution and increase their four-year-college-going rates. It:
 - a) Provides that the particular focus of the program is on students traditionally underrepresented in the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU).
 - b) Includes in its focus, unduplicated pupils as defined under specified Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) provisions.
 - c) Requires that a school district or charter school expend funds for any of the following:
 - i) Providing teachers, administrators, and counselors with professional development opportunities to improve A-G completion rates, pupil college-going rates, and college readiness of pupils, including the provision of honors and Advanced Placement courses.
 - ii) Provision of counseling services to students regarding college admission requirements and financial aid programs.
 - iii) Developing or purchasing materials that support college readiness, including those that support high performance on admissions assessments.
 - iv) Developing comprehensive advising plants to support student completion of A-G requirements.
 - v) Implementing and strengthening collaborative partnerships between high schools and postsecondary institutions, including, but not limited to, existing early academic outreach partnerships with the UC and the CSU.
 - vi) Providing subsidies to pay fees for advanced placement exams for unduplicated pupils, as defined under specified LCFF provisions.

- d) Requires, as a condition for receiving funds, that a school district or charter school develop a plan describing how funds will be spent. Further it:
 - i) Requires that the plan include information about its alignment with the school district's or charter school's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).
 - ii) Requires that the plan be discussed at a regularly scheduled governing board meeting and adopted at a subsequent regularly scheduled meeting.
 - e) Requires, as a condition of receiving funds, that school districts and charter schools report to the California Department of Education (CDE) the number of students served under the grant and the number of students admitted to the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU).
 - f) Requires the CDE to compile the information received from districts and charter schools and submit a report to the appropriate Legislative policy and fiscal committees, by April 30, 2017.
 - g) Declares the Legislature's intent that this funding be allocated to school districts and charter schools with students who are traditionally underrepresented at four year universities and students who are unduplicated pupils, as defined under specified Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) provisions.
- 2) Requires the CDE to annually develop and post on its website a list of high schools with 75 percent or greater enrollment of unduplicated pupils, as defined under specified LCFF provisions (LCFF Plus Students).
- 3) Requires, as a condition of receiving funding for enrolling more California resident students in the annual Budget Act than that required under the 2015 Budget Act, that the UC develop an implementation plan and timeline to significantly increase the admission of LCFF Plus students enrolled at the high schools identified by the CDE. Specifically it:
- a) Requires that each UC campus ensure that it increases the admission of California resident undergraduate students above those admitted in the 2015-16 academic year.
 - b) Requires that each UC campus also ensure that it significantly increases the number of students admitted from LCFF Plus high schools.
 - c) Requires that the UC identify a Local Control Funding Formula Plus Student's status as such in the student's application file and that this information be provided to admissions personnel.

- d) Requires that the University of California (UC) identify as a high priority group within the "Entitled to Review" pool of applicants Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Plus student applicants who have fulfilled minimum admission requirements but do not meet the criteria for guaranteed admission through Statewide Admission or through Eligibility in the Local Context.
 - e) Requires that the UC examine the costs/benefits of:
 - i) Extending an application fee waiver to graduates of LCFF Plus high schools.
 - ii) Increasing the total number of campuses covered under the fee waiver policy for this group of applicants.
 - f) Requires that the UC expand targeted support and retention services for disadvantaged or underprepared students, including LCFF Plus students who graduated from the California Department of Education (CDE) identified LCFF Plus schools and requires that these services include but not be limited to:
 - i) Counseling on course planning and scheduling.
 - ii) Tutoring.
 - iii) Financial assistance that supplements but does not supplant existing institutional, federal or state financial aid programs.
 - iv) Any other services that facilitate these students' successful completion of an undergraduate degree within four years.
 - g) Requires, as a condition of budget funding, as specified, that the UC report, by September 1, 2018 and annually thereafter to the appropriate Legislative Policy and Fiscal Committees and the Department of Finance:
 - i) The number and percentage of LCFF Plus students, as specified.
 - ii) The percentage of LCFF Plus students disaggregated as specified.
 - iii) The percentage of LCFF Plus students enrolled systemwide and at each campus earning enough credits in their first year to indicate they are on track to complete a degree in four years.
 - h) Defines various terms for the purpose of these provisions.
- 4) Requests that the UC establish the California College Readiness Project within the existing California Subject Matter Projects (CSMPs). It also:
- a) Makes conforming changes to the objectives and goals of the CSMPs to include:

- i) Provision of strategies for improving A-G course completion rates, college going rates, and college readiness of students who attend schools in local educational agencies eligible for supplemental and concentration grant funding under Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), as specified.
 - ii) Provision of support in the implementation of these strategies to appropriate school personnel to ensure that all students are afforded an opportunity to successfully meet the requirements for admission to the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU).
- b) Requires that school personnel employed by local educational agencies eligible for supplemental or concentration grant funding under LCFF receive priority for admission to programs offered by the California College Readiness Project.
 - c) Deletes the sunset and repeal of the CSMPs.
- 5) Makes a number of related declarations and findings.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, strategies to increase the number of college graduates requires strengthening of the relationship between the K-12 system and the state's public universities. This bill attempts to incentivize the two systems to work together to create a pipeline from high school to our four-year university system and ensure that all California high school students, regardless of family income, have access to rigorous coursework, quality counseling services, and exposure to college through partnerships between high schools and higher education institutions.

This bill does three things in an effort to achieve the author's goals. It creates a one-time block grant to provide college readiness funding to K-12 districts, it requires the UC to establish a College Readiness project to provide strategies for college readiness to K-12 staff and it requires that the UC increase admission of underrepresented students, particularly students from high schools with high proportions of unduplicated pupils.

- 2) ***Why is it important?*** According to a 2015 report by the Public Policy Institute of California (*Will California Run Out of College Graduates?*) if current trends continue, by 2030, the state will experience a shortage of 1.1 million workers for jobs that require a bachelor's degree. While the state is expected to experience declines in the share of high school dropouts and increases in the share of college graduates, these improvements will not make up for the large numbers of highly educated baby boomers retiring from the labor force and even the number of highly educated workers from elsewhere is unlikely to be large enough to bridge this workforce skills gap.

The Public Policy Institute of California report finds that the most promising approach to closing the workforce skills gap is to concentrate on improving the educational attainment of California residents. It outlines four key strategies for the state and its colleges and universities to pursue, including increased access, improved college completion rates, expanded transfer pathways from community colleges, and being smart about financial aid programs. The report also indicates that research shows students are much more likely to earn a bachelor's degree if they first enroll in a four-year college, rather than community college—even when accounting for differences in academic preparation. Increasing the share of high school graduates eligible for the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) would be an important step toward increasing the number of college graduates. It would also improve access for students from low-income families and other underrepresented groups. The report concludes that a state plan for higher education should ensure that enough high school graduates are ready for college and enough slots are available for new college students.

Consistent with the recommendations of the report, this bill provides resources and tools to K-12 districts to ensure students are prepared for college and conditions budget funding for the UC on the increased admission of California resident undergraduate students, including those from school districts with large populations of low income, English learner, and foster youth students.

- 3) ***Related budget activity.*** The 2015 Budget Act provided \$25 million to the UC contingent on increasing California resident enrollment by 5,000 students, holding resident tuition flat in 2015-16 and 2016-17, and redirecting non-resident institutional aid to support resident students. It also provided for an increase in the enrollment of 10,400 additional California residents at the CSU.

This bill requires the UC, as a condition of receiving any enrollment funding in the annual Budget Act, to increase the admission of California resident undergraduate students and to significantly increase admission of students from Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Plus high schools (as defined) and to provide targeted support and retention services to disadvantaged or underprepared students, including students who graduated from LCFF Plus high schools.

K-12 College Readiness Block Grant

- 4) ***Need for clarification of eligibility and use of funds?*** This bill provides that a particular focus of the College Readiness Block Grant is on students traditionally underrepresented in higher education, particularly unduplicated pupils as defined under LCFF, and declares the Legislature's intent that funding be allocated to districts and charter schools that enroll these pupils. However, as currently drafted, the bill sets no threshold for determining eligibility or priority for funding, potentially making this funding available to any district or charter school that enrolls any number of unduplicated pupils. Should the bill be amended to prioritize funding for districts with the highest proportions of unduplicated pupils? Could/should the bill be amended to require that funds received by districts that

have smaller populations of unduplicated students must ensure that funds are targeted to serve the unduplicated students?

In addition, current law requires that the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) include annual goals in each of eight state priority areas, including student achievement, as measured by the share of students who are college and career ready and the share of students completing AP exams with a score of 3 or higher. This bill currently requires submission of a plan describing the use of these funds and how this aligns with the school district's/charter's LCAP.

In order to ensure that these funds are used to enhance, and not subsidize existing efforts, **staff recommends** the bill be amended on page 5, line 17 after "spent" to insert, " and shall describe how funds will supplement and not supplant funding for existing programs and services to ensure college readiness."

- 5) **Strengthened requirements?** This bill requires that districts and charter schools develop a plan describing how funds will be spent in order to receive funding from the new block grant. In light of the fact that the objective of the grant is to increase the 4-year college going rates of high school students, the block grant requirements could be strengthened to ensure that students will be provided with an opportunity to complete the A-G requirements necessary for admission.

Staff recommends the bill be amended on Page 5 line 15 to require expansion of A-G course offerings as an additional allowable use of the funds and to insert:

"(g) Expanding the offerings of A-G courses approved by the University of California and establishing or expanding partnerships with other secondary or postsecondary institutions to ensure that all students enrolled in schools identified by the department pursuant to Section 33318.8 have access to coursework or other opportunities to satisfy A-G requirements."

Staff further recommends the bill be amended on Page 5 line 21 after the period to insert:

"The plan shall also include detailed information on the extent to which all pupils within the district or charter school, particularly unduplicated pupils, will have access to A-G courses approved by the University of California."

UC Admissions

- 6) **LCFF Plus schools.** This bill creates a category of high schools, LCFF Plus schools, defined as having 75 percent or greater enrollment of unduplicated pupils, and requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to annually post a list of these high schools on its website. The bill requires that as a condition of budget funding, the UC significantly increase the admission of students from these high schools. In addition to considering application fee waivers for this group of applicants, the bill requires that UC expand targeted support and retention services for these students. According to the CDE, in 2013-14, about 500 schools throughout California met this definition. These

schools had a total enrollment of about 590,000 students, with 85 percent of these students representing unduplicated pupil categories.

- 7) **Eligibility for UC admission.** According to the University of California (UC), its Comprehensive Review Policy governs the admission and selection of undergraduates at its nine campuses. Freshmen applications are assessed using multiple measures of achievement (high school course completion, GPA, and standardized test scores) and promise while considering applicants' educational context. Comprehensive review involves consideration of 14 factors, utilized by all campuses, but the specific evaluation process and weight given to each factor differ from campus to campus, and year to year, based on campus-specific goals and needs.

UC's admission guarantee policy, applicable to all California resident high school graduates, includes Statewide Eligibility (SE), Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC), and Entitled to Review (ETR). The UC guarantees admission to the system (though not necessarily to the first-choice campus) to all California applicants who are in the top 9 percent of California high school graduates (SE), or in the top 9 percent of their respective high school class (ELC). The top 9 percent is determined by a formula based on grade point average (GPA) and standardized test scores.

In 2012, the UC implemented a new freshman admissions policy, Entitled to Review (ETR). Under this policy students are not guaranteed admission, but are guaranteed a comprehensive review of their application if they have completed 11 of 15 required a-g courses with a weighted GPA of at least 3.0 by the end of their junior year. The intent was to confer the right to a full application review to a broader pool of college-going California students while ending the practice of excluding many high-achieving students solely on the basis of UC's extensive standardized testing requirements.

- 8) **Net effect?** This bill, as a condition of budget act funding, requires each UC campus to increase the admission of California resident undergraduates and to significantly increase the number of admitted students from Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Plus high schools. It makes no changes to the UC's admissions policy or to the eligibility requirements for admission. Rather, it requires that supplemental consideration be given to LCFF Plus students, consistent with UC admissions policy, and that these student applicants be identified as a high-priority group within the Entitled to Review pool.

The bill also requires reporting on the number and percentage of LCFF Plus students admitted systemwide and by campus, disaggregated by admission policy, as well as reporting on the support and retention services offered and progress toward 4-year degree completion for admitted LCFF Plus students.

- 9) **AB 540 students?** This bill requires that each UC campus increase the admission of California resident undergraduate students admitted each year as a condition of receiving funding in the annual budget act. **Staff recommends** the bill be amended on page 6 line 18 to insert "and undergraduate students meeting

the requirements set forth in Section 68130.5” to ensure that these admission increases include AB 540 students.

College Readiness Project

- 10) **Participation requirements.** This bill establishes a College Readiness Project within the California Subject Matter Projects (CSMPs) and requires that school personnel employed by local educational agencies (LEAs) that are eligible for supplemental or concentration grant funding under Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) receive priority for admission to these programs. Presumably the intent of these provisions is to ensure that less well-resourced schools with large populations of low-income and underrepresented students have the opportunity to secure staff professional development opportunities currently unavailable to them. However, as currently drafted, the bill sets no threshold for determining eligibility or priority for participation, potentially making this professional development available to any LEA that applies. Should the bill be amended to prioritize admission for school personnel from LEA’s with the highest proportions of unduplicated pupils?
- 11) **CSMPs report.** The CSMPs deliver intensive, discipline-based professional development in six content areas authorized by law to teachers and administrators. Current law required a report on the CSMPs, by January 2016. In its December 2015 report, the UC notes that from 2011-15, the CSMP serviced 102,412 participants (teachers) from 8,215 K-12 schools with service extending as far north as Del Norte County and as far south as Imperial County, and serving teachers in all 58 California counties. The top ten cities with the most schools served were Los Angeles, San Diego, Sacramento, San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, Fresno, Bakersfield, Stockton, and Santa Ana. About 48 percent of the schools served by CSMP were designated as “low-performing,” as defined by the State’s Academic Performance Index (API of 1-5).

This bill creates a new effort, the College Readiness Project, within the CSMPs. A similar report would be helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the new project. **Staff recommends** the bill be amended on page 10 lines 11-15 to require a report on the CSMPs, by January 1, 2020, and require that it specifically include information on the College Readiness project.

SUPPORT

Advancement Project
 Asian Americans Advancing Justice - California
 Asian Law Alliance
 California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA)
 Campaign for College Opportunity
 Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)
 Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE)
 Community Coalition
 Council of Mexican Federations
 Courage Campaign
 Education Trust—West

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Garvey School District
InnerCity Struggle
Khmer Girls in Action
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles Urban League
Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
PICO California
Policy Link
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools and the 23 school district superintendents
of Riverside County, San Bernardino City Unified School District
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
The Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel Valley and Pomona Valley

OPPOSITION

None received.

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