

- 2) Authorizes the Board of Governors (BOG) of the California Community Colleges (CCC), in consultation with the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC), to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs, at up to 15 community college districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, as specified, to be determined by the Chancellor of the CCC and as long as it does not duplicate a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC. Completion of an independent evaluation by the Legislative Analyst's Office is also required and sunsets the program on July 1, 2023. (EC § 78040 et seq.)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Extends the July 1, 2023, inoperative and January 1, 2026, repeal dates of the authorization for the BOG of the CCC to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs by two years.
- 2) Requires that a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program commence his or her degree program no later than the 2022-23 academic year.
- 3) Repeals an existing requirement that a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program complete his or her degree program by the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “the challenge with the sunset is that colleges are working with local high schools and prospective students on recruiting efforts. A large part of those efforts are focused on working with local industries to identify incumbent workers who can move into programs. If the sunset remains, colleges will not be able to recruit past spring of 2018 since the program currently ends in 2022-2023 (academic year). Students are unlikely to choose programs that have no guarantee of continuing, thus program viability would be in jeopardy.”
- 2) ***Status of existing pilot.*** As outlined in the Master Plan for Higher Education and by state statute, the CCCs are designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower-division undergraduate instruction. However, authorization to offer baccalaureate degrees on piloted bases was granted under Senate Bill 850 (Block, Ch. 747, Stats. 2014). Specifically, SB 850 authorized the BOG, in consultation with the CSU and the UC, to establish a baccalaureate degree pilot program. The pilot program allows up to 15 participating community college districts to offer one baccalaureate degree program each to meet local workforce needs as long as it does not duplicate a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC. SB 850 sunsets on July 1, 2023.

Under SB 850, the four-year degree programs must be up and running by the 2017-18 academic year. Below is the list of colleges that were selected to participate in the pilot:

1. Antelope Valley College (airframe manufacturing technology)
2. Bakersfield College (industrial automation)
3. Cypress College (mortuary science)
4. Feather River College (equine industry)
5. Foothill College (dental hygiene)
6. Mesa College (health information management)
7. Mira Costa College (biomanufacturing)
8. Modesto Junior College (respiratory care)
9. Santa Ana College (occupational studies)
10. Shasta College (health information management)
11. Skyline College (respiratory care)
12. West Los Angeles College (dental hygiene)
13. Rio Hondo College (automotive technology)
14. Santa Monica College (interaction design)
15. Solano Community College (biotechnology)

According to the Community College Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office), of the 15 colleges, 10 started offering classes for their baccalaureate degree pilot programs in fall 2016: The 5 remaining colleges began offering classes fall 2017. The Chancellor's Office reports that for the fall 2016, 206 students are enrolled in the baccalaureate degree pilot program.

- 3) ***Interim evaluation by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO).*** SB 850 additionally directs the LAO to conduct interim and final evaluations of the pilot program, which are due on July 1, 2018, and July 1, 2022, respectively, before the pilot program sunsets on July 1, 2023. The interim evaluation was released ahead of schedule in December 2017. SB 850 directed LAO to include in its report, among other things, an evaluation of completion rates, the impact of baccalaureate degree pilot program on underserved and underprepared students, information on job placement of graduates and recommendations on whether and how the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program can or should be extended and expanded. Findings and recommendations relevant to the provisions in this bill include the following:
- a) Under the existing sunset date and timeline, very little graduation and workforce outcome data will be available at the final evaluation date to help ascertain whether the program is effective.
 - b) Extension of the sunset to permit participating districts to continue enrolling new students to enter the pilot would result in additional years of student outcome data and a more rigorous final program evaluation. However, LAO recommends that the Legislature exercise caution in extending the bachelor's degree pilot program. Extending the enrollment period too long would further engrain a program, making terminating the pilot more difficult.

- c) Expansion of the pilot in advance of its final evaluation is not recommended given the numerous concerns about program selection and consultation, a lack of any graduation or workforce outcomes and problems in financial reporting.

The two-year extension being proposed in this measure seems to strike the appropriate balance between concern raised in the evaluation and making more student-outcome data available. Additionally, the timeline changes in this bill would allow current students additional time to complete their program and allow for enrollment of several new cohorts into the existing pilots.

- 4) ***Amendment.*** This bill requires a student to commence his or her degree by fall of 2022 and at the same time sunsets the program on July 1, 2025. Under this time frame a student who begins the program fall 2022 would need to graduate in three years. This would be a nearly unattainable target for a first-time freshman as completion of a bachelor's degree would take at least four years. To address this issue the bill could be amended to either push up the deadline to commence the program fall of 2021 or extend the sunset date by an additional year. **The author requests, staff agrees, that the bill be amended** to extend the sunset date for three years rather than two.

- 5) ***Related and prior legislation.***

SB 769 (Hill, 2017) would extend the operation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program until July 1, 2028, and would extend the time by which a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program is required to complete his or her degree to the end of the 2027–28 academic year. SB 769 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 850 (Block, Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014) authorizes the Board of Governors of the California Community College (CCC), in consultation with the California State University and the University of California, to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs, at up to 15 community college districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, as specified, to be determined by the Chancellor of the CCC.

SUPPORT

California Community College Chancellor's Office
 Community College League of California
 Feather River College
 Foothill-De Anza Community College District
 Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
 Kern Community College District
 Los Rios Community College District
 MiraCosta Community College District
 North Orange Community College District
 Peralta Community College District
 San Diego Community College District
 San Diego Mesa College

San Francisco Community College District
South Orange County Community College District
Southwestern Community College District
Yuba Community College District

OPPOSITION

None received

-- END --