

Date of Hearing: April 12, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 2732 (Chang) – As Introduced February 19, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Public postsecondary education: mandatory orientation for students

**SUMMARY:** Requires the California State University (CSU) Trustees and requests the University of California (UC) Regents, to provide, as part of established campus orientations, educational and preventive information about cyberbullying to students at all campuses of their respective segments.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Stipulates the policy of the State of California, as specified, that all persons, regardless of their sex, should enjoy freedom from discrimination of any kind in the postsecondary educational institution of the state; and, that students shall be provided notification of the prohibition against sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination and to provided notification of available remedies (Education Code (EC) Section 66281.5).
- 2) Requires the governing board of each community college district and the CSU Trustees, and request the UC Regents to, in collaboration with campus-based and community-based victim advocacy organizations, provide, as part of established campus orientations, educational and preventive information about sexual violence to students at all campuses of their respective segments; and, specifies that for a campus with an existing on-campus orientation program, this information shall be provided, in addition to the sexual harassment information required to be provided, as specified, during the regular orientation for incoming students (EC Section 67385.7).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** *Background.* According to a February 2015 report, by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, entitled, "Cyberbullying, depression, and problem alcohol use in female college students: a multisite study," found that cyberbullying and its effects have been studied largely in middle and high school students, but less is known about cyberbullying in college students. The study performed a cross-sectional study investigating the relationship between involvement in cyberbullying and depression or problem alcohol use among college females. The study found that college-age females are just as likely to suffer the negative effects of cyberbullying as younger adolescents.

Additionally, based on information provided by the author, with college confession pages and apps that allow anonymous posting, cyberbullying is gaining momentum without people even realizing it because it has been glorified; in certain contexts, it is used as entertainment. Furthermore, cyberbullying has been linked to a markedly increased risk for depression and alcohol use in college students.

*Need for the measure.* According to the author, cyberbullying has been linked to suicide, alcoholism, and depression in college students. The author states, "Students are already undergoing a tremendous transition as they have just entered into adulthood, and many are way

from home for the first time." The author argues that college-aged students should receive training on cyberbullying while they attend a UC or CSU.

This measure will equip students with preventative information should they find themselves in a harmful cyberbullying situation. Additionally, this measure provides that students are aware of their options by including educational information about cyberbullying during campus orientation.

*Current practices of the UC and CSU.* The UC and CSU continue to provide in-depth orientation for students in sexual harassment and assault, but presently, Committee staff understands that most of the campuses do not currently provide information regarding cyberbullying during their orientation for students.

*Efforts in other states.* The State of New Jersey has passed legislation that adds cyberbullying to the definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying and providing notice to students at their postsecondary institutions of higher learning.

Additionally, there is federal movement to provide more guidance to college-aged students regarding cyberbullying and its negative effects.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

None on file.

**Opposition**

None on file.

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