

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 458 (O'Donnell) – As Introduced February 23, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Postsecondary education: instructional strategies

**SUMMARY:** Requests the California Subject Matters Project (CSMP) housed within the University of California (UC) to conduct a feasibility study to determine the appropriate grade level and subject area and potential cost for a pilot program to develop standards-aligned content and instructional software for use on portable electronic devices.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires the UC Regents, with the approval of an intersegmental Concurrence Committee, to establish and maintain the projects and specifies the composition of the concurrence committee to be representatives of the various segments of education. Requires the advisory board of each subject matter project to use specified criteria in recommending funding for local project sites (Education Code Section 99200).
- 2) Provides for the establishment and maintenance of nine CSMPs for the purpose of developing and enhancing teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, as follows:
  - a) The California Writing Project;
  - b) The California Reading and Literature Project;
  - c) The California Mathematics Project;
  - d) The California Science Project;
  - e) The California History-Social Science Project;
  - f) The World History and International Studies Project;
  - g) The California Physical Education-Health Project;
  - h) The California Arts Project; and,
  - i) The California World Language Project (EC Section 99201).
- 3) Authorizes UC to establish other subject matter projects and specifies that no funds allocated in the annual Budget Act shall be used for subject matter projects in subjects not specifically authorized in statute (EC Section 99201.5).

- 4) Sunsets CSMP on June 30, 2017, and repeals the authorizing statute on January 1, 2018, unless a later-enacted statute deletes or extends those dates (EC Section 99206).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** *Purpose of the measure.* According to the author, "As California transitions to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), we need to invest in instructional materials that are aligned to those new standards. At the same time, there is an increased demand for portable electronic devices to provide curriculum content. Although electronic materials are being created by private publishers, they are developed for a national market and may not suit the unique needs of California's students." The author contends that, "The state could realize significant cost savings through the use of publicly-resourced materials. The purpose of this bill is to explore the feasibility and cost of developing such materials. The California Subject Matters Project (CSMP) should do this study, because it is the only interdisciplinary and intersegmental public entity that works directly with teachers to improve classroom instruction in specified content areas."

*Background.* As California transitions to the CCSS and as other content standards are updated, school districts need new instructional materials that are aligned to said standards. At the same time, school districts are increasingly making use of portable electronic devices in order to provide curriculum content. Although private publishers are developing electronic instructional software, those products can be costly and are geared towards a national market. California's schools need a source of high-quality, cost-effective materials that are tailored to the many needs of our students.

*California Subject Matters Project.* CSMP is an intersegmental effort of postsecondary education institutions that connects K-12 educators with faculty in the various disciplines from UC, California State University, and private higher education colleges and universities to provide professional development designed to enhance teachers' content knowledge and instructional strategies to improve student learning and academic performance as measured against the state's K-12 academic content standards. Additionally, the CSMP provide teachers with instructional strategies for working with English learners and help teachers use research and data to improve student learning and achievement.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

None on file.

**Opposition**

None on file.

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