

Date of Hearing: April 22, 2014

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Das Williams, Chair
AB 2352 (Chesbro) – As Introduced: February 21, 2014

SUBJECT: Community colleges: early and middle college high schools.

SUMMARY: Exempts from the low enrollment priority requirement a student attending an early college high school if the student is seeking to enroll in a California Community College (CCC) course that is required for the student's early college high school (ECHS) program; and, specifies that a community college district does not need to include middle college high school (MCHS) and ECHS students in their district full-time equivalent students (FTES) report, if a MCHS or ECHS student is enrolled in a community college course that is required for the student's MCHS or ECHS program.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes MCHS as broad-based comprehensive instructional programs focusing on college preparatory and school-to-work curricula, career education, work experience, community service, and support and motivational activities; and declares ECHS to be autonomous schools that blend high school and college into a coherent educational program – specifying that ECHS pupils should begin taking college courses as soon as they demonstrate readiness and the college credit earned may be applied toward completing an associate or bachelor's degree, transfer to a four-year university, or obtaining a skills certificate (EC § 11300 and § 11302).
- 2) Provides opportunities for minor students to enroll in college-level, degree-applicable courses for advanced scholastic or advanced vocational purposes while they are in high school and authorizes the governing board of a school district, upon recommendation of the principal of a pupil's school and with parental consent, to authorize a student to concurrently enroll in a community college during any session or term to undertake one or more courses of instruction (Education Code § 48800 et. seq.).
- 3) Requires the CCC Chancellor's Office to report to the Department of Finance and Legislature annually on the amount of FTES claimed by each CCC district for high school pupils enrolled in non-credit, non-degree applicable, degree applicable (excluding physical education), and degree applicable physical education courses; and provides that, for purposes of receiving state apportionments, CCC districts may only include high school students within the CCC district's report on FTES if the students are enrolled in courses that are open to the general public, as specified. Additionally, current law requires the governing board of a CCC district to assign a low enrollment priority to special part-time or full-time students in order to ensure that these students do not displace regularly admitted community college students; however, current law exempts MCHS students from being assigned low enrollment priority if they are seeking to enroll in a CCC course that is required for their MCHS program (EC § 76001 and § 76002).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: Middle and early college high schools. MCHS and ECHS operate in a similar manner to provide high school pupils opportunities to take college courses while still in high school as part of an integrated program. According to information provided by the author's office, data shows that ECHS are reaching their target populations; nationally, roughly three-fourths of high school pupils attending ECHS are students of color, while nearly 60% report eligibility for free or reduced-priced lunch. Most students attending ECHS will be the first in their families to go to college. Currently, there are 40 ECHS in California. The demographic make-up of the ECHS students in the 40 schools in California is as follows: 59.52% are Latino; 17.41% are White; 8.57% are Black; and, 6.47% are Asian. To note, 92% of the 40 schools are currently partnered with a CCC.

Challenges for MCHS and ECHS students. High school pupils participating in MCHS and ECHS programs are considered special part-time or full-time students for purposes of attending a community college to fulfill the college aspect of the program. According to the author, pupils attending ECHS programs are encountering difficulty in enrolling in the necessary community college classes they need to meet the dual degree coursework requirement of such programs and thus there has been a decrease in the number of students completing the full mission of these programs. The author argues that ECHS are experiencing a drop in the number of new student applications due to pupils' difficulty in enrolling in community college courses.

By providing ECHS students an exemption from the low enrollment priority requirement, this bill will give ECHS students an opportunity to complete their programs in a timely manner. AB 230 (Carter, Chapter 50, Statutes of 2011), allowed MCHS students this exemption, but not ECHS students; this bill will give bring parity to ECHS students.

Course demands. Currently, there is more demand than there are course offerings at the CCC and course registration priorities play an important role in managing CCC enrollment. Enrollment priorities determine which groups of students are enrolled in courses and which students get turned away. According to a March 2013 report by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), course offerings have declined from 420,000 to 334,000 since 2008—86,000 or 21% of course offerings—and most were credit courses necessary to transfer or obtain a degree or certificate. PPIC estimates that since 2008, 600,000 students have not been able to enroll in classes, and another 500,000 students were on waiting lists for fall 2012 courses.

Existing law requires CCC to assign high school pupils a low enrollment priority in order to ensure they do not displace regularly admitted CCC students. This bill creates a narrow exemption from the low enrollment priority for students attending an ECHS, if the student is seeking to enroll in a community college course that is required for the student's ECHS program. The proposal does not give ECHS students priority in CCC enrollment but rather gives community colleges some flexibility in the priority assignment for ECHS students.

Conflicting legislation. AB 1451 (Holden), which passed out of this committee on April 1, 2014, among other things, authorizes the governing board of a school district to authorize a pupil, as specified, to attend a community college during any session or term as a special part-time or full-time student and to undertake one or more courses of career technical education offered at the community college and authorizes the governing board of a school district to enter into a concurrent enrollment partnership agreement with a community college district located within its immediate service area. Additionally, this bill will allow certain exemptions for pupils who attend ECHS and MCHS.

Staff recommends, should this measure pass out of this committee, that the two measures eventually be amended to address potential chaptering out issues.

Related legislation. AB 230 (Carter), as described above.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Alvord Unified School District
Banning Unified School District
Beaumont Unified School District
Coachella Valley Unified School District
Corona-Norco Unified School District
Desert Center Unified School District
Desert Sands Unified School District
Hemet Unified School District
Jurupa Unified School District
Lake Elsinore Unified School District
Los Angeles Community College District
Los Rios Community College District
Menifee Union School District
Moreno Valley Unified School District
Murrieta Valley Unified School District
Newport-Mesa Unified School District (sponsor)
Nuvview Union Elementary School District
Palm Springs Unified School District
Palo Verde Unified School District
Perris Elementary School District
Perris Union High School District
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
Riverside Unified School District
Romoland Elementary School District
San Diego Unified School District
San Jacinto Unified School District
South Orange County Community College District
Temecula Valley Unified School District
Val Verde Unified School District
Yosemite Community College District

Opposition

None on file.

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