

Date of Hearing: July 11, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

SB 478 (Portantino) – As Amended June 19, 2017

SENATE VOTE: 29-10

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: transfer of community college students to the California State University or University of California.

SUMMARY: Requires the governing board of each community college district to direct community colleges to identify and notify students who complete an associate degree for transfer (ADT), to automatically award these students with the degree and add the students to an identification system that is maintained by community colleges in a manner that is accessible to the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) enrollment systems for purposes of streamlining transfer. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the governing board of each community college district to direct the appropriate officials at their respective campuses to do all of the following:
 - a) Identify students who complete an ADT;
 - b) Notify students of their completion of the ADT requirements;
 - c) Automatically award the student with the ADT; and,
 - d) Add the student to the identification system, as described in (5) below, at the end of each academic term.
- 2) Requires that all of (1)(a – c) inclusive be completed at the end of each academic term.
- 3) Permits a student to choose not to receive an ADT or to be included in the identification system, as described in (5) below.
- 4) Specifies that (1)(c and d) above, does not apply to a student who opts out from receiving an ADT and that (1)(d) above does not apply if a student opts out of being included in the identification system, as described in (5) below.
- 5) Requires the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to maintain an identification system that can be accessed electronically by the CSU and the UC enrollment systems.
- 6) Specifies that the provisions of this measure shall be operative only if the Legislature appropriates sufficient funds to pay for all state-mandated costs that will be incurred by community college districts.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Declares the Legislature's intent that the CSU and the UC, for purposes of enrollment planning and admission priority practice at the undergraduate level, in part, prioritize California Community College (CCC) transfer students in an approved transfer agreement program (Education Code (EC) Section 66202).
- 2) Requires the CCC Board of Governors, the UC Regents, and the CSU Trustees, in consultation with their respective Academic Senates, to jointly develop, maintain and disseminate a common core curriculum in general education course for the purposes of transfer, and establishes a variety of related requirements (EC Sections 66720 - 66722.5).
- 3) Requires each department, school, and major of the UC and CSU to establish discipline specific articulation and transfer program agreements for majors with lower division prerequisites and establishes a number of related reporting and other requirements (EC Section 66740, et seq.).
- 4) Establishes the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act under which CCC districts are required to develop and grant a transfer associate degree that deems the student eligible for transfer into the CSU, when the student meets specified course requirements. Additionally, the CSU is required to guarantee admission with junior status to any community college student who meets specified requirements, but provides that the student is not guaranteed admission for specific majors or campuses. However, the CSU is required to grant a student priority admission to his or her local CSU campus and to a program or major that is similar to his or her community college major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Students that utilize the ADTs process are required to receive priority over all other community college transfer students, except for community college students who have entered into a transfer agreement between a community college and the CSU prior to the fall term of the 2012-13 academic year. And requires the CCC and the CSU to establish a student-centered communication and marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the ADT pathway, as specified (EC Sections 66745 - 66749.5).
- 5) Requires the Regents of the UC to annually report on CCC transfer students admitted to the UC, beginning no later than March 2017 and until March 2022 including reporting on students who indicate on their admission application that they received an ADT and who were admitted (EC Section 66721.9).

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), based on the most recent version of this bill:

- 1) Local costs ranging from \$1.2 million to \$2.5 million. Approximately 41 of the 114 community colleges conduct degree audit checks manually or do not use software programs capable of handling both an automatic degree audit check and automatic awarding of ADTs.

The estimated cost of an automated system capable of implementing the provisions of SB 478 range from between \$30,000 and \$60,000.

The total local costs range amounts are derived by multiplying 41 community colleges total costs for initial implementation.

To note, the cost estimate does not include ongoing campus costs related to annual software maintenance contracts.

- 2) State operations costs of \$10,000 in order to make the necessary changes to the CCCCCO's current system in order to implement the provisions of this measure.

COMMENTS: *Background.* The Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, established by SB 1440 (Padilla), Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010, in part, required CCC districts to develop and grant a transfer associate degree that deemed the student eligible for transfer into the CSU, when the student met specified course requirements. Completion of an ADT guarantees:

- 1) Admission with junior status to a CSU campus to a major determined to be similar to the ADT, but not to a specific campus or major;
- 2) No additional lower-division CSU coursework;
- 3) No more than 60 semester units of upper division CSU coursework to complete a bachelor's degree that, in addition to the 60 units completed at community college, results in a 120 unit pathway to a bachelor's degree; and,
- 4) Priority admission at CSU.

To note, for students transferring to UC, under the UC's comprehensive review policy, the ADT is among one of the nine criteria campuses are able to use to select their admitted class when they receive more minimally qualified applicants than they can admit.

What does the data say? According to the October 2016 Education Insights Center report, *Trial and Error: California Students Make the Best of an Improving Yet Complex Transfer Process*, transfer students represented about half of new undergraduate enrollment at the CSU in 2015-16, and half of the bachelor's degrees conferred by the CSU in 2014-15 were awarded to students who and transferred from a community college. The report also found that at the UC in 2015-16, about 28 percent of new undergraduates had transferred from community college and community college transfer students were awarded about a third of the UC's bachelor's degrees in 2014-15.

However, the report also found that despite this representation of community college transfer students at the state's public universities, only 24 percent of students who enroll at a CCC intending to transfer to a public university actually do so after four years, and only 38 percent transfer after six years. Per the students who participated in the study, it is interesting to note the study found, in part:

- 1) Students did not understand the ADT;
- 2) Students were (and still appear to be) confused by the offering of both an associate's degree and an ADT in the same discipline; and,
- 3) Students who earned an associate's degree did not know if the degree they received was an ADT.

Lastly, the report recommended that both community colleges and the CSU need to improve counseling and online support for transfer students and community colleges should institute degree audit programs to assist students in transfer planning.

Purpose of the measure. According to the author, the student transfer processes from a CCC to a CSU or UC, "are complex and confusing for most transfer students." The author contends that it is challenging for the CSU and UC to certify whether or not a CCC transfer student has obtained an ADT.

This measure requires the CCC to automatically award ADTs to students who have completed all necessary requirements to earn an ADT and add them to an identification system that the CSU and UC will be able to access electronically.

Current ADT notification process. Generally, CCC students are not notified of their completion of the ADT requirements nor is the degree automatically awarded. A student must file a petition for an ADT prior to receiving the award. Committee Staff understands that that ADT students seeking admittance to a four year public university self-identify and submit verification that they have finished requirements for the ADT.

According to the CCCCCO, colleges are not equipped with the tools, such as an automated degree audit system, which would be required to implement the provisions as outlined in this measure. To note, a system like the one described in this bill could simplify the process for students and presumably increase the number of ADT graduates.

Committee comments and amendments. As currently drafted, this measure requires the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to maintain an identification system that can be accessed electronically by the UC and CSU enrollment systems. It is presently unclear as to what the term "enrollment systems" means or even entails. Committee Staff understands that said term is seen as vague and confusing to the UC and CSU. Additionally, there is an old reference to the CCCCCO

With that in mind, *Committee Staff recommends, and the author has agreed to accept the following amendments:*

(d) ~~The Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges~~ **California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office** shall maintain an identification system that can be accessed electronically by the California State University and the University of California ~~enrollment systems.~~

Previous legislation. SB 1440 (Padilla), Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010, created the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, which required community colleges to create two-year 60 unit ADTs that are fully transferable to CSU and specified that once admitted, these students need only complete two additional years (an additional 60 units) of coursework to earn a bachelor's degree.

AB 2302 (Fong), Chapter 427, Statutes of 2010, authorized any community college student who met all the requirements for transfer established by SB 1440 (as referenced above) to request that the UC guarantee admission with junior status and to request the granting of priority admission to a program or major similar to his or her community college major or area of emphasis.

SB 440 (Padilla), Chapter 720, Statutes of 2013, in part, expanded the provisions of the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act to require that CCCs create ADTs in every major, and in areas of emphasis, and to require that the CSU accept these degrees, and develop an admissions redirection process for students who completed these degrees but were denied admission to the CSU campus to which they applied. SB 440 also required the CCC and the CSU to establish a student-centered communication and marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the ADT pathway.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
California State Student Association
Campaign for College Opportunity

Opposition

None on file

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