

Date of Hearing: March 12, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 1885 (Addis) – As Introduced January 22, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Student Success Completion Grant program.

**SUMMARY:** Requires, commencing with the 2025-26 academic year (AY), students meeting the applicant criteria for the Student Success Completion Grant Program (SSCGP) at the California Community Colleges (CCC), who enroll in nine or more units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units, and are considered full-time as part of the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) Academic Accommodation Plan (AAP), shall be eligible for a grant amount of \$1,298 per semester, or the quarterly equivalent.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the mission and function of the CCC, which, in part, is to: 1) offer academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level for both younger and older students, including those persons returning to school; 2) grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degrees; 3) offer English as a Second Language instruction, adult noncredit instruction, and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level; and, 4) advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous work force improvement (Education Code (EC) Section 66010.4)
- 2) Establishes the SSCGP, under the administration of the CCC. Stipulates that SSCGP is operative only in fiscal years funding has been provided for SSCGP in the annual Budget Act or another statute. Expresses that SSCGP awards are intended to cover non-tuition costs of college. Specifies a student attending a CCC may receive a SSCGP award if the student meets all of the following requirements:
  - a) Receives a Cal Grant B or C award;
  - b) Is making satisfactory academic progress at the college under criteria required by the applicable federal standards, as specified;
  - c) Is a California resident or is exempt from paying nonresident tuition, as specified; and,
  - d) Students who meet the applicant criteria shall be eligible for the following grant amounts:
    - i) \$1,298 per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 12, 13, or 14 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units;
    - ii) \$4,000 per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 15 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units; and,
    - iii) Commencing with the 2023-24 AY, students who meet the criteria (as enumerated above in (2) (a – c) inclusive, who are current or former foster youth, as defined, will be eligible for a SSCGP in the amount of \$5,250 per semester, or quarterly

equivalent, if they enroll in 12 units or more per semester or the quarterly equivalent number of units (EC Section 88931).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown. This measure has been keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

**COMMENTS:** *Need for the measure.* According to the author, “students taking nine units as part of their disabled student programs and services academic accommodation plan are unable to earn the Student Success Completion Grant because the grant can only be awarded to eligible full-time students who are taking at least 12 units; however, under the academic accommodation plan, students with disabilities taking nine units qualify as full-time.”

The author states that, “I’m authoring the College Access for Students with Disabilities Act because this bill will level the playing field and support community college students with disabilities to achieve their academic goals. Assembly Bill 1885 will make sure that eligible students with disabilities have equitable opportunities to qualify for the Student Success Completion Grant. Doing so will increase the opportunity for needed financial support for thousands of community college students.”

*The SSCGP.* The Legislature, in conjunction with the Governor and the Department of Finance, created the SSCGP; and, stipulated, commencing with the 2018-19 academic year, each participating CCC must provide a SSCGP award to eligible students in order to assist in offsetting students’ total cost of CCC attendance.

The 2022-23 Budget Act adjusted the SSCGP whereby \$200 million was allocated in addition to funding from previous budget years. Additionally, the 2022-23 Budget Act increased the award amount for all eligible CCC students: \$1,298 per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 12, 13, or 14 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units; and, \$4,000 per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 15 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units.

Further, the 2023-24 Budget Act adjusted the SSCGP, stipulating that beginning with the 2023-24 AY, students who meet the aforementioned criteria and who are current or former foster youth, as defined, will be eligible for a SSCGP in the amount of \$5,250 per semester, or quarterly equivalent, if they enroll in 12 units or more per semester or the quarterly equivalent number of units.

Currently, the Governor’s proposed 2024-25 Budget allocates \$412 million to fund the SSCGP.

Committee Staff understands that, due to limited funding, SSCGP funds are typically awarded on a first come, first serve basis to eligible students.

*Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS).* The DSPS was created when AB 77 (Lanterman), Chapter 275, Statutes of 1976, was enacted and codified in Education Code, Section 84850 and Title 5, California Code of Regulations (5 CCR) Sections 56000-56076. It funds support services and instructional programs for students with verified disabilities in the CCC. The DSPS assists colleges to provide services and accommodations for qualified students to support student success and to meet the requirements of federal and State non-discrimination

and civil rights laws, including Sections 504 and 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act; and California Government Code Sections 11135-11139.5.

The DSPS provide support services and educational accommodations to students with disabilities so they can have full and equitable access to the community college experience. Additionally, many colleges provide specialized instruction as part of their DSPS program. An AAP is developed for each student served by DSPS. The AAP defines the student's educational goals and outlines the support services and academic accommodations necessary for the student's specific disability-related educational needs.

Examples of services that may be provided by DSPS that are over and above those regularly offered by the college would be test-proctoring, assessment for learning disabilities, specialized counseling, interpreter or captioning services for hearing-impaired or deaf students, mobility assistance, note-taker services, reader services, transcription services, specialized tutoring, access to adaptive equipment, job development/placement, registration assistance, special parking and specialized instruction.

Students in DSPS are considered full-time when taking nine units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units; however, for non-DSPS students, full-time is considered 12 units, or the quarterly equivalent number of units. Twelve units is the traditional number that various programs use when determining whether a student has full-time status.

*How many students?* According to the CCC Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), in the 2022-23 AY (the most recent data available), 107,385 CCC students were a part of the DSPS. Additionally, of the 107,385 students, there were 5,400 students in DSPS who received a Cal Grant, but were not eligible to receive a SSCG. The CCCCCO notes that, of the 5,400 students, not all of them were enrolled in nine units. Therefore, the exact number of students who will become eligible to receive the SSCG is presently unknown.

*Committee comments.* While this measure has been keyed "non-fiscal" by the Legislative Counsel, as currently drafted, this measure changes the threshold of full-time enrollment for students with disabilities, in order for this demographic of student to be eligible to receive funds from the SSCGP. Additionally, this measure is predicated on CCCs being required to provide the funds to said student group. Lastly, this measure does not augment the existing SSCGP funds. It appears that this measure indeed has fiscal implications; however, it remains unclear how this measure will be funded.

*Moving forward, the author may wish to work with the appropriate fiscal committees in order to address potential funding concerns.*

*Related legislation.* AB 1542 (Mike Fong), of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, which is currently awaiting action by the Senate Committee on Education, stipulates funds from the CCC SSCGP be awarded to student members of the CCC Board of Governors.

*Arguments in support.* According to the San Diego, Southwestern, Palo Verde, and San Bernardino Community College Districts, "according to survey data from National Center for Education Statistics, students with disabilities receive 15% less financial aid than non-disabled students. Under AB 1885, students with disabilities are eligible to receive up to \$1,298 per

semester through the SSCG. This is a win for our students with disabilities and it will go a long way in covering the cost of college attendance.”

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

California Association for Postsecondary Education and Disabilities

California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office (Sponsor)

Cerritos College

Citrus College

College of the Redwoods

Contra Costa Community College District

El Camino Community College District

Foothill-De Anza Community College District

John Burton Advocates for Youth

Mt. San Antonio College

Palo Verde Community College District

Rio Hondo College

Riverside Community College District

San Bernardino Community College District

San Diego Community College District

South Orange County Community College District

Southwestern Community College District

Ventura County Community College District

Victor Valley College

**Opposition**

None on file.

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