

Date of Hearing: April 8, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 731 (Fong) – As Amended March 27, 2025

[Note: This bill is double referred to the Assembly Committee on Education and will be heard by the Committee as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SUBJECT: Pupil instruction: dual enrollment: College and Career Access Pathways partnerships

SUMMARY: Amends the dual enrollment program, College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnership, to align with best practices, in order to streamline access to dual enrollment for high school students throughout the state. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Removes the requirement for a student to procure a principal's recommendation in order to participate in a CCAP dual enrollment program.
- 2) Adds to the terms and protocols of a CCAP partnership agreement to include a requirement for a student to complete one application for the duration of the student's participation in the CCAP partnership program.
- 3) Provides additional clarity around the type of community college coursework which may be offered as part of the CCAP agreement to include: in-person coursework at the high school or the college or online coursework using either synchronous or asynchronous modalities. Authorizes the board of governors to adopt regulations to ensure asynchronous online courses that are part of the CCAP agreement are offered with appropriate student supports. Defines "synchronous and asynchronous" as the following:
 - a) "Synchronous" as classroom-style instruction or designated small group or one-on-one instruction delivered in the form of internet or telephonic communications, and involving live two-way communication between the teacher and the pupil; and,
 - b) "Asynchronous" as a program in which a pupil and teacher interact using online resources, including, but not limited to, discussion boards, Web sites, and e-mail. However the pupil and the teacher need not necessarily be online at the same time.
- 4) Clarifies it is the intent of the Legislature that college courses offered as part of a CCAP partnership agreement should primarily be in-person courses and that online formats should only be offered if an-person course is not available.
- 5) Removes the requirement that restricted the number of courses (four courses per term) students can undertake as part of the CCAP partnership program. Retains the requirement that prohibits students from taking more than 15 units per term.
- 6) Amends the data requirements that a community college district is required to collect and annually submit to the office of the Chancellor of the California Community College (CCCCO), as follows:

- a) The total number of high school pupils who successfully completed 12 or more units of college coursework by graduation, completed a certificate, or completed the courses required for an associate degree or an associate degree for transfer; and,
- b) The total number and percentage of successful course completions by course category, type, including online, and in-person, and by school site of the CCAP partnership.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Authorizes for a community college district to enter into a CCAP partnership agreement, with a governing board of a high school, the governing board of a charter school district, or a county office of education and outlines specific requirements for participation in the CCAP partnership agreements by the CCC and the local school or charter school district. The purpose of the partnership is to offer or expand dual enrollment opportunities for pupil who may not be college bound or who are underrepresented in higher education. Permits special part-time students participating in the CCAP partnership to receive priority enrollment, enroll in up to 15 course, and receive fee waivers for specified fees. The goal of the partnership is to offer courses which develop seamless pathways from high school to community college for career technical education or the preparation for transfer, improve high school graduation rates, and/or help pupils achieve college and career readiness.
 - a) Requires the CCAP partnership agreement to be approved by the respective governing boards of the community college district and the school district. The governing boards must:
 - i) Consult with and consider the input of the appropriate local workforce development board in order to determine to what extent the career technical education pathways are aligned with regional and statewide employment needs; and,
 - ii) Present, take comments from the public on, and approve or disapprove of the CCAP partnership agreement at an open public meeting of the governing board of the district.
 - b) Requires Chancellor of the CCC to annually collect specified data from the CCC and school districts participating in a CCAP partnership and report the data to the Legislature, the Director of Finance, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The data shall include:
 - i) The total number of high school pupils by school site enrolled in each CCAP partnership, aggregated by gender and ethnicity;
 - ii) The total number of CCC courses taken by CCAP partnership participants disaggregated by category and type and by school site;
 - iii) The total number and percentage of courses successfully completed by CCAP partnership participants disaggregated by course category, type, and by school site;
 - iv) The total number of full-time equivalent students generated by the CCAP partnership community college district participants; and,

- v) The total number of full-time equivalent students served online by the CCAP partnership college district participants (EDC Section 76004).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS: *Purpose of the measure.* In February 2021, the California Governor’s Council for Postsecondary Education (Council) published a report which ascribed a roadmap for how the State could recovery from the COVID -19 pandemic with equity by instituting large scale higher education reform efforts.¹ One of the recommendations included supporting and expanding college preparation and early credit attainment among high school students through dual enrollment programs. The report specifically highlighted CCAP as a successful modality for increasing early college credit attainment.

The recommendations from the report laid the foundation for the 2022 budgetary “compacts” between the Governor and the public postsecondary education segments. The compacts are a list of benchmarks the CCC, the CSU, and the UC will meet over five fiscal years (2022-2027) in exchange for increased funding in the annual Budget Act. Contained within the CCC compact (CCC roadmap) is the agreement to: (1) increase the number of high school students who graduate with 12 or more college units by 15%, (2) close participation equity gaps in dual enrollment, and (3) establish dual enrollment pathways in high-need fields of education, healthcare, technology, and climate action.² Since 2023, the Chancellor of the CCC has provided an update on the CCC progress in meeting the assigned “roadmap” benchmarks. In the 2024 CCC State of the System, the Chancellor reported that “the number of students enrolling via dual enrollment increased by almost 22% between 2022 and 2023.”³ In November 2024, the Public Policy Institute of California reported 97% of community colleges in California offer statewide dual enrollment at a reduced or no cost to high school students and 3% of the high school graduating class of 2023 graduated with 12 or more college credits.⁴

Streamlining access through the removal of barriers to participation in dual enrollment will only increase access. According to the author, “the College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) program was established to enable high school students to take college courses at their school sites, easing logistical barriers. CCAP is an invaluable resource for high school students, setting students up for success in both their academic and professional lives. Despite the benefits of dual enrollment programs, dual enrollment participation has not been equitable for all students. According to the California Community College Chancellor’s Office, participation rates were measured at 13.9% among white students, 10.9% among Latino students, and 10.8% among the socioeconomically disadvantaged.”

The author further explains that, “AB 731 will ensure more equitable access to dual enrollment opportunities for all students by streamlining the application process so that a student completes only one application for the duration of their attendance at a community college as a unique part-time student participating in a CCAP agreement. This will avoid confusion of the application process and removes an unnecessary hurdle that limits access to dual enrollment opportunities.

¹ <https://careereducation.gov.ca.gov/RecoveryWithEquity.pdf>

² <https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/Programs/Education/CCC-Roadmap-May-2022.pdf>

³ <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/2024-sos-executive-summary-final.pdf?la=en&hash=DC147E3BF646F01C1EFF8825E5CEFEDB91B52B69>

⁴ <https://www.ppic.org/publication/fact-sheet-dual-enrollment-in-california/>

This bill will also authorize a Community College District to offer CCAP courses solely to high school students through either synchronous or asynchronous online modalities, which will give students the option to choose the online modality that works best for their learning style, schedule, and academic needs. Furthermore, this bill will eliminate the four community college courses per term limit to give students flexibility in meeting the current 15-unit cap on dual enrollment courses. By removing this restriction, students can accumulate more college credits while still in high school, easing the transition to college and reducing future tuition costs. Lastly, AB 731 will streamline the CCAP reporting requirements so that more outcome-driven data is collected in order to evaluate the program effectively.”

College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships. CCAP partnerships were created in 2015, with the enactment of AB 288 (Holden), Chapter 618, Statutes of 2015. According to the Assembly Higher Education analyses for the AB 288 (Holden), “ (the) measure creates an unprecedented policy shift; allowing high school pupils whose grade 10 or 11 formative assessment show that they are not college proficient, to take remediation courses while in high school, as taught by community college faculty on a high school campus, and receive credit.” The entire premise of CCAP partnerships was to provide expanded opportunities to students who that are underrepresented in high education or who are not currently on an academic path to qualify for college admission. The goals of CCAP partnerships were to:

- 1) Provide students with a seamless educational pathway from high school to community college for either career technical education or degree transfer;
- 2) Improve high school graduation rates; and,
- 3) Help high school students achieve college and career readiness skills.

Unique to CCAP partnerships is the ability for a student to enroll in up 15 units per semester of dual enrollment coursework. In order to participate a student must receive a recommendation from their high school principal, obtain parental consent, and apply to the partnering community college. The student is able to enroll in community college courses offered as articulated by the CCAP partnership. The CCAP partnerships agreement is required to include the specified courses offered to students, the nature, time, and location of the courses, protocols for information sharing and the use of joint facilities, and the employment of the dual enrollment teachers.

The outcome of the agreement is a streamlined process by which the CCC and high school partner to provide college courses to students that would reduce time to degree for the student upon entry to higher education. Every year, the Chancellor of CCC is required to provide a report on the number of enrolled students and the academic outcomes of those who elect to participate in CCAP partnerships. The last published report contains data from the 2021-2022 academic year and indicated 67,914 students participated in dual enrollment courses across 73 CCAP partnerships; and, those students successfully completed 106,887 college-level courses.⁵

Assembly Higher Education (AHED) Committee: November 2024 Oversight Hearing. For several years, Committee Staff have heard from K-12 high school districts, community college

⁵ <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/report/2021-2022-Concurrent-enrollment.pdf?la=en&hash=CE151D70793F22F9A6B39CA65E4B11C23A0DD763>

districts, and educational stakeholders of the need to improve CCAP partnerships. While various iterations of amendments have occurred to the CCAP Education Code Section over the years, fundamental changes to dual enrollment have not transpired. The state continues to have a myriad of avenues by which dual enrollment can be provided to students, with most of the options being available to those pupils who are scholastically advanced. To learn more about dual enrollment and the changes stakeholders would like to see, the AHED committee held an oversight hearing on November 06, 2023 to understand the benefits and hindrances of dual enrollment programs. During the hearing, the AHED Committee heard from researchers, practitioners, and from both the California Department of Education and the CCC Chancellor's Office as to how the state could assist in expanding dual enrollment opportunities for high school students throughout the state.

During the hearing, the AHED Committee learned of proposed changes to the CCAP program that would encourage equitable access across the State. The chart below demonstrates the changes to the CCAP program as prescribed by AB 731 (M. Fong) and the justification of the recommendation based on information gleaned from the November 2023 oversight hearing:

Change to the CCAP Program	Justification of the Recommendation
Remove the Principal's approval of participation.	Researchers and stakeholders agreed that removing the Principal's approval for students to participate would remove unintended biases that could be contributing to the equity gaps in participation in dual enrollment programs. Principals do not have to approve if a student wishes to take an Advance Placement course and therefore approval in dual enrollment programs should be removed to encourage equitable placement.
Require only one application by the student in order to participate in the CCAP partnership.	Some community colleges require participating high school students to re-apply every year to participate in courses. This is a redundant practice as the student is already in the system as a CCC student and should not be required to reapply.
Clarify college courses offered pursuant to a CCAP partnership can be offered online or in person.	One of the concerns raised by community colleges is the restraint of CCAP partnerships to only offer courses on the high school campus during the school day. During a site visit in the fall of 2023, Committee Staff learned that some high schools offer both a CCAP partnership and another form of dual enrollment in order to permit students to take college coursework after school.

	Students should be able to take the coursework at any time it fits within their schedule and the code should not prohibit them from being able to expand their academic knowledge.
Removes the language prohibiting students from taking more than four CCC courses per term.	The language permitting students to take up to 15 units per term remains in code. Most community college courses are three units and therefore this bill would enable the number of courses to match the number of units.

By enacting all of the changes as highlighted above, AB 731 (M. Fong) would codify all of the recommendations from the November 2023 oversight hearing and would establish CCAP partnerships as the premier and primary dual enrollment program in the State; which would help unify and streamline college coursework attainment for K-12 students regardless of the location of the high school.

AB 359 (Holden) and the Governor's veto message. AB 731 (M. Fong) contains similar changes to the CCAP program originally proposed by AB 359 (Holden) of 2024. Introduced in 2024, the AB 359 (Holden) would have updated the CCAP partnership language to address the concerns raised during the Assembly Committee on Higher Education Oversight hearing by:

- 1) Permitting CCC to enter into agreements with high schools outside the CCC service area;
- 2) Requiring CCAP courses to be dual credit courses for both high school graduation and college credit;
- 3) Permitting physical education courses to be offered as part of CCAP;
- 4) Removed daunting reporting requirements;
- 5) Removed the principal's approval for participation;
- 6) Removed duplicative requirements for the approval of career education courses;
- 7) Removed the ability for colleges to offer pretransfer coursework;
- 8) Removed the requirement that a course offered at the high school does not displace a course offered at the community college campus;
- 9) Clarified college courses offered pursuant to a CCAP partnership can be offered online or in person;
- 10) Requiring community colleges to offer CCAP course even if the high school enrollment is small (more than five students);
- 11) Required only one application to be completed by students who participate in the CCAP partnership; and,

- 12) Required all CCAP agreements to be updated based on the changes approved in the measure by the 2030-2031 academic year.

AB 359 (Holden) was vetoed by the Governor as:

“This bill makes various changes and clarifications related to the College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships. Specifically, the bill clarifies that CCAP partnerships can offer dual enrollment opportunities to all pupils, removes CCAP requirements regarding consultation with local workforce boards, enables interested local educational agencies to enter into a CCAP agreement with a community college outside its service area, and clarifies that students should receive college credit for CCAP courses.

While I support the author's goal of expanding access and removing barriers to dual enrollment opportunities, this bill creates significant General Fund costs that are not reflected in the state's current fiscal plan.”

AB 731 (M. Fong) selected the proposed updates to CCAP partnerships listed in AB 359 (Holden) which would require little to no fiscal cost to implement. The changes as proposed would streamline access for students by removing redundant enrollment barriers and provide additional access to a variety of class offerings.

Arguments in support. The sponsors of AB 731 (M. Fong), Hispanas Organized for Political Equality, clarify the need for the measure as “AB 731 is critical to that work and aligns strongly with HOPE’s mission of ensuring equitable access to education for Latinas and other marginalized students in the state. AB 731 removes student-level barriers to ensure that all students can equitably access, benefit, and participate in CCAP dual enrollment programs. Among other things, AB 731 streamlines the current application process, removes the existing requirement that the school principal approve the dual enrollment application, and provides flexibility in how students meet the 15-unit course cap. It also builds on AB 368 (Holden, 2022), which HOPE co-sponsored, by reframing existing reporting requirements for dual enrollment programs so that they are outcome-driven and are leveraged to assess how dual enrollment participation is translating into certificates, transfers and success for students. Together, these reforms enhance access to dual enrollment programs and provide the state with tools to develop data-informed evaluations of our dual enrollment efforts.”

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Alameda County Office of Education
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California
Californians Together
Campaign for College Opportunity
CFT- a Union of Educators & Classified Professionals, AFT, Afl-cio
Edvoice
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality
Nextgen California
San Jose-evergreen Community College District
The Education Trust – West

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Ellen Cesaretti-Monroy / HIGHER ED. / (916) 319-3960