

Date of Hearing: April 21, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 2523 (Fong) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: governing bodies: biography and contact information

SUMMARY: Requires the systemwide board of the California Community Colleges and the California State University and requests the systemwide board of the University of California to post contact information for each of the board members so that the public may have an avenue to contact and provide input on items before the board prior to board meetings. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Defines for purposes of sections that are applicable to the California State University (CSU) the following terms:
 - a) “Board” as the Trustees of the CSU; and,
 - b) “Trustee” as a member of the board.
- 2) Requires the CSU to post in an easily located space on the board’s internet website the following:
 - a) Each of the trustee’s names and biographies;
 - b) The email address assigned by the CSU to each of the trustees for official CSU related business;
 - c) The mailing address, if assigned by the CSU, for each of the trustees for official CSU related business; and,
 - d) The telephone number, if assigned by the CSU, for each of the trustees for official CSU related business.
- 3) Encourages each of the trustees to consider public and stakeholder input provided to the trustees before voting on a matter in an open meeting of the board.
- 4) Defines for purposes of sections that are applicable to the California Community Colleges (CCC) the following terms:
 - a) “Board” as the Board of Governors of the CCC; and,
 - b) “Board member” as a member of the board.
- 5) Requires the CCC to post in an easily located space on the board’s internet website the following:
 - a) Each of the board members’ names and biographies;

- b) The email address assigned by the CCC to each of the board members for official CCC related business;
 - c) The mailing address, if assigned by the CCC, for each of the board members for official CCC related business; and,
 - d) The telephone number, if assigned by the CCC, for each of the board members for official CCC related business.
- 6) Encourages each of the board members to consider public and stakeholder input as provided to the board member before voting on a matter in an open meeting of the board.
- 7) Defines for purpose of the section pertaining to the University of California (UC) the following terms:
- a) “Board” as the Regents of the UC; and,
 - b) “Regent” as a member of the board.
- 8) Requests the UC to post in an easily located space on the board’s internet website the following:
- a) Each of the regent’s names and biographies;
 - b) The email address assigned by the UC to each of the regents for official UC related business;
 - c) The mailing address, if assigned by the UC, for each of the regents for official UC related business; and,
 - d) The telephone number, if assigned by the UC, for each of the regents for official UC related business.
- 9) Encourages each of the regents to consider public and stakeholder input as provided to the regent before voting on a matter in an open meeting of the board.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the UC as a public trust to be administered by the Regents and grants the Regents full powers of organization and governance subject only to legislative control as necessary to ensure the security of funds, compliance with terms of its endowments, and the statutory requirements around competitive bidding and contracts, sales of property, and the purchase of materials, goods, and services (Article IX, Section (9) (a) of the California Constitution).
- 2) Stipulates no provision of the Donahue Higher Education Act shall apply to the UC unless the UC Regents adopts the provision (Education Code (EDC) Section 67400).
- 3) Establishes the CSU system, made of 23 campuses, and bestows upon the CSU Trustees, through the Board of Trustees, the power, duties, and functions with respect to the management, administration, and control of the CSU system (EDC Section 66606 and 89030 et. Seq.).

- 4) Establishes the CCC under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. The CCC shall be comprised of community college districts (Education Code (EDC) Section 70900).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: *Author's statement.* As expressed by the author, "AB 2523 promotes accessibility and transparency in California's public higher education system by requiring contact information of governing board members to be more accessible to the public, including students, faculty, and other stakeholders. This bill seeks to remove barriers that prevent individuals from communicating directly with governing board members responsible for decisions impacting the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges systems. AB 2523 supports more informed policymaking and helps ensure that the needs of California's higher education communities needs are considered by governing board members."

California Community Colleges Board of Governors. California is home to the largest system of higher education in the country – the CCC. In fall 2025, 116 community colleges provide postsecondary educational services to 1.5 million students.¹ The 116 community colleges are divided into 73 geographical boundaries called community college districts which are overseen by locally elected boards of trustees. The entire system is overseen by the Board of Governors (BOG) which promulgates regulations, policies and guidance on the implementation of state and federal laws for the colleges and districts.

The 18 voting members of the BOG consists of:

- Twelve members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed with a 2/3 vote of the California State Senate;
- Two student members who are appointed by the Governor from a list of names provided by the Student Senate of the California Community Colleges (the student organization recognized by the BOG for the CCC);
- Two tenured faculty members appointed by the Governor from a list of names furnished by the Academic Seante of the CCC;
- One classified employee appointed by the Governor from a list of names provided by the classified employees union of the CCC; and,
- The Lieutenant Governor of California.²

The current information contained on the BOG's website for each board member includes: their name, their photo, and their biography.³ *Committee staff note the second student representative is missing from the BOG's website.*

¹ California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office – Management Information Systems Data Mart – Students – Student Count – Fall 2025.

² Education Code Section 71000

³ <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Board-of-Governors/Members>

The current BOG website does not contain individual contact information for the members of the board; however, the website does contain a generic email to provide written comments on BOG agenda items: BoardComments@CCCCO.edu. The website also provides the contact information for the BOG liaison, ccastro@cccoco.edu, if an individual has questions regarding public comment. The public is permitted to provide two minutes of public or virtual comments during the public BOG meetings on agenda items.⁴

Given the governance structure of the CCC, delegates the majority of day-to-day operational decisions to the local governing board of community college districts, the author may wish to expand the legislation to require the local governing boards to post the same contact information as the BOG.

California State University Board of Trustees. Originally established in 1875 as a college for teachers in San Francisco, the CSU has since expanded to include 23 campuses who enroll 471,451 students in fall 2025. The CSU provides nearly half of the bachelor's degrees in the state and has an alumni base of over 3 million students and counting. To oversee the nation's largest four-year public university, the State established the Board of Trustees (BOT).

The BOT is endowed with the authority to adopt regulations and policies pertaining to the overall operations of the CSU including educational policy decisions, budgeting, and campus planning. The membership of the board is comprised of 25 members (trustees) each with term limits and voting privileges, who are selected and appointed through various manners:

- Five ex-officio members including Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Chancellor of the CSU;
- Two student members, who are appointed by the Governor from a list provided by the Cal State Student Association;
- 16 members of the public each appointed by the Governor and confirmed with a 2/3 vote by the California State Senate;
- One tenured faculty member who is appointed by the Governor from a list provided by the Academic Senate of the CSU; and,
- An alumni, appointed by the Alumni Council of the CSU.⁵

The BOT website provides links to individual webpages for each of the trustees, which includes the trustee's photo, name, term of service, and biography.⁶ The BOT website also includes the mailing address to the offices of the ex-officio members and a generic mailing address and email address for the other trustees.⁷ Public comment at BOT meetings is restricted to one minute per speaker and the person must register to provide comment in advance.⁸ Written comments are

⁴ <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Board-of-Governors/Meeting-schedule-minutes-and-agendas>

⁵ Education Code Section 66602

⁶ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/meet-the-board-of-trustees>

⁷ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/meet-the-board-of-trustees/Pages/address-list.aspx>

⁸ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/Pages/public-comment.aspx>

permitted to a generic email: trusteesoffice@calstate.edu and the written comments will be provided to the trustees prior to the beginning of the BOT meeting.⁹

University of California Board of Regents. In 1869, California opened the doors to the State's public land-grant research university system, the UC. What began with 14 faculty and 40 students has since grown to educating more than 300,000 students annually and an alumni base of 2.5 million.¹⁰ The UC is a constitutionally autonomous university system governed by a 26 member board, known as the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents members are as follows:

- Seven ex officio members – the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President and Vice President of the alumni association, and the current President of the UC;
- 18 members of the public appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the majority of the Senate;
- A member of the UC faculty; and,
- A student representative.¹¹

Additional representatives who are not voting members of the Board include an additional faculty representative and an additional student representative.¹²

Similar to the CSU and the CCC, the Board of Regent's website includes a biography, picture, and name of each Regent; however, the website does not include contact information for each individual Regent.¹³ The Board of Regent's website does have a contact page which includes a way for the public to share concerns or views with the Board of Regents through a generic email address: regentsoffice@ucop.edu or via a mailing address. For both contact methods, the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff may provide a reply and will be shared with the Regents or the appropriate University administrative offices.¹⁴

All meetings of the Board of Regents are public and therefore public comment is permissible. According to the guidelines for public comment, "anyone who wishes to speak must provide their name and phone number to the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff at the link above by 5:00 p.m. the day before the public comment period."¹⁵ Each speaker is afforded up to three minutes to address the Board of Regents.

Arguments in support. As the sponsors of the measure, the California Faculty Association states "this bill increases transparency in California's public higher education institutions and access to contact information for governing board members by requiring the California State University (CSU) and the California Community Colleges (CCC) to display governing board members'

⁹ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/Pages/information-for-bot-attendees.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us#:~:text=The%20University%20of%20California%20opened,alumni%20living%20around%20the%20world.>

¹¹ California State Constitution Section 09 of Article IX Education.

¹² <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/members-and-advisors/#appointed>

¹³ <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/members-and-advisors/>

¹⁴ <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/contact/>

¹⁵ <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/meetings/public-comment.html>

biographies and official contact information on their websites and requesting the University of California (UC) to do the same.”

The California Faculty Association further explains, “outside of limited public comment periods during board meetings, students, faculty, and other stakeholders have few meaningful opportunities to share their perspectives with governing board members before decisions are made. As a result, governing board members may not have the benefit of timely input from those directly affected by policies and actions under consideration. Increasing transparency and improving access to governing board members would allow stakeholders to communicate directly with decision-makers and provide input on matters that may be presented at open meetings. Greater consideration of public and stakeholder input prior to board deliberations would also help ensure that governing board members are better informed when making decisions affecting California’s public higher education system.”

Committee comments and amendments. The systemwide governing board of the CCC, CSU, and UC are all subject to open public board meetings laws, known as the Bagley-Keene Act. Each board must provide avenues for the public to watch the meeting and participate in a collegial and orderly fashion. However, as stated above, each system has a different method by which the public may engage with the public university systems. Each of the public higher education system are conducting a public service for the people of California and therefore, are subject to the opinions of the public. Given the limitations on public comment during the public board meetings, additional contact points should be created so that the public may be fully heard by each of the members of the appointed boards.

To provide continuity and technical clarity, the Committee has suggested, and the author has agreed to the following amendments:

1) *Amends Education Code Section 66602.9, subdivision (c) to read as follows:*

(c) Each trustee is encouraged to consider public and stakeholder input provided to the trustee, ~~as described in subdivision (b)~~, regarding a matter to be presented at an open meeting of the board, before voting on the matter at the open meeting.

2) *Amends Education Code Section 71035, subdivision (c) to read as follows:*

(c) Each board member is encouraged to consider public and stakeholder input provided to the board member, ~~as described in subdivision (b)~~, regarding a matter to be presented at an open meeting of the board, before voting on the matter at the open meeting.

3) *Amends Education Code Section 92673, subdivision (c) to read as follows:*

(c) Each regent is encouraged to consider public and stakeholder input provided to the regent, ~~as described in subdivision (b)~~, regarding a matter to be presented at an open meeting of the board, before voting on the matter at the open meeting.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Faculty Association (Sponsor)
Teamsters California

Opposition

None on file.

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