

Date of Hearing: April 25, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 1173 (Ta) – As Amended March 28, 2023

SUBJECT: College and career fairs.

SUMMARY: Requires a local educational agency (LEA) serving pupils in grades 9 to 12 inclusive, that chooses to hold a college or career fair to notify each community college district (CCD) with overlapping jurisdiction. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires LEAs holding a college or career fair to notify each CCD with overlapping jurisdiction with the LEA, and provide an opportunity for the CCD to participate in the college or career fair.
- 2) Requires the notice, pursuant to (1) above, to include the planned date, time, and planned location of the college or career fair.
- 3) Requires the notice, pursuant to (1) above, to be delivered to the CCD prior to the planned date of the college or career fair by first-class mail or by email.
- 4) Defines the following terms for purposes of this section:
 - a) “Career fair” means an event where multiple private businesses, governmental agencies, university representatives, or career technical school representatives are invited by a LEA to present career options or career technical education options to pupils;
 - b) “College fair” means an event where multiple college or university representatives are invited by a LEA to present college options to pupils; and,
 - c) “LEA” means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Community Colleges (CCC), a postsecondary education system in this state, under the administration of the Board of Governors and specifies that the CCC consist of community college districts (CCDs).

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) authorizes the CCC to grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degrees; 3) requires the CCC to 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) Sections 66010.4 and 70900).

- 2) Recognizes that all students need to be provided with opportunities to explore and make career choices and to seek appropriate instruction and training to support those choices.

Encourages expansion of cooperative activities between schools, youth leadership activities, and community resources. Among community resources of particular significance in providing information on various career opportunities are vocational and occupational exhibits, demonstrations and activities conducted at fairs (EC Section 51004).

- 3) Requires the California Department of Education to annually encourage school districts to plan programs and activities which utilize the resources of fairs and youth leadership activities as an integral part of the vocational instructional program and career decision making (EC Section 51005).
- 4) Defines “career fair” to mean an event where multiple private businesses, government agencies, university representatives, or career technical school representatives are invited by a school or school district to present career options or career technical education options for students.

Defines “college fair” to mean an event where multiple college or university representatives are invited by a school or school district to present college options to students.

Defines “school” to mean public schools, including, but not limited to, charter schools and alternative schools.

Stipulates that a school district or school that is planning to hold a college or career fair must notify each apprenticeship program in the same county as the school district or school of the college or career fair. In determining the county location of an apprenticeship program, the school district or school shall rely on the database of approved apprenticeship programs published by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) on its internet website. The notification shall include both of the following:

- a) The planned date and time of the college fair or career fair; and,
- b) The planned location of the college fair or career fair.

Requires that the notice must be delivered before the planned date of the college or career fair either by first-class mail or by electronic mail pursuant to the contact information contained in the database of approved apprenticeship programs published by the DAS on its internet website (Labor Code Section 3074.2).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This measure is keyed non-fiscal by the Office of Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS: *Double referral.* This measure was heard in the Assembly Committee on Education, where it passed with a 7-0 vote on March 22, 2023. Issues germane to the Education Committee’s jurisdiction are referenced in that Committee’s analysis.

Purpose of the measure. According to the author, “community colleges are able to recruit students in a number of different ways, including through online advertising, social media, traditional media, and in-person recruitment at local high schools. In-person recruitment at high school college fairs provides community college representatives an opportunity to directly communicate with potential students and provide them information on the academic,

extracurricular, and community elements of campus life, as well as answer any specific questions that students may have.”

The author states that, “AB 1173 would ultimately help high schools students learn about the CCC which overall is a much cheaper option compared to CSUs [California State University], UCs [University of California], or a private institution for a student to complete their undergraduate education and to prepare them to transfer.”

California’s community colleges. The CCC is the largest higher education system in the nation, arguably, the world. Comprised of 73 CCDs, the CCC has 115 brick and mortar campuses and one fully online campus. Currently, the CCC educates over 1.8 million students.

AB 19 (Santiago, et al.), Chapter 735, Statutes of 2017, established the California College Promise Program, which authorizes but does not require CCCs to waive fees for first-time, full-time students without financial need for their first year of college. To be eligible for these waivers, students must have no prior postsecondary coursework, enroll in 12 or more units per semester, and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a California Dream Act Application (CADAA).

Having a second year of CCCs ability to waive fees a for first-time, full-time students transpired in the Budget Act of 2019. AB 74 (Ting), Chapter 23, Statutes of 2019, allocated over \$42.5 million to support extending the California College Promise Program to a second academic year (in addition to \$42.5 million to support the first academic year). The higher education budget trailer bill, SB 77 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 53, Statutes of 2019, included the statutory changes necessary to expand the California College Promise Program for a second academic year.

Many refer to the aforementioned program as “free” community college.

Additionally, the CCC Associate in Art for Transfer (AA-T) and the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degrees are two-year associate degrees that are fully transferable to the CSU and are no more than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units. With these Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT) - sometimes called a Degree with a Guarantee - students who meet the CSU’s minimum eligibility requirements are guaranteed priority admission to a CSU campus, though not necessarily to a particular campus or major.

With an ADT, students are able to earn two degrees - their associate’s degree and their bachelor’s degree - with only 120 units if students transfer into a program at the CSU that is similar to the one in which they earned their associate’s at a CCC.

Students who choose to pursue an ADT and are in the California College Program have the potential to save significant costs of earning their degrees. However, if high school pupils are not made aware of the viable option of beginning their college experiences at a CCC during career fairs, they may miss an opportunity to learn about the CCC, which could be the best choice for them.

Arguments in support. According to Coast Community College District (CCCD), sponsors of this measure, “increasingly, community college recruitment representatives are prevented from participating in college fairs that occur on high school campuses, particularly early in the college

application process. Often, community college representatives are only allowed to meet directly with students after the application and acceptance notifications from four-year institutions are released. High school students should be made aware of all options that are academically and financially available to them. High school campuses hosting college fairs should provide equal access for community colleges and four-year institutions alike.”

Further, the CCCD states that, “this bill seeks to create an additional avenue to bolster high school student awareness of community college opportunities, thereby boosting enrollment and community college services to California’s students. The state and federal governments have made funding available for student recruitment and retention at community colleges in recognition of declining enrollment, a situation exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Related legislation. SB 332 (Cortese) of the current Legislative Session, which is pending action by the Senate Committee on Appropriations, in part, requires the Department of Industrial Relations to evaluate the effectiveness of the requirement that a school notify each apprenticeship program in the same county of a career or college fair it is planning to hold.

Prior legislation. SB 1080 (Min) of the 2021-2022 Session, which was held in the Assembly Committee on Education, was substantially similar to this this measure.

AB 643 (Ramos) Chapter 324, Statutes of 2021, requires LEAs planning to hold a college or career fair to notify each apprenticeship program in the same county of the date and location of the fair.

AB 1558 (Ramos) of the 2019-2020 Session, which was vetoed by the Governor, was virtually identical to AB 643 (Ramos), as described above.

Governor Newsom’s vetoed message stated that, “this bill requires local school districts or schools that are planning college or career fairs to notify each apprenticeship program in their county, utilizing information from the database of approved apprenticeship programs published by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards. Many schools and school districts already include apprenticeship programs as part of their career fair outreach. While the intentions of this bill are commendable, this bill could result in additional costs to schools, which are already under significant financial stress.”

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Coast Community College District (Sponsor)
Citrus College
Mt. San Antonio College
North Orange Community College District
Rancho Santiago Community College District

Opposition

None on file.

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