

Date of Hearing: March 21, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Mike Fong, Chair
AB 447 (Arambula) – As Introduced February 6, 2023

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: students with disabilities: inclusive college pilot programs

SUMMARY: Requires the California State University (CSU) and requests the University of California (UC) establish and maintain inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at four-year public postsecondary educational institutions, subject to an appropriation as specified. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Specifies that, subject to an appropriation of funds by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act or another statute as specified, CSU will, and UC is requested to, establish and maintain inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at four-year public postsecondary educational institutions.
- 2) Declares that program funds may be used to establish new inclusive college programs at campuses that currently do not have a program or have a program in development, or to provide continuing support to established inclusive college programs to help those programs reach capacity and sustainability.
- 3) Specifies that an inclusive college program funded as specified will do all of the following:
 - a) Serve students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are at least 18 years of age, even if the students are not taking courses for credit or a traditional degree;
 - b) Provide students with a person-centered planning process and the opportunity to pursue an educational credential, including, but not limited to, a degree, certificate, or nondegree credential issued by the institution;
 - c) Provide inclusive academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, and integrated work experiences that develop career skills that can lead to gainful employment;
 - d) Provide individual supports and services for academic and social inclusion in academic courses, extracurricular activities, housing, and other aspects of campus life; and,
 - e) Establish strategies to recruit and support students from historically underserved communities.
 - f) Specifies that an inclusive college program operated by the UC that does not receive funds appropriated for purposes of this bill is requested to comply with the requirements in as listed above.
- 4) Specifies that funds appropriated by the Legislature as specified may be used for any of the following purposes:

- a) Administrative salaries, including a program director at a campus with an inclusive program and other administrative staff, including academic coordinators, employment and internship coordinators, social inclusion coordinators, and residential coordinators;
 - b) Additional program staff, including instructors, peer mentors, residential support staff, and administrative assistants;
 - c) Training for higher education faculty in evidence-based best practices;
 - d) Augmentation of existing assistive technologies and other academic support services offered by campus disability programs and resource centers;
 - e) Scholarships for student tuition, fees, and living expenses;
 - f) Additional student supports, including; counseling, residential needs, mentor services, and transportation services;
 - g) Outreach, including internet website design, disseminating information to high school transition programs, local educational agencies, special education local plan areas, and college and career centers, and advertising placements and campaigns, including the cost of printing any materials; and,
 - h) Data collection and dissemination.
- 5) Specifies that programs must comply with the requirements for, and will apply for, federal status as a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program so that its students can apply for federal financial aid.
 - 6) Requires programs to investigate long-term sustainability by securing funding from multiple sources, including funds from the Department of Rehabilitation, regional centers, and financial aid programs.
 - 7) Establishes the following definitions:
 - a) “Intellectual and developmental disabilities” has the same meaning as “developmental disability,” as specified; and,
 - b) “Local educational agencies” means school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education.
 - 8) Makes the Legislative finding and declaration that California lacks programs to provide inclusive college opportunities for students with disabilities.
 - 9) Specifies that it is the intent of the Legislature to establish or expand upon existing inclusive college programs with the goal of providing inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at public four-year postsecondary educational institutions.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the UC as a public trust to be administered by the Regents of the UC; and, grants the Regents full powers of organization and government, subject only to such legislative control as may be necessary to insure security of its funds, compliance with the terms of its endowments, 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) Establishes the Donahoe Higher Education Act, setting forth the mission of the UC, CSU, and CCC (Education Code (EDC) Section 66010, et seq.).
- 3) Confers upon the CSU Trustees the powers, duties, and functions with respect to the management, administration, control of the CSU system and provides that the Trustees are responsible for the rule of government of their appointees and employees (EDC Sections 66606 and 89500, et seq.).
- 4) Declares the intent of the Legislature that public higher education in California strive to provide educationally equitable environments that give each Californian, regardless of age, economic circumstance, or the other characteristics as specified, a reasonable opportunity to develop fully their potential (EDC Section 66030)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS: *Purpose.* According to the author, “our state has long recognized the importance of addressing the needs of youth with disabilities in education. AB 447 will encourage California to establish inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at public four-year universities. These programs further the educational and social development for students with intellectual disabilities across the UCs and CSUs. These scholars will have an opportunity to take part in internships and jobs both on and off campus while building the skillset to enter into permanent employment. Students in these programs will have the opportunity to engage socially and live in on-campus housing as well as participate in extracurricular clubs and organizations. This will allow California to continue to be a leader in creating higher education opportunities for students with disabilities to be more inclusive.”

Background. Since 2011, the U.S. Department of Education has provided grants to institutions of higher education, or consortia of institutions of higher education to enable them to create or expand high quality, inclusive model comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities through the Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) program.

According to the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), in 2016 (the most recent data available), the employment rate of people with developmental disabilities was 14.2%. The employment rate of people with all types of disabilities was 35.0%, and the employment rate of the general population was 76.5%. These rates have remained constant over time, and the situation has surely only gotten worse during the pandemic.

When looking at the Federal TPISD model, a survey of students that completed a TPISD program published in the Annual Report of the Cohort 2 TPISID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 5, 2019-2020) found that one year after completing the program, 59% of students had a paid job, and 26% of respondents reported they were pursuing further education.

The UC Davis Redwood SEED Scholars Program is the first four-year, residential inclusive college program in California. This is a four-year program dedicated to fully including students with intellectual disabilities onto the campus of UC Davis. It is a collaborative effort between UC Davis and UC Davis Medical Investigation of Neurodevelopmental Disorders (MIND) Institute through the UC Davis Health System. They welcomed the first cohort of students in fall of 2021. Students take foundational courses created just for them, UC Davis academic courses in their area of interest, develop independent living and communication skills while living in the dorms with other first-year students and have internship and employment opportunities on campus as well.

Arguments in support. California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the sponsor of AB 447, wrote that “Currently, persons with developmental and intellectual (I/DD) do not have the same opportunities after high school as other students. AB 447 will provide equitable and inclusive access to higher education for our I/DD community.”

“In California, I/DD youth that receive post-secondary services are 14% more likely to have paid integrated employment and earn 51% higher wages than those who did not have access to post-secondary services (Smith, et al 2018). Graduates receiving post-secondary services also use fewer government-funded support services (Cimera, et al, 2018). However, there are few UC/CSU colleges that provide inclusive college programs for youth transitioning out of high school. “

“AB 447 (Arambula) will establish and expand existing inclusive college programs for students with I/DD on public 4-year university campuses, increasing the wage-earning capacity of persons with I/DD throughout the state. By offering a sustainable funding source, AB 447 will enhance post-secondary programs for persons with I/DD, supporting their goals of obtaining both a college education and increased opportunities to gain competitive, integrated employment.”

Committee comments. This bill is similar to AB 2920 (Arambula, 2022), which passed unanimously from this Committee before being held in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations. AB 447 is different in that it removes any “pilot” element from inclusive college programs established pursuant to this legislation.

The author noted that there are several inclusive higher education programs that currently exist at CSU and UC institutions, such as the UC Davis Redwood SEED Scholars Program. Given the success and existence of these programs, the author does not believe it is necessary to move forward with these programs on a provisional basis.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Kevin J. Powers / HIGHER ED. / (916) 319-3960