

Date of Hearing: June 26, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

SB 1406 (Hill) – As Amended April 10, 2018

SENATE VOTE: 36-0

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: community college districts: baccalaureate degree pilot program

SUMMARY: This bill extends the sunset date of the authorization for the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (CCC) to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs by three years. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Extends the July 1, 2023, inoperative and January 1, 2026, repeal dates of the authorization for the Board of Governors (BOG) of the CCC to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs by three years.
- 2) Requires that a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program commence his or her degree program no later than the 2022-23 academic year.
- 3) Repeals an existing requirement that a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program complete his or her degree program by the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Differentiates the missions and functions of public and independent institutions of higher education. Under these provisions:
 - a) The primary mission of the California State University (CSU) is required to offer undergraduate and graduate instruction through the master's degree. The CSU is authorized to establish two-year programs only when mutually agreed upon by the Trustees and the CCC Board of Governors. The CSU is also authorized to jointly award the doctoral degree with the University of California (UC), and with one or more independent institutions of higher education;
 - b) The UC is authorized to provide undergraduate and graduate instruction and has exclusive jurisdiction in public higher education over graduate instruction in the professions of law, medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine. The UC is also the primary state-supported academic agency for research;
 - c) The independent institutions of higher education are required to provide undergraduate and graduate instruction and research in accordance with their respective missions; and,
 - d) The mission and function of the CCC is the offering of academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level and the CCC are authorized to grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degree. The community colleges are also required to offer remedial instruction, English as a Second Language instruction, and adult noncredit

instruction, and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level. (Education Code (EDC) Section 66010.4)

- 2) Authorizes the Board of Governors (BOG) of the CCC, in consultation with the CSU and the UC, to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs, at up to 15 community college districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, as specified, to be determined by the Chancellor of the CCC and as long as it does not duplicate a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC Completion of an independent evaluation by the Legislative Analyst's Office is also required and sunsets the program on July 1, 2023. (EDC Section 78040 et seq.)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill passed out of the Senate Committee on Appropriation pursuant to Rule 28.8.

COMMENTS: *Need for the bill.* According to the author, “the challenge with the sunset is that colleges are working with local high schools and prospective students on recruiting efforts. A large part of those efforts are focused on working with local industries to identify incumbent workers who can move into programs. If the sunset remains, colleges will not be able to recruit past spring of 2018 since the program currently ends in 2022-2023 (academic year). Students are unlikely to choose programs that have no guarantee of continuing, thus program viability would be in jeopardy.”

Status of existing pilot. As outlined in the Master Plan for Higher Education and by state statute, the CCCs are designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower-division undergraduate instruction. However, authorization to offer baccalaureate degrees on piloted bases was granted under Senate Bill 850 (Block, Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014). Specifically, SB 850 authorized the BOG, in consultation with the CSU and the UC, to establish a baccalaureate degree pilot program. The pilot program allows up to 15 participating community college districts to offer one baccalaureate degree program each to meet local workforce needs as long as it does not duplicate a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC. SB 850 sunsets on July 1, 2023.

Under SB 850, the four-year degree programs must be up and running by the 2017-18 academic year. Below is the list of colleges that were selected to participate in the pilot:

- a) Antelope Valley College (airframe manufacturing technology)
- b) Bakersfield College (industrial automation)
- c) Cypress College (mortuary science)
- d) Feather River College (equine industry)
- e) Foothill College (dental hygiene)
- f) Mesa College (health information management)
- g) Mira Costa College (biomanufacturing)
- h) Modesto Junior College (respiratory care)
- i) Santa Ana College (occupational studies)
- j) Shasta College (health information management)
- k) Skyline College (respiratory care)
- l) West Los Angeles College (dental hygiene)
- m) Rio Hondo College (automotive technology)
- n) Santa Monica College (interaction design)

o) Solano Community College (biotechnology)

According to the Community College Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office), of the 15 colleges, 10 started offering classes for their baccalaureate degree pilot programs in fall 2016: The 5 remaining colleges began offering classes fall 2017. The Chancellor's Office reports that for the fall 2016, 206 students are enrolled in the baccalaureate degree pilot program.

Interim evaluation by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO). SB 850 additionally directs the LAO to conduct interim and final evaluations of the pilot program, which are due on July 1, 2018, and July 1, 2022, respectively, before the pilot program sunsets on July 1, 2023. The interim evaluation was released ahead of schedule in December 2017. SB 850 directed the LAO to include in its report, among other things, an evaluation of completion rates, the impact of baccalaureate degree pilot program on underserved and underprepared students, information on job placement of graduates and recommendations on whether and how the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program can or should be extended and expanded.

Findings and recommendations relevant to the provisions of this bill include the following:

- 1) Under the existing sunset date and timeline, very little graduation and workforce outcome data will be available at the final evaluation date to help ascertain whether the program is effective.
- 2) Extension of the sunset to permit participating districts to continue enrolling new students to enter the pilot would result in additional years of student outcome data and a more rigorous final program evaluation. However, LAO recommends that the Legislature exercise caution in extending the bachelor's degree pilot program. Extending the enrollment period too long would further engrain a program, making terminating the pilot more difficult.
- 3) Expansion of the pilot in advance of its final evaluation is not recommended given the numerous concerns about program selection and consultation, a lack of any graduation or workforce outcomes and problems in financial reporting.

The LAO recommends that, to allow for a more robust evaluation without entrenching the program for many years, the Legislature could allow students to enroll through the fall 2021 term, while moving up the final evaluation by one year. This bill instead opts to keep the final evaluation in 2022, and instead allows for enrollment through the fall 2022 term. The proposed three-year enrollment extension seems to strike an appropriate balance between heeding the concern raised by the LAO evaluation relative to sunset provisions and allowing for additional student-outcome data to become available. Additionally, changes to the timeline may afford existing participants more time to complete their respective programs.

Arguments in Support. The Community College League of California notes that "The 15 community college pilot baccalaureate programs have discovered that the current pilot sunset date of 2023 creates programmatic obstacles for current and future students, and it taints the analysis of the pilots by introducing a variable affecting enrollment and related operational issues. The 2023 sunset date deters students from enrolling since they are concerned with completing the programs in advance of the deadline. This not only deters future enrollment in the programs, it contaminates the analysis of the pilot program by introducing an artificial barrier to

enrollment. Moreover, extension of the registration period would offer more data for the LAO analysis of the pilot programs.”

“SB 1406 provides a necessary modification to the existing community college baccalaureate pilot program. These degrees will increase student access to career education programs and benefit local employers and communities. Further, by extending the enrollment date, colleges can continue essential partnerships with local high schools to recruit prospective students without the fear of the program being eliminated in four years.”

Arguments in Opposition. The California Faculty Association, California Labor Federation, Faculty Association of the California Community Colleges, and SEIU California jointly write that, “Last December, the [LAO] issued an interim evaluation of the Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program and while it noted that the California Community College Chancellor’s office made rapid progress in implementing it, there was limited review and consultation with the CSU. Also, some degree programs were approved over the CSU’s objections, contradicting both the letter and spirit of the initial implementing legislation.”

“It’s important to note that the LAO found a majority of the fields selected for the pilot program did not require a bachelor’s degree for licensure or certification. The report also found that little student outcome data would be available by the final date to help determine the effectiveness of the program. As noted in the report ‘extending the sunset date, however, would have a major drawback. A longer enrollment period would work to further engrain the program in the status quo, potentially making terminating the pilot more difficult even if the outcome data show that the pilot was ineffective.’”

Prior legislation. SB 769 (Hill) of 2017 would extend the operation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program until July 1, 2028, and would extend the time by which a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program is required to complete his or her degree to the end of the 2027–28 academic year. SB 769 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 850 (Block) Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014 authorized the Board of Governors of the California Community College (CCC), in consultation with the California State University and the University of California, to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs, at up to 15 community college districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, as specified, to be determined by the Chancellor of the CCC.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Association of California Community College Administrators
California Community College Chancellor’s Office
College of the Canyons
Community College League of California
Foothill-De Anza Community College District
Kern Community College District
League of Women Voters of California
Los Angeles Community College District

Los Rios Community College District
North Orange Community College District
Peralta Community College District
San Diego Community College District
San Francisco Community College District
San Jose-Evergreen Community College District
Santa Monica College
South Orange Community College District
Yuba Community College District

Opposition

California Faculty Association
California Labor Federation
Faculty Association of the California Community Colleges
SEIU California

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