

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: July 6, 2011
POSITION: Oppose

BILL NUMBER: AB 160
AUTHOR: A. Portantino

BILL SUMMARY: Concurrent Enrollment in High School and College

This bill would make changes to current law governing concurrent enrollment of K-12 students in the California community colleges (CCCs). Specifically, this bill would: (1) authorize community college districts (CCDs) to enter into partnership agreements with neighboring school districts to allow qualifying secondary students to enroll in CCC advanced scholastic, career-technical or vocational education, basic skills remediation, high school exit exam preparation, English as a second language, or dropout prevention courses; (2) allow qualifying secondary students to enroll in specified CCC courses upon notifying their principal; (3) allow qualifying secondary students to enroll in up to 11 units per semester, or equivalent thereof; (4) authorize CCDs with partnership agreements to assign an enrollment priority to concurrently enrolled students; and (5) exempt CCDs with partnership agreements from existing concurrent enrollment limitations and requirements.

The bill would also require participating CCDs and school districts to provide an annual report on specified concurrent enrollment data to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, the Legislature, the Department of Finance (Finance), and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

For school districts without a partnership agreement, the bill would allow school districts to authorize pupils to enroll in CCC career technical education (CTE) courses upon the recommendation of the community college dean of career technical education or other community college CTE administrator.

The bill also states various legislative findings and declarations.

FISCAL SUMMARY

The bill could generate Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressure in the tens of millions of dollars by expanding eligibility for concurrent enrollment. According to the Chancellor's Office, 2009-10 concurrent enrollment totaled approximately 30,000 full-time equivalent students (FTES). Concurrent enrollment reached approximately 45,000 FTES in 2002-03 prior to reforms being implemented. If concurrent enrollment increased 15,000 FTES as result of this bill, it could generate cost pressure of \$68 million Proposition 98 General Fund based on the current credit FTES funding rate of \$4,565.

COMMENTS

We support efforts to allow CCDs and K-12 school districts more discretion to work together to meet the needs of their students; however, Finance opposes this bill for the following reasons:

- This bill could generate cost pressure in the tens of millions of dollars Proposition 98 General Fund by expanding concurrent enrollment opportunities for secondary students. Given state's current fiscal challenges, it would not be prudent fiscal policy to generate new cost pressures at this time. Under current law, the state can pay twice for the education of a concurrently enrolled student because K-12 students only need to attend a minimum of four hours for the school district to receive full revenue limit apportionment. Then, as a result of the student concurrently enrolling

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in a community college, the community college becomes eligible for state apportionment in the CCC system.

- Due to recent budget reductions and current budget constraints, the CCCs have reduced course offerings and are turning away traditional students that are seeking courses to improve, or gain, job skills or to advance their educational goals. Given the limited number of courses available, it would not be prudent policy to expand eligibility for concurrent enrollment students and exacerbate an already challenging situation for traditional CCC students.
- The bill's provision that would authorize community colleges and school districts to enter into partnership agreements is unnecessary. There is nothing that precludes a school district from contracting with a community college to provide additional courses to K-12 students under normal contract education arrangements.
- We question the appropriateness of allowing a community college dean of career technical education or other community college CTE administrator to recommend a secondary student to enroll in a CCC CTE course without the concurrence of the school district principal. Current law authorizes the principal to make concurrent enrollment recommendations since she or he should be aware of course opportunities at the school district and the academic needs and history of the student.

Chapter 786, Statutes of 2003 (SB 338, Scott), enacted a number of reforms related to concurrent enrollment programs to help ensure a more limited scope of attendance in these programs in response to widespread abuses that had occurred during the previous five years. Specifically, the bill required that: (1) students demonstrate adequate preparation in the discipline to be studied prior to being recommended for concurrent enrollment, (2) students exhaust all opportunities to enroll in similar courses at their school of attendance prior to seeking concurrent enrollment in community college courses, and (3) only five percent of students per grade level may be recommended by a school district for concurrent enrollment in summer session community college courses. Later amendments allowed high school students to exceed the cap if they are taking advanced college-level coursework, and exempted students enrolled in college-level transfer courses, vocational courses that were part of a sequence leading to a degree or certificate, and courses necessary for high school seniors to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE).

According to the author's office, it is necessary to remove barriers to concurrent enrollment opportunities, thus allowing school districts and CCDs to create partnerships that expand community college educational opportunities for K-12 students in specified areas. These areas include career technical preparation, advanced college-level courses, remediation necessary to pass the CAHSEE, basic skills instruction, English as a second language instruction, and courses designed to prevent dropout prevention. However, career technical preparation, advanced college-level courses, and remediation necessary to pass the CAHSEE are already authorized uses for concurrent enrollment without limitation. Consequently, the bill would expand concurrent enrollment options to wide variety of courses as agreed upon by CCDs and school districts.

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							Fund Code
	LA	(Dollars in Thousands)							
	CO	PROP							
	RV	98	FC	2011-2012	FC	2012-2013	FC	2013-2014	
6870/Comm College	LA	Yes		----- See Fiscal Summary -----					0001