

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 1, 2013
AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 17, 2013

SENATE BILL

No. 524

Introduced by Senators Lara and Steinberg

February 21, 2013

An act to add Chapter 16.5 (commencing with Section 11550) to Part 7 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 524, as amended, Lara. Pupil instruction: Pathways Curriculum Task Force.

Existing law establishes a system of public elementary and secondary schools in this state, and authorizes local educational agencies throughout the state to operate schools and provide instruction to pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive (K-12). Existing law also establishes a system of postsecondary education in the state that consists of 4 segments: the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, and independent institutions of higher education.

This bill would express the intent of the Legislature to develop a voluntary K-12 curriculum to educate pupils and their families about college and career opportunities. The bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to appoint, and provide staff for, a 12-member Pathways Curriculum Task Force. The bill would specify the qualifications and duties of the members of the task force. The bill would require the task force to establish specified learning goals for pupils at elementary, middle, and high school levels and help pupils to achieve these goals. The bill would require the task force to develop a

pathways curriculum that, among other things, would provide materials, resources, and information for K-12 pupils and their families to gain a comprehensive understanding of available opportunities in postsecondary educational institutions.

The bill would express the intent of the Legislature that local educational agencies consider adopting all or parts of the career and college pathways curriculum, but would specify that adoption of the curriculum would not be mandatory and that local educational agencies may decline to participate.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (1) California makes a major investment in three
4 world-renowned systems of higher education: the University of
5 California, the California State University, and the California
6 Community Colleges. In addition, California is home to prestigious
7 independent universities and a significant number of vocational
8 and specialized private institutions. Yet many pupils complete
9 their senior year of high school with little understanding of these
10 institutions, poor knowledge of financial aid programs, and few
11 tools for making wise postsecondary educational choices. Pupils
12 from disadvantaged backgrounds, pupils who would be the first
13 in their families to go to college, and pupils with poor academic
14 records are often the least informed.

15 (2) The lack of information about postsecondary educational
16 opportunity erodes the effectiveness of California's investment in
17 higher education, and exacerbates attempts to provide skilled
18 workers for California's economy. According to the Public Policy
19 Institute of California, California will need one million more
20 college graduates by 2025 than current trends will produce.
21 California's evolving economy will also need significantly more
22 skilled workers with associate degrees and career certificates.
23 California cannot afford to let pupils reach adulthood uninformed
24 of the institutions and programs available to help them become
25 productive members of society.

1 (3) The Legislature recently broadened the Academic
2 Performance Index to include indicators of college and career
3 preparedness, in addition to state test scores. To assist schools
4 ~~improve~~ *in improving* these new benchmarks, some classroom
5 attention to college eligibility requirements and the value of
6 postsecondary education and training could be helpful to schools
7 and local school districts.

8 (4) Pathway guidance is too often left to chance. The
9 development of opportunities for school districts to incorporate
10 such guidance into their programs is an appropriate school
11 responsibility. Effective pathway instructional programs can be
12 an efficient and effective way to complement the important work
13 of school counselors.

14 (5) Postsecondary education and training has become
15 increasingly expensive in both public and private institutions;
16 student and family debt burden has grown dramatically in recent
17 years. It is in the state's interest to ensure that students and families
18 understand the serious nature of student indebtedness, receive
19 information on maximizing access to grant and work opportunities
20 to reduce indebtedness, and are provided with alternatives and
21 strategies to avoid excessive debt.

22 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to develop a K-12
23 curriculum to educate pupils and their families about the rich array
24 of college and career opportunities available and how appropriate
25 K-12 course taking and academic proficiency can ensure that pupils
26 can meet their college and career goals. It is also the intent of the
27 Legislature that such a pathway curriculum will educate pupils
28 and their families about the cost of postsecondary education and
29 the best ways to pay for it.

30 SEC. 2. Chapter 16.5 (commencing with Section 11550) is
31 added to Part 7 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, to
32 read:

33

34 CHAPTER 16.5. PATHWAYS CURRICULUM TASK FORCE

35

36 11550. (a) (1) The Superintendent shall appoint and staff a
37 Pathways Curriculum Task Force to develop a voluntary curriculum
38 for kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, that will provide
39 pupils and their families with a basic understanding of
40 postsecondary educational institutions, options, programs, and

- 1 opportunities in California. The task force shall consist of 12
2 members, including all of the following:
- 3 (A) Four persons representing postsecondary education.
 - 4 (B) Four persons representing elementary and secondary
5 education.
 - 6 (C) Two public members.
 - 7 (D) One person representing nonprofit organizations whose
8 missions are focused on increased participation in postsecondary
9 education.
 - 10 (E) One person with expertise in career preparation or
11 apprenticeship.
- 12 (2) The Superintendent is encouraged to include persons with
13 specific knowledge and background in college admissions, financial
14 aid, postsecondary educational opportunities, and development of
15 a curriculum for kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
- 16 (b) The task force shall establish learning goals for pupils at
17 elementary, middle, and high school levels, and shall develop
18 curriculum to help pupils achieve those goals. The task force shall,
19 at a minimum, address all of the following topics:
- 20 (1) The variety of college, university, and technical education
21 in California.
 - 22 (2) The importance of postsecondary education and training.
 - 23 (3) Ways to finance postsecondary education and training, and
24 attention to cost-benefit analysis.
 - 25 (4) The A-G course sequence required for admission to the
26 University of California, postsecondary education admission
27 requirements, and the community college transfer process.
- 28 (c) The task force shall solicit and consider input from a broad
29 range of interested persons, agencies, and organizations, including,
30 but not necessarily limited to, the Student Aid Commission, the
31 Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education, specialists in
32 elementary and secondary curriculum, school counselors, experts
33 in federal and state financial aid and college admissions, and civil
34 rights and nonprofit organizations whose missions are related to
35 career preparation and college access, business, labor, parents, and
36 pupils.
- 37 (d) The task force shall appoint a subgroup to consult with
38 specialists in high school economics curriculum to develop a unit
39 on postsecondary education.

1 (e) The pathways curriculum developed pursuant to this chapter
2 shall accomplish all of the following:

3 (1) Be as concise and clear as possible so as to easily integrate
4 with other curriculum objectives, while still helping pupils gain a
5 comprehensive understanding of postsecondary educational
6 opportunity.

7 (2) Include complementary materials for family and guardians
8 to learn what steps in elementary, middle, and high school they
9 may take to assist their pupils reach college and career goals, as
10 well as suggested questions to ask of school officials.

11 (3) Provide a cumulative resource for pupils and their families
12 who come to California from other states and other countries and
13 enter the California elementary and secondary education system
14 at various grade levels.

15 (4) Provide pathway curriculum materials as well as suggestions
16 for college and work site field trips, guest speakers, and other
17 innovative means of inspiring and informing pupils and their
18 families about college and career pathways.

19 (5) Provide information on the availability of, and access to,
20 the most current information on postsecondary educational
21 opportunities, including, but not necessarily limited to, federal and
22 state Internet Web sites devoted to postsecondary educational
23 opportunity and how best to navigate those sites.

24 (f) The task force shall develop the pathways curriculum within
25 one year of its first convening, and shall accomplish all of the
26 following:

27 (1) Transmit the pathways curriculum to the ~~Legislature~~, *Senate*
28 *Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Education,*
29 *the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, the Assembly*
30 *Committee on Education, the Assembly Committee on Higher*
31 *Education, the state board, the Regents of the University of*
32 *California, the Trustees of the California State University, the*
33 *Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, the*
34 *Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, the Student*
35 *Aid Commission, and the Instructional Quality Commission for a*
36 *three-month review and comment period.*

37 (2) Consider comments and make changes as deemed
38 appropriate.

39 (3) Transmit the curriculum to the department, where it shall
40 be available for school district and school use and where it shall

1 be maintained. The Superintendent shall assume leadership
2 responsibilities for dissemination of the curriculum to school
3 districts, professional educational organizations, and civic
4 organizations throughout the state.

5 (g) The task force shall recommend, and the department shall
6 determine and implement, an annual process by which the pathways
7 curriculum shall remain current in the rapidly changing and
8 complex environment of postsecondary educational opportunity.
9 The Chancellor of the California State University and the
10 Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall, and the
11 President of the University of California is requested to, provide
12 cooperation and support to the department in this regard.

13 (h) The department shall work with the Instructional Quality
14 Commission and appropriate framework committees to integrate
15 the pathways curriculum into each subject matter curriculum
16 framework as it is revised or updated.

17 (i) Schools and school districts may use and deliver this
18 curriculum in a manner that best suits local needs and resources.

19 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that local educational
20 agencies consider adopting all or parts of the career and college
21 pathways curriculum. However, adoption is not mandatory, and
22 local educational agencies may decline to participate.