

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 7, 2014  
AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 24, 2014

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1068**

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**Introduced by Senator Beall**

February 18, 2014

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An act to ~~add Section 72209 to, and to add and repeal Section 72210 of,~~ of the Education Code, relating to community colleges.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1068, as amended, Beall. Community colleges: accreditation.

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. Existing law specifies the duties of the board of governors, including, among other duties, establishing minimum standards for the formation of community colleges and districts. Under its existing regulatory authority, the board of governors requires each community college to be accredited and has designated the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges as the accrediting agency.

~~This bill would, notwithstanding that designation, authorize the governing board of a community college district to designate a federally recognized accrediting agency to accredit community colleges under its jurisdiction. The bill would require the selected accrediting agency to comply with various requirements, including the California Public Records Act, obtaining approval from the board of governors for new accreditation policies or procedures that increase costs, and to not charge fees unrelated to the accreditation process, as provided. The bill would require the board of governors, on or before January 1, 2016, to report~~

to the Legislature—on (1) the feasibility of creating an independent accrediting agency to accredit the California Community Colleges and other 2-year private postsecondary educational institutions for purposes of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965 and state-authorized financial aid, (2) based on a thorough examination of community college accreditation nationwide, a recommendation of whether the state would be best served by using a specified accrediting agency for all California public postsecondary educational institutions, and (3) the potential for using multiple accrediting agencies to ensure that the California Community Colleges are of the highest quality, as provided.

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. Section 72209 is added to the Education Code,~~  
 2     ~~to read:~~  
 3     ~~72209. (a) Notwithstanding any other law or regulations and~~  
 4     ~~to the extent authorized by federal law, the governing board of a~~  
 5     ~~community college district may designate a federally recognized~~  
 6     ~~accrediting agency to accredit community colleges under its~~  
 7     ~~jurisdiction.~~  
 8     ~~(b) The accrediting agency for the community colleges~~  
 9     ~~designated by Section 51016 of Title 5 of the California Code of~~  
 10     ~~Regulations shall remain the accrediting agency for a community~~  
 11     ~~college district until the governing board of the community college~~  
 12     ~~district exercises its discretion pursuant to subdivision (a).~~  
 13     ~~(c) The accrediting agency designated pursuant to subdivision~~  
 14     ~~(a) shall comply with all of the following requirements:~~  
 15     ~~(1) Documents related to the accreditation of a community~~  
 16     ~~college are subject to public disclosure pursuant to the California~~  
 17     ~~Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250)~~  
 18     ~~of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).~~  
 19     ~~(2) Obtain approval from the Board of Governors of the~~  
 20     ~~California Community Colleges before implementing a new~~  
 21     ~~accreditation policy or procedure that increases costs for a~~  
 22     ~~community college, community college district, or the state.~~  
 23     ~~(3) Not charge a community college or community college~~  
 24     ~~district for costs unrelated to the accreditation process, including,~~  
 25     ~~but not limited to, attorneys fees.~~

1 ~~(d) This section does not affect the accreditation status of a~~  
2 ~~community college on January 1, 2015.~~

3 ~~(e) This section does not apply to the accrediting agency's~~  
4 ~~activities that are related to private educational institutions in the~~  
5 ~~state or educational institutions outside of the state.~~

6 ~~(f) This section does not affect the authority of the United States~~  
7 ~~Department of Education regarding educational institutions.~~

8 ~~(g) The provisions of this section are severable. If any provision~~  
9 ~~of this section or its application is held invalid, that invalidity shall~~  
10 ~~not affect other provisions or applications that can be given effect~~  
11 ~~without the invalid provision or application.~~

12 ~~SEC. 2.~~

13 *SECTION 1.* Section 72210 is added to the Education Code,  
14 to read:

15 72210. (a) The Board of Governors of the California  
16 Community Colleges, on or before January 1, 2016, shall report  
17 *all of the following* to the ~~Legislature on the~~ *Legislature*:

18 (1) (A) *The feasibility of creating an independent accrediting*  
19 *agency to accredit the California Community Colleges and other*  
20 *two-year private postsecondary educational institutions for*  
21 *purposes of Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965*  
22 *(20 U.S.C. Sec. 1070 et seq.), as amended, and state-authorized*  
23 *financial aid.*

24 ~~(b)~~

25 (B) *The independent accrediting agency would be separate from*  
26 *state government and funded by fees or dues paid by those*  
27 *postsecondary educational institutions seeking accreditation from*  
28 *the accrediting agency.*

29 (2) *Based on a thorough examination of community college*  
30 *accreditation nationwide, a recommendation of whether the state*  
31 *would be best served by using the Western Association of Schools*  
32 *and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission,*  
33 *commonly known as WASC Senior, as the single accrediting agency*  
34 *for all California public postsecondary educational institutions.*

35 (3) *The potential for using multiple accrediting agencies as a*  
36 *means to ensure that the California Community Colleges are of*  
37 *the highest quality.*

38 ~~(e)~~

1     **(b)** (1) The report to be submitted pursuant to subdivision (a)  
2 shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the  
3 Government Code.

4     (2) Pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, this  
5 section is repealed on January 1, 2020.

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