

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 4, 2014

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 27, 2014

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1425**

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**Introduced by Senator Block**

February 21, 2014

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An act to add Article 1.7 (commencing with Section 78025) to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of, *and to add and repeal Section 78026 of*, the Education Code, relating to community colleges.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1425, as amended, Block. Community colleges: ~~retroactive awarding of degrees.~~ *degree audit system.*

~~(1) Existing~~

*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 the public postsecondary education in this state. Existing law establishes community college districts throughout the state, and authorizes those districts to provide instruction at community college campuses.

This bill, prior to the beginning of the spring term of each academic year, and in accord with a specified timetable, would require each community college district with a specified Internet-accessible automatic degree audit system in place to conduct a one-time inquiry as the system is put in place. That inquiry would seek to identify the students who have completed the required units to receive a degree or certificate, or who have completed the transfer requirements of the California State University or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, in up to 12 of the highest demand majors, as determined

by each community college district, during the previous 2 academic years.

~~The bill would require each affected community college campus to notify the students identified under the bill as eligible to receive a degree or certificate that they are eligible for the degree or certificate. The bill would provide that these students would have the choice of opting out or receiving the degree or certificate.~~

~~The~~

~~This bill would require the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to identify and procure a commercially available utility *utilities* and procure at least one of those utilities to conduct systemwide automatic degree audits that would enable community college student services staff to monitor student progress toward completion of a certificate or degree, or the credits required to meet the transfer requirements of the California State University or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum. The bill would require the chancellor's office to oversee the implementation of the bill in accordance with a timetable that would require all campuses of the California Community Colleges to have the automatic degree audit system in place by December 31, 2017, 2019, as specified.~~

~~The bill would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to submit a report to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of the implementation of the retroactive degree awarding and online degree audit system on or before December 31, 2017, and on or before December 31 every 3 years thereafter. 2020.~~

~~This bill would not be operative until the board of governors certifies that sufficient funds have been received from state, federal, or private sources to implement the online degree audit system that would be created under the bill.~~

~~Because this bill would impose new duties on community college districts, it would constitute a state-mandated local program.~~

~~(2) The~~

~~The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.~~

~~This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.~~

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

*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 is falling behind in producing the necessary  
4 postsecondary education to ensure our state's prosperity and  
5 opportunities for individuals in the 21st century.
- 6 (2) California faces a degree and certificate gap, and is projected  
7 to need one million more workers with bachelor's degrees and an  
8 additional 1.3 million workers with associate degrees or certificates  
9 by 2025. Today, one in every four jobs requires at least an associate  
10 degree.
- 11 (3) In the near future, one in every three jobs will require at  
12 least an associate degree. Failure to make significant improvements  
13 in degree completion will result in a less productive economy,  
14 lower incomes for residents, less tax revenue for the state, and  
15 more dependence on social services.
- 16 (4) The California Community Colleges are the state's largest  
17 workforce provider, offering associate degrees and short-term job  
18 training certificates in more than 175 different fields.
- 19 (5) Meeting the current and future need for higher education  
20 requires that postsecondary institutions improve their success rates  
21 with current students and attract, and graduate, individuals from  
22 groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in  
23 postsecondary education.
- 24 (6) Degree audit systems efficiently support student persistence  
25 and success efforts, and thereby save money for the institutions in  
26 the longer term. This will be especially true of a degree audit  
27 system that is centralized at the ~~Chancellor's~~ Office of the  
28 *Chancellor of the California Community Colleges* and paired with  
29 the online educational planner that is being developed as part of  
30 the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.
- 31 ~~(7) In California, less than one-fifth of community colleges have~~  
32 ~~online degree audit systems that can be used to inform their~~  
33 ~~students about their progress, leaving the remainder of the state's~~  
34 ~~112 community colleges without a mechanism to identify already~~  
35 ~~earned degrees.~~

1 ~~(8)~~  
 2 (7) As movement toward performance-based budgeting  
 3 continues, ~~retroactive degree awarding and~~ degree audit systems  
 4 better position an institution to improve student outcomes.

5 ~~(9)~~  
 6 (8) Earning a certificate or degree from a community college  
 7 doubles an individual’s chance of obtaining a job. At a time when  
 8 unemployment rates are nearly 9 percent, certificates and degrees  
 9 are all the more valuable.

10 ~~(10)~~  
 11 (9) Earning a degree or certificate from a California community  
 12 college, on average, nearly doubles an individual’s earnings within  
 13 three years, from \$25,600 to \$45,571.

14 ~~(11)~~  
 15 (10) A national effort, Project Win-Win, is tackling this issue  
 16 in nine other states and is showing promising results. This project  
 17 introduces degree audit systems at colleges ~~to accomplish both of~~  
 18 ~~the following:~~

19 ~~(A) Award degrees retroactively.~~  
 20 ~~(B) Ensure to ensure~~ that, moving forward, students have  
 21 real-time information about their progress toward obtaining a  
 22 degree.

23 (b) Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to do all of the  
 24 following:

25 (1) Build on national and local efforts to identify current ~~or~~  
 26 ~~former~~ students who are eligible to obtain their certificate or degree.

27 ~~(2) Award degrees and certificates retroactively to those students~~  
 28 ~~who have completed degree or certificate requirements.~~

29 ~~(3)~~  
 30 (2) Establish ~~a central~~ *an* auditing system at the California  
 31 Community Colleges that enables individual community colleges  
 32 to audit student records, identify the students who are eligible for  
 33 a certificate or degree, and notify these students of this valuable  
 34 information.

35 SEC. 2. Article 1.7 (commencing with Section 78025) is added  
 36 to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education  
 37 Code, to read:

38  
 39 Article 1.7. ~~Retroactive Awarding of Degrees~~ *Degree Audit*  
 40 *System*

1 ~~78025. (a) The board of governors shall require all community~~  
2 ~~colleges to award degrees retroactively in accordance with this~~  
3 ~~article.~~

4 ~~(b) Prior to the beginning of the spring term of the academic~~  
5 ~~year, and commencing with the 2015–16 academic year for the~~  
6 ~~first 28 campuses, each community college district shall perform~~  
7 ~~a one-time inquiry as the automatic degree audit system required~~  
8 ~~by this article is put in place at each campus, consistent with the~~  
9 ~~timetable prescribed in Section 78026, to identify the students who~~  
10 ~~have completed the semester or quarter units required to receive~~  
11 ~~a degree or certificate, or who have completed the California State~~  
12 ~~University (CSU) or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer~~  
13 ~~Curriculum (IGETC) transfer requirements in up to 12 of the~~  
14 ~~highest demand majors, as determined by each community college~~  
15 ~~district, during the previous two academic years.~~

16 ~~(c) A community college campus shall notify those students~~  
17 ~~identified pursuant to subdivision (b) as eligible to receive a degree~~  
18 ~~or certificate that they are eligible to receive the degree or~~  
19 ~~certificate. Those students shall have the choice to opt out or to~~  
20 ~~receive the degree or certificate.~~

21 ~~78026.~~

22 ~~78025. (a) The Chancellor of the California Community~~  
23 ~~Colleges shall identify a commercially available utility utilities to~~  
24 ~~conduct systemwide automatic degree audits for these purposes,~~  
25 ~~audits, and procure that utility at least one of those utilities in~~  
26 ~~accordance with the relevant provisions of the State Contract Act~~  
27 ~~(Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 10100) of Part 2 of Division~~  
28 ~~2 of the Public Contract Code). Once this that utility is or those~~  
29 ~~utilities are procured, the chancellor’s office shall oversee the~~  
30 ~~implementation of this article in accordance with the following~~  
31 ~~timetable:~~

32 ~~(1) At least 28 84 campuses of the California Community~~  
33 ~~Colleges shall have the automatic degree audit system in place by~~  
34 ~~December 31, 2015. 2018.~~

35 ~~(2) At least 56 campuses of the California Community Colleges~~  
36 ~~shall have the automatic degree audit system in place by December~~  
37 ~~31, 2016.~~

38 ~~(3)~~

1 (2) All campuses of the California Community Colleges shall  
 2 have ~~the an~~ automatic degree audit system in place by December  
 3 31, ~~2017~~. 2019.

4 (b) ~~The An~~ automatic degree audit system procured under this  
 5 section shall satisfy all of the following conditions:

6 (1) It shall comply with all pertinent privacy and security  
 7 considerations and requirements.

8 (2) It shall be centrally ~~purchased~~ *procured* by the ~~Chancellor's~~  
 9 ~~Office~~ *Office of the Chancellor* of the California Community  
 10 Colleges in order to reduce costs through a bulk procurement  
 11 process.

12 (3) It shall be managed by each community college district for  
 13 use among the campuses within each respective district.

14 (4) It shall enable community college counselors, advisors, and  
 15 other student services staff to monitor student progress toward  
 16 completing a degree or certificate program, or achieving the  
 17 minimum requirements for CSU or IGETC transfer.

18 (5) It shall be accessible to community college personnel and  
 19 students through an Internet Web portal that provides a degree  
 20 progress profile, generated for each student upon request, that  
 21 includes all information regarding credits earned that is available  
 22 in the community college's data.

23 ~~78027. The~~

24 78026. (a) *The* Legislative Analyst's Office shall submit a  
 25 report to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of the  
 26 implementation of the ~~retroactive degree awarding and online~~  
 27 degree audit system on or before December 31, ~~2017~~, and on or  
 28 before December 31 every three years thereafter. 2020.

29 (b) *Pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, this*  
 30 *section is repealed on December 31, 2024.*

31 ~~78028.~~

32 78027. The metrics to be determined and reported pursuant to  
 33 Section ~~78027~~ 78026 shall include, but not necessarily be limited  
 34 to, all of the following:

35 (a) ~~The number and percentage of community college students~~  
 36 ~~who were identified and were awarded associate degrees or~~  
 37 ~~certificates, or who were determined to have completed the CSU~~  
 38 ~~or IGETC transfer requirements because of the degree audit system.~~

39 (b)

1 (a) The estimated economic benefits for the college and labor  
2 market of the degree audit system.

3 (e)

4 (b) Other relevant indicators of student success resulting from  
5 having a degree audit system in place.

6 ~~78029.~~

7 78028. This article shall not be operative until the board of  
8 governors certifies that sufficient funds have been received from  
9 state, federal, or private sources to implement the online degree  
10 audit system that would be created under this section. The board  
11 of governors shall prominently post this certification promptly on  
12 its Internet Web site.

13 SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
14 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
15 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
16 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
17 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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