

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 18, 2016
AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 28, 2016

SENATE BILL

No. 1281

Introduced by Senator Block

February 19, 2016

An act to add Section 6061.7 to the Business and Professions Code, relating to law schools.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1281, as amended, Block. Law schools: unaccredited law school disclosures.

Existing law requires any law school that is not accredited by the examining committee of the State Bar to provide every student with a disclosure statement, subsequent to the payment of any application fee but prior to the payment of any registration fee, that contains, among other things, a statement that the law school is not accredited and the number and percentage of students who have taken and who have passed the first-year law student's examination and the final bar examination in the previous five years, or since the establishment of the school, whichever time is less, as specified.

This bill would additionally require a law school that is not accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA) to post on its Internet Web site, specified information, including tuition costs, class sizes, number of faculty, bar passage data, and employment outcomes for graduates. *The bill would define terms for these purposes.* The bill would also ~~require the school to disclose the data required under these provisions in accordance with the ABA~~ *authorize the State Bar to develop a standard information report reporting template.* The bill would require specific disclosure information be distributed by the school to all

applicants being offered conditional scholarships at the time the scholarship offer is extended.

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

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 6061.7 is added to the Business and
2 Professions Code, to read:
3 6061.7. (a) ~~In addition to the disclosure statement required by~~
4 ~~Section 6061, any~~ Any law schools not approved by the American
5 Bar Association shall publicly disclose on its Internet Web site,
6 with a link from the Internet home page under “Admissions,” all
7 of the following information:
8 (1) Admissions data.
9 (2) ~~Tuition and~~ Tuition, fees, ~~living costs,~~ and financial aid.
10 (3) Conditional scholarships.
11 (4) Enrollment data, including academic, transfer, and other
12 attrition.
13 (5) Number of full-time and part-time faculty, professional
14 librarians, and administrators.
15 (6) ~~Class~~ Average class sizes for ~~first-year and upper-class~~
16 ~~required~~ courses and the number of ~~seminar, clinical, and~~
17 ~~co-curricular~~ clinical offerings.
18 (7) Employment outcomes for graduates.
19 (8) Bar passage data.
20 (b) (1) The information in subdivision (a) shall be disclosed ~~in~~
21 ~~manner that is either identical to, or substantially equivalent to,~~
22 ~~the American Bar Association’s Standard 509 Information Report.~~
23 *and published on the law school’s Internet Web site in a*
24 *standardized information report that is readily accessible to current*
25 *and prospective students in a manner that is complete, accurate,*
26 *and not misleading to a reasonable student or applicant.*
27 (2) *The State Bar may create a standardized information report*
28 *template.*
29 (3) *All law schools described in subdivision (a) shall include*
30 *the standardized information report as part of the annual*
31 *compliance report required from all law schools that are not*
32 *approved by the American Bar Association and are regulated by*
33 *the examining committee of the State Bar.*

1 (4) A law school may use the information report template to
2 comply with the information disclosure required under subdivision
3 (a).

4 (c) A law school described in subdivision (a) shall publicly
5 disclose on its Internet Web site, in a readable and comprehensive
6 manner, all of the following information on a current basis:

7 (1) Refund policies.

8 (2) Curricular offerings, academic calendar, and academic
9 requirements.

10 (3) Policies regarding the transfer of credit earned at another
11 institution of higher education.

12 (d) The law school's transfer of credit policies shall include, at
13 a minimum, both of the following:

14 (1) A statement of the criteria established by the law school
15 regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution.

16 (2) A list of institutions, if any, with which the law school has
17 established an articulation agreement.

18 (e) All information that a law school reports, publicizes, or
19 distributes pursuant to this section shall be complete, accurate,
20 and not misleading to a reasonable law school student or applicant.
21 A law school shall use due diligence in obtaining and verifying
22 such information.

23 (f) A law school shall distribute the data required under
24 paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) to all applicants being offered
25 conditional scholarships at the time the scholarship offer is
26 extended.

27 ~~(g) Schools shall be considered in compliance if they report the~~
28 ~~data required by Standard 509 of the American Bar Association's~~
29 ~~Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools,~~
30 ~~as that standard may be amended.~~

31 ~~(h)~~

32 (g) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions
33 apply:

34 (1) "Curricular offering" means only those courses offered in
35 the current and past two academic years.

36 (2) "Conditional scholarship" means any financial aid award,
37 the retention of which is dependent upon the student maintaining
38 a minimum grade point average or class standing, other than that
39 ordinarily required to remain in good academic standing.

1 (3) “Bar passage data” means the most current cumulative bar
2 pass rates defined and reported by the examining committee of the
3 State Bar.

4 (4) “Employment outcomes for graduates” means the results
5 of a survey by the law school, taken three years after graduation,
6 that breaks down the employment rate of graduates in each of the
7 first three years after graduation, including the rate of employment
8 of graduates in jobs where a Juris Doctor degree is required by
9 the employer and the rate of employment of graduates in jobs
10 where a Juris Doctor degree is an advantage in employment.

11 (5) “Admissions data” means information from the most recently
12 enrolled fall semester class including total number of applications,
13 the total number of accepted students, and the 75th, 50th, and 25th
14 percentile scores for the undergraduate grade point averages and
15 law school admission test scores of admitted students.