

Senate Bill No. 775

CHAPTER 317

An act to add Section 2053.4 to, and to add and repeal Section 2053.2 of, the Penal Code, and to add Section 1120.1 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to corrections.

[Approved by Governor August 3, 1995. Filed with
Secretary of State August 3, 1995.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 775, Costa. Prisoners and juveniles: education .

(1) Existing law requires the Director of Corrections to implement in every state prison literacy programs that are designed to ensure that, upon parole, inmates are able to achieve a 9th-grade reading level.

This bill would require the Department of Corrections to implement a 2-year prison education pilot program designed to increase inmate literacy through computer-assisted instruction. The department would be required to choose 6 correctional facilities in which to implement the program. The bill would require the department to develop a standardized curriculum and to assess each inmate's literacy improvement with a pre- and post-test.

This bill would require the department to evaluate the program and report to the Legislature by December 1, 1998. The bill would repeal these provisions as of January 1, 1999.

This bill would require the Director of Corrections to appoint a Superintendent of Correctional Education to oversee and administer all prison education programs.

(2) Existing law requires the Department of the Youth Authority to establish a statewide educational program for wards committed to the department. This educational program is required to be offered at each institution within the jurisdiction of the department, except as provided.

This bill would provide that in furtherance of the purpose of the Department of the Youth Authority to protect society from the consequences of criminal activity, the department's educational programs shall focus on value-based character education, emphasizing curriculum leading to a crime-free lifestyle. The bill would require the department to establish the office of the Superintendent of Education, and would require the Superintendent of Education to oversee educational programs under the jurisdiction of the department.

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

SECTION 1. Section 2053.2 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

2053.2. (a) The Department of Corrections shall implement a two-year prison education pilot program designed to increase inmate literacy through computer-assisted instruction that allows individualized self-paced literacy training. This program shall be implemented at six correctional institutions, to be chosen by the department. At least one site shall be at an institution housing females.

(b) Computers shall be located for this purpose in all prison housing units that the Director of Corrections determines are appropriate.

(c) Both staff members and inmate tutors may provide assistance to inmates participating in the pilot program.

(d) In order to ensure success of the pilot program, the department shall develop a standardized curriculum to be followed by each institution and shall monitor each institution to verify adherence to that standardized curriculum. The curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, educational tools designed to improve literacy, life skills, and employability skills.

(e) Literacy improvement shall be assessed with a pre-test and post-test, to be given to each inmate participant.

(f) The pilot project shall commence on July 1, 1996, and end on July 1, 1998.

(g) The department shall evaluate the program and submit a report on the effectiveness of the program to the Legislature by December 1, 1998.

(h) This section shall remain in effect until January 1, 1999, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute extends or repeals that date.

SEC. 2. Section 2053.4 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

2053.4. The Director of Corrections shall appoint a Superintendent of Correctional Education, who shall oversee and administer all prison education programs. The Superintendent of Correctional Education shall set both short-term and long-term goals for inmate literacy and testing, and shall establish priorities for prison education programs.

SEC. 3. Section 1220.1 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

1220.1. In furtherance of the purpose of the Department of the Youth Authority to protect society from the consequences of criminal activity, the department's educational programs shall focus on value-based character education, emphasizing curriculum leading to a crime-free lifestyle. In furtherance of this goal, the department shall establish the office of the Superintendent of Education. The



Superintendent of Education shall oversee educational programs under the jurisdiction of the department.

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