

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 8, 1999
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 15, 1999

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1645

**Introduced by Committee on Agriculture (Cardoza (Chair),
Maldonado (Vice Chair), Brewer, Florez, Frusetta, House,
Reyes, Thomson, and Wiggins)**

March 4, 1999

An act to add Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 8980) to Part 6 of the Education Code, relating to agricultural education, *and making an appropriation therefor.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1645, as amended, Committee on Agriculture. Agricultural education.

Under existing law there is, within the State Department of Education, an agricultural vocational education unit to assist school districts in the establishment and maintenance of agricultural vocational educational programs.

This bill would enact the Agricultural Education Act of 1999 and would require the State Department of Education to establish a comprehensive agricultural education program for prekindergarten and kindergarten children and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to provide statewide coordination for agricultural education in California schools. This program would include, but would not be limited to, the development, review and dissemination of curriculum, the development of

statewide educational activities for pupils, state level consultation with local education agencies, agricultural organizations, and universities and colleges, for materials review, professional development, and support, and the coordination and monitoring of the regional agricultural education program delivery. This program would also provide for regional delivery of education in agricultural awareness, literacy, career exploration, and preparation activities.

This bill would appropriate \$127,500 from the General Fund to the State Department of Education for expenditure for staff for purposes of the comprehensive agricultural education program that would be established by the bill. The bill would also appropriate \$300,000 from the General Fund to the State Department of Education for purposes of curriculum development for agricultural education.

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

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 9 (commencing with Section
2 8980) is added to Part 6 of the Education Code, to read:

3
4 CHAPTER 9. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

5
6 8980. This chapter shall be known and may be cited
7 as the Agricultural Education Act of 1999.

8 8981. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
9 following:

10 (a) Agriculture is one of the most important industries
11 in California. Gross income from production agriculture
12 annually exceeds twenty-six billion eight hundred million
13 dollars (\$26,800,000,000). Support industries in
14 agricultural marketing, business, research,
15 communications, and education contribute another ten
16 billion dollars (\$10,000,000,000) to the state's economy
17 and exports annually exceeds six billion dollars
18 (\$6,000,000,000).

19 (b) During 1998, approximately 399,000 agricultural
20 jobs were performed by farmworkers, who, through their



1 tireless efforts, have contributed greatly to the success of
2 the agricultural industry.

3 (c) There is currently no comprehensive agricultural
4 education program for California's pupils. According to
5 the National Academy of Sciences, most Americans have
6 insufficient knowledge about the social and economic
7 significance of agriculture and its links to human health
8 and environmental quality. Many of the challenges facing
9 the state clearly require an understanding of these
10 linkages if solutions are to be found. These challenges
11 include changing demographics, rapid urbanization,
12 responding to worldwide food and fiber supply needs,
13 changing domestic and world trade policies, and
14 increased global competition in raw agricultural
15 commodities and value added products.

16 (d) Pupils need to understand all of the following:

17 (1) The role that agriculture plays in the economy.

18 (2) The role science plays in changing agriculture.

19 (3) The relationship of agriculture and the
20 environment.

21 (4) The wide variety of employment opportunities
22 that exist in the industry.

23 (e) A basic education across curriculum subjects, and
24 grade levels can strengthen students' understanding, of
25 agriculture and its fundamental importance to society.

26 (f) It is in the best interest of the public that a
27 statewide comprehensive program, with state level
28 coordination and regional delivery, be established to
29 infuse agricultural education into a broad range of
30 academic subject areas, provide a stronger career
31 preparation program to meet the needs of a dynamic and
32 competitive agricultural industry in California, and to
33 provide for better informed citizens in the state.

34 8982. (a) The State Department of Education, in
35 consultation with the State Agricultural Advisory
36 Committee shall establish a nonmandatory
37 comprehensive agricultural education program for
38 prekindergarten and kindergarten children and grades 1
39 to 12, inclusive, to provide statewide coordination for
40 agricultural education in California schools.



1 (b) The program shall include, but shall not be limited
2 to, the following elements:

3 (1) The development, review and dissemination of
4 curriculum and instruction materials to ensure accuracy,
5 grade appropriateness, and support of State Standards
6 and Frameworks.

7 (2) Professional development for student teachers and
8 practicing teachers.

9 (3) The development of statewide educational
10 activities for pupils.

11 (4) State level consultation with local education
12 agencies, agricultural organizations, and universities and
13 colleges, for materials review, professional development,
14 and support.

15 (5) The coordination and monitoring of the regional
16 agricultural education program delivery.

17 (c) The program shall provide for regional delivery of
18 education in agricultural awareness, literacy, career
19 exploration, and preparation activities that include, but
20 not be limited to, the following:

21 (1) Development of collaborative models, utilizing
22 matching state and community-based funds, to develop
23 objective, age appropriate materials for use in classrooms
24 within each of California’s agriculture production
25 regions.

26 (2) Technical assistance to local districts and private
27 parties, including agricultural foundations, agricultural
28 associations, nonprofit trade associations and businesses.

29 (3) Development of a statewide resource center.

30 (4) Coordination and delivery of professional
31 development activities on a regional basis.

32 (5) Coordination of regional pupil activities.

33 (6) Coordination and monitoring of funding within
34 the regions.

35 ~~SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature that funding~~
36 ~~be provided for the Agricultural Education Act of 1999 in~~
37 ~~the annual Budget Act.~~

38 *SEC. 2. (a) The amount of one hundred*
39 *twenty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$127,500) is*
40 *hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State*



1 *Department of Education for expenditure exclusively for*
2 *staff for purposes of Section 8982 of the Education Code.*
3 *It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate two*
4 *hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$255,000) annually,*
5 *commencing in the 2000–01 fiscal year, from the General*
6 *Fund to the State Department of Education for*
7 *expenditure exclusively for staff for purposes of Section*
8 *8982 of the Education Code.*

9 *(b) The amount of three hundred thousand dollars*
10 *(\$300,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund*
11 *to the State Department of Education as a one-time*
12 *expenditure for purposes of curriculum development for*
13 *agricultural education.*

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