

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 4, 2007

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 1, 2007

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 890**

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**Introduced by Senator Scott**

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Portantino)

**(Coauthor: ~~Senator Alquist~~ Coauthors: *Senators Alquist, Denham, Ducheny, Maldonado, Padilla, Romero, and Wyland*)**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members ~~Berryhill~~ *Arambula, Beall, Berryhill, Hancock, Parra, Solorio, and Torrico*)

February 23, 2007

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An act to add and repeal Article 6.3 (commencing with Section 54710) of Chapter 9 of Part 29 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to pupils.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 890, as amended, Scott. Pupils: early college commitment program.

Existing law requires a school district maintaining any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to offer to all otherwise qualified pupils in those grades a course of study fulfilling the requirements and prerequisites for admission to the California public institutions of postsecondary education and to provide a timely opportunity to each of those pupils to enroll within a 4-year period in each course necessary to fulfill those requirements and prerequisites.

Existing law authorizes a school district to apply to establish a University and College Opportunities Program with existing local or categorical funds. The program plan developed by a school district or school is required to include, among other things, college counseling to assist pupils in preparing application forms for college admission,

to procure scholarships and other financial aid, and to meet all deadlines for these programs.

This bill would establish, until January 1, 2014, the early college commitment program. Participation by *pupils and* school districts in the program would be voluntary. ~~The bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction *would be required*, among other program duties, to designate the 30% of school districts that operate middle and high schools with the highest proportion of low-income pupils, as defined, as college opportunity zones. A school that is designated as a college opportunity zone by the Superintendent would be required to give all pupils enrolled in grades 6 to 9, inclusive, and their parent or legal guardian, the opportunity to sign “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge cards developed by the Superintendent. Schools not designated as a college opportunity zone would be required to give pupils who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals and are enrolled in grades 6 to 9, inclusive, and their parent or legal guardian, and all foster youth and the appropriate adult responsible for that foster youth, the opportunity to sign a pledge card.~~ ~~The bill would require participating~~ *Participating* school districts *would be required* to provide college information and college preparation events targeted towards pupils who sign pledge cards.

The bill would provide that a pupil who signs a pledge card declares a commitment to prepare for college, finish high school, and enroll in college and commits, among other things, to meet all graduation requirements, take challenging coursework, complete and file a free application for federal student aid, and submit his or her grade point average to the Student Aid Commission by March 2 of his or her senior year. *A pupil who signs the pledge and completes the requirements of the pledge would be preapproved to receive, upon completion of high school, a fee waiver under the California Community College Board of Governor’s fee waiver program for 2 years of enrollment at a California community college.*

The bill would encourage the California Community Colleges, the University of California, the California State University, independent colleges, the California Student Opportunity and Access Program, the Student Aid Commission, and other nonprofit, business, or other community organizations to provide support services as needed in coordination with local school districts.

The bill would require the Superintendent to submit a report to the Legislature, on or before November 1, 2012, evaluating the early college

commitment program and recommending whether the program should be continued.

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. It is the intent of the Legislature to establish a  
2 program to ensure early notification and early commitment of  
3 college opportunities for pupils in middle school and high school  
4 and their families. It is the intent of the Legislature that the program  
5 motivate pupils to stay in school, graduate from high school, take  
6 rigorous coursework, and, if they choose to do so, seek  
7 postsecondary opportunities.

8 SEC. 2. Article 6.3 (commencing with Section 54710) is added  
9 to Chapter 9 of Part 29 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education  
10 Code, to read:

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12 Article 6.3. Early College Commitment Program

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14 54710. The early college commitment program is hereby  
15 established for the purpose of accomplishing all of the following  
16 goals:

17 (a) Increase high school completion rates, direct college-going  
18 rates, and college preparation of pupils attending schools with the  
19 greatest poverty and among low-income pupils in general.

20 (b) Motivate pupils to prepare for college by taking challenging  
21 coursework, which may include college preparatory and career  
22 technical classes, depending on their interest in pursuing direct  
23 university admission or specific technical education programs in  
24 community college.

25 (c) Help families understand that college is attainable and  
26 affordable, that financial aid is available, and that with the right  
27 preparation their children can go to college if they choose to do  
28 so.

29 (d) Provide a clear path for pupils through middle schools, high  
30 schools, community colleges, universities, and state and federal  
31 financial aid programs, thereby improving opportunity and  
32 efficiency.

1 (e) Strengthen the state’s historic promise of college access  
2 made in the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education and express  
3 this commitment directly to middle and high school pupils and  
4 their families.

5 (f) Prepare the highly skilled workforce necessary to keep  
6 California’s economy competitive, maintain the income and quality  
7 of life for California residents, increase tax revenues, and provide  
8 for improved civic and democratic participation.

9 54711. (a) Participation by *pupils and* school districts in the  
10 early college commitment program is voluntary. A school district  
11 that chooses to participate in the program is encouraged to do so  
12 districtwide, with all schools in the district participating, and shall  
13 provide schoolwide college information and college preparation  
14 events targeted towards pupils who sign “Save Me a Spot in  
15 College” pledge cards.

16 (1) Schools designated as a college opportunity zone, in a  
17 participating school district, shall give all pupils enrolled in grades  
18 6 to 9, inclusive, and their parent or legal guardian, or the  
19 appropriate person in the case of foster youth, the opportunity to  
20 sign a “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge card.

21 (2) Schools not designated as a college opportunity zone, in a  
22 participating school district, shall give a pupil who is eligible for  
23 free and reduced-price meals and is enrolled in grades 6 to 9,  
24 inclusive, and his or her parent or legal guardian, and all foster  
25 youth and the appropriate adult responsible for that foster youth,  
26 the opportunity to sign a “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge card.

27 (b) A participating school district shall record data and track  
28 pupils who enroll in the program in their existing pupil records  
29 and provide necessary reports to the Superintendent to monitor  
30 and evaluate the program.

31 54712. The Superintendent shall perform the following  
32 responsibilities:

33 (a) Identify school districts as college opportunity zones. In  
34 determining which school districts shall be identified as college  
35 opportunity zones, the Superintendent shall designate the 30  
36 percent of school districts that operate middle and high schools  
37 with the highest proportion of low-income pupils. For purposes  
38 of this subdivision, a low-income pupil is a pupil who is eligible  
39 for free or reduced-price meals.

1 (b) Develop the “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge card *and*  
2 *include on the card the commitments made by the pupil and the*  
3 *major postsecondary and financial aid opportunities provided by*  
4 *the state.*

5 (c) Develop the letter and information materials about the  
6 program and college opportunities to be ~~mailed to all school~~  
7 ~~districts and accredited private and independent schools that~~  
8 ~~maintain any of grades 6 to 9, inclusive.~~ *placed on the Web site of*  
9 *the department.*

10 (d) Consult with the California Community Colleges, the  
11 University of California, the California State University, the  
12 Student Aid Commission, and independent colleges and universities  
13 in developing the pledge, letter, and supporting materials.

14 (e) Determine the form of special recognition pupils who meet  
15 the requirements of the pledge will receive at the time of high  
16 school graduation.

17 (f) Develop a method to collect data from participating school  
18 districts to track enrolled pupils and evaluate the effectiveness of  
19 the program.

20 (g) *Develop a letter addressed to pupils and their parents and*  
21 *signed by the Governor and the Superintendent that describes the*  
22 *major steps to prepare for college, including postsecondary career*  
23 *technical education, and the major postsecondary and financial*  
24 *aid opportunities available to students in California. Make this*  
25 *letter available on the Web site of the department and request all*  
26 *school districts to distribute the letter through existing means to*  
27 *all pupils and their parents.*

28 (h) *In consultation with the Office of the Chancellor of the*  
29 *California Community College, representatives of the community*  
30 *college financial aid and business offices, and representatives of*  
31 *school districts, determine a mechanism through which pupils who*  
32 *have fulfilled the “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge requirements*  
33 *can be preapproved to receive, upon completion of high school,*  
34 *a fee waiver under the California Community College Board of*  
35 *Governor’s fee waiver program for two years of enrollment at a*  
36 *California community college.*

37 54713. (a) A pupil who signs a pledge card declares a  
38 commitment to prepare for college, finish high school, and enroll  
39 in college and commits to do all of the following:

1 (1) Meet all graduation requirements to finish high school in  
2 California.

3 (2) Take challenging college preparatory or career technical  
4 coursework.

5 (3) Seek proficiency in mathematics and in reading and writing  
6 in English.

7 (4) Complete and file a free application for federal student aid  
8 and submit his or her grade point average to the Student Aid  
9 Commission by March 2 of his or her senior year.

10 (5) Meet application and other requirements for university  
11 admission or enroll directly in community college soon after high  
12 school graduation.

13 (b) At the time of enrollment, each pupil shall receive a  
14 certificate of participation in the early college commitment  
15 program, with his or her name, and bearing the signature of the  
16 Superintendent and the Governor.

17 (c) Participating pupils also shall receive a booklet of college  
18 information providing more specific information about eligibility  
19 requirements, preparation steps, and other pertinent information.  
20 School districts shall provide information and services, through  
21 existing programs, to the pupils who sign pledge cards through  
22 their middle school and high school years. These “Roadmap to  
23 College” services shall include all of the following:

24 (1) Transcript review and academics assessment, leading to  
25 course planning for the pupil at the time of enrollment in the early  
26 college commitment program and annual reporting to the pupil on  
27 how he or she is doing relative to state standards and other  
28 benchmarks.

29 (2) Information about the Golden State Scholarshare College  
30 Savings Trust (Article 19 (commencing with Section 69980) of  
31 Chapter 2 of Part 42 of Division 5 of Title 3) at the time of  
32 enrollment.

33 (3) A visit to at least one community college, including, but not  
34 limited to, exposure to career technical and transfer programs, and  
35 at least one four-year college.

36 (4) Information on college admissions tests in grade 11.

37 (5) Information on college admission and community college  
38 enrollment steps in grade 12.

1 (6) Information on the financial aid application process,  
2 including, but not limited to, the free application for federal student  
3 aid, in grade 12.

4 (d) Pupils enrolled in *an* early college commitment program  
5 who meet their pledge will be eligible to continue their  
6 postsecondary education at a California community college to  
7 pursue career technical education or a degree, or to transfer to a  
8 four-year university, or, if they meet the admission requirements  
9 and apply for admission, at the University of California or the  
10 California State University. ~~Pupils who are eligible and  
11 demonstrate financial need, as determined pursuant to the free  
12 application for federal student aid, to help cover the costs of fees,  
13 books, supplies, transportation, and living expenses at  
14 postsecondary institutions will receive financial aid.~~

15 (e) *A pupil who signs the pledge and completes the requirements  
16 of the pledge shall be preapproved to receive, upon completion of  
17 high school, a fee waiver under the California Community College  
18 Board of Governor's fee waiver program for two years of  
19 enrollment at a California community college.*

20 54714. The Legislature encourages the California Community  
21 Colleges, the University of California, the California State  
22 University, independent colleges, the California Student  
23 Opportunity and Access Program, the Student Aid Commission,  
24 and other nonprofit, business, or other community organizations  
25 to provide support services as needed in coordination with school  
26 districts.

27 54715. On or before November 1, 2012, the Superintendent  
28 shall submit to the Legislature a report that evaluates the early  
29 college commitment program and recommends whether the  
30 program should be continued.

31 54716. This article, as of January 1, 2014, is repealed, unless  
32 a later enacted statute, that becomes operative on or before January  
33 1, 2014, deletes or extends that date.