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SENATE BILL

No. 890

Introduced by Senator Scott

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Portantino)

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

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Arambula, Beall, Berryhill, Brownley,
~~Evans~~, *Davis, De Leon, Eng, Evans, Fuentes*, Hancock, ~~Karnette~~,
Jones, Karnette, Krekorian, Laird, Ma, Mullin, Parra, Solorio, and
Torrico)

February 23, 2007

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 Commitment to College 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, 2020, the Early Commitment to College program. Participation by pupils and school districts in the program would be voluntary. A pupil scheduled to graduate from high school after 2017 would not be allowed to participate. 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, or the appropriate person in the case of foster youth,~~ *parents or guardians* the opportunity to sign a “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge 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,~~ *parents or guardians* the opportunity to sign a pledge. Participating school districts would be required to provide college information and college preparation events inclusive of pupils who sign the pledge.

The bill would provide that a pupil who signs a pledge 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 college preparatory 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 is certified by his or her school district as having fulfilled the requirements of the pledge would ~~be preapproved to receive, upon completion of high school enrollment~~ *at a community college*, a fee waiver under the California Community

College Board of Governor’s fee waiver program for 2 *or more* 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 *and universities*, 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 recommendation to the Legislature, on or before November 1, 2018, on 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 college preparatory 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:

11
12 Article 6.3. Early Commitment to College Program
13

14 54710. The Early Commitment to College 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 college
21 preparatory coursework, which may include ~~college preparatory~~
22 ~~and career technical classes, depending on their interest in pursuing~~
23 ~~direct university admission or specific technical education~~
24 ~~programs in community college.~~ *career technical coursework and*

1 *the course requirements for admission to the University of*
2 *California and the California State University.*

3 (c) Help families understand that college is attainable and
4 affordable, that financial aid is available, and that with the right
5 preparation their children can go to college if they choose to do
6 so.

7 (d) Provide a clear path *and direct assistance* for pupils through
8 middle schools, high schools, community colleges, universities,
9 and state and federal financial aid programs, thereby improving
10 opportunity and efficiency.

11 (e) Strengthen the state's historic promise of college access
12 made in the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education and express
13 this commitment directly to middle and high school pupils and
14 their families.

15 (f) Prepare the highly skilled workforce necessary to keep
16 California's economy competitive, maintain the income and quality
17 of life for California residents, increase tax revenues, and provide
18 for improved civic and democratic participation.

19 54711. (a) (1) Participation by pupils and school districts in
20 the Early Commitment to College program is voluntary. A school
21 district that chooses to participate in the program is encouraged to
22 do so districtwide, with all schools in the district participating, and
23 shall provide schoolwide college information and college
24 preparation events inclusive of pupils who sign the "Save Me a
25 Spot in College" pledge. An elementary school district may
26 distribute the general letter ~~signed by the Governor and the~~
27 ~~Superintendent of Public Instruction~~ as set forth in subdivision (f)
28 of Section 54712, but if the elementary school district chooses to
29 participate in the program, it shall do so in collaboration with the
30 high school district in which the predominant number of its pupils
31 attend.

32 (2) For purposes of this article, all of the following apply:

33 (A) "College Opportunity Zone" means the 30 percent of middle
34 schools and *the 30 percent of* high schools with the highest
35 proportion of low-income pupils.

36 (B) "Low-income pupil" means a pupil who is eligible for free
37 or reduced-price meals.

38 (3) Schools designated as a College Opportunity Zone; in a
39 participating school district; shall give all pupils enrolled in grades
40 6 to 9, inclusive, and their ~~parent or legal guardian, or the~~

1 ~~appropriate person in the case of foster youth, parents and~~
2 ~~guardians, the opportunity to sign a “Save Me a Spot in College”~~
3 ~~pledge.~~

4 (4) Schools not designated as a College Opportunity Zone, in
5 a participating school district, shall give a pupil who is eligible for
6 free and reduced-price meals and is enrolled in grades 6 to 9,
7 inclusive, and his or her parent or ~~legal guardian, and all foster~~
8 ~~youth and the appropriate adult responsible for that foster youth,~~
9 ~~guardian~~ the opportunity to sign a “Save Me a Spot in College”
10 pledge.

11 (b) A participating school district shall certify that a pupil has
12 completed the “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge pursuant to
13 Section 54713 and shall track pupils enrolled in the Early
14 Commitment to College program by recording and reporting
15 participation *and outcome* data as directed by the Superintendent.

16 (c) Any school that participates in the federal free or
17 reduced-price lunch program is encouraged to participate in the
18 Early Commitment to College program.

19 (d) A pupil scheduled to graduate from high school after 2017
20 shall not be allowed to enroll in the program.

21 54712. The Superintendent shall perform the following
22 responsibilities:

23 (a) Identify schools as College Opportunity Zones.

24 (b) Develop the “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge, which
25 shall include the commitments made by the pupil and the major
26 postsecondary and financial aid opportunities provided by the state.

27 (c) Consult with the California Community Colleges, the
28 University of California, the California State University, the
29 Student Aid Commission, and independent colleges and universities
30 in developing the pledge, letter, and supporting materials.

31 (d) Determine the form of recognition for pupils who have been
32 certified by his or her school district as having fulfilled the
33 requirements of the pledge pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section
34 54711.

35 (e) Develop a method by which participating schools shall record
36 and report participation in, and outcome data of, the Early
37 Commitment to College program to the Superintendent pursuant
38 to subdivision (b) of Section 54711.

39 (f) (1) Develop a letter addressed to pupils enrolled in grades
40 6 to 9, inclusive, and their parents or ~~legal guardians, or the~~

1 appropriate person in the case of foster youth *guardians*, and signed
 2 by the Governor and the Superintendent, *the Superintendent of*
 3 *Public Instruction, and the local district superintendent* that
 4 describes the major steps to prepare for college, including
 5 postsecondary career technical education, and the major
 6 postsecondary and financial aid opportunities available to students
 7 in California. ~~Develop a second letter that details the Early~~
 8 ~~Commitment to College program and that is directed to pupils~~
 9 ~~eligible to sign the “Save Me a Spot in College” pledge as set forth~~
 10 ~~in subdivision (b). Make both letters and information on~~

11 *(2) Develop a second letter signed by the Governor, the*
 12 *Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the local district*
 13 *superintendent, to be directed to pupils eligible to sign the pledge*
 14 *pursuant to Section 54711, and their parents or guardians, that*
 15 *details the Early Commitment to College Program, including the*
 16 *pledge, in addition to the information in the letter directed to all*
 17 *students in grades 6 to 9, inclusive. Make both letters and*
 18 *information on the Early Commitment to College program available*
 19 *on the Web site of the department and request all school districts*
 20 *to distribute the letters as appropriate through existing means to*
 21 *all pupils and their parents.*

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

31 *(g) Develop a method for participating school districts to notify*
 32 *colleges and universities in their service area that the school*
 33 *district is participating in the program and seeking partnerships*
 34 *with colleges, universities, and others to plan and conduct activities*
 35 *to implement the program.*

36 54713. (a) A pupil who signs a pledge declares a commitment
 37 to prepare for college, finish high school, and enroll in college and
 38 commits to do all of the following:

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

1 (2) Enroll in college preparatory coursework, which may include
2 ~~A-G requirements and career technical coursework~~; *career*
3 *technical coursework and the course requirements for admission*
4 *to the University of California and the California State University.*

5 (3) Seek to achieve proficiency in mathematics and in reading
6 and writing in English, as demonstrated *by results* on the California
7 Standards Test or assessments of college-level ~~proficiency~~
8 *readiness.*

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

12 (5) Meet application and other requirements for university
13 admission or enroll directly in community college ~~in the academic~~
14 *year within 12 months* after high school graduation.

15 (b) At the time of enrollment, each pupil shall receive a
16 certificate of participation in the Early Commitment to College
17 program, with his or her name, and bearing the signature of the
18 Superintendent, the local school district superintendent, and the
19 Governor.

20 (c) Participating pupils also shall receive a booklet of college
21 information providing more specific information about eligibility
22 requirements, preparation steps, and other pertinent information.

23 (d) School districts shall provide information and services,
24 through existing programs to pupils, not exclusive of those who
25 sign the pledge, through their middle school and high school years.
26 These ~~“Roadmap to College”~~ services shall include all of the
27 following:

28 (1) Transcript review and academics assessment, leading to
29 course planning for the pupil at the time of enrollment in the Early
30 Commitment to College program and annual reporting to the pupil
31 *and his or her parent or guardian* on how he or she is doing
32 relative to state standards and other benchmarks.

33 (2) Information about the Golden State Scholarshare College
34 Savings Trust (Article 19 (commencing with Section 69980) of
35 Chapter 2 of Part 42 of Division 5 of Title 3) at the time of
36 enrollment.

37 (3) A visit to at least one community college, including, but not
38 limited to, exposure to career technical and transfer programs, and
39 at least one four-year college in grade 9 or 10.

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

1 (5) Information on college admission and community college
2 enrollment steps in grade 12.

3 (6) Information on the financial aid application process,
4 including, but not limited to, the free application for federal student
5 aid and grade point average verification, in grade 12.

6 (e) Pupils enrolled in ~~an~~ *the* Early Commitment to College
7 program ~~who meet their pledge, in the same manner as all other~~
8 *pupils*, will be eligible to continue their postsecondary education
9 at a California community college to pursue career technical
10 education or ~~a degree, or to transfer to a four-year~~ *an associate*
11 *degree, or to prepare for transfer to a four-year college or*
12 university, or, if they meet the admission requirements and apply
13 for admission, at the University of California or the California
14 State University. Pupils who meet all the eligibility requirements
15 of the Cal Grant Program (Article 3 (commencing with Section
16 69530) of Chapter 2 of Part 42 of Title 3) at the time of application
17 will be eligible to receive a Cal Grant.

18 ~~(f) (1) A pupil who signs the pledge and is certified as having~~
19 ~~fulfilled the requirements of the pledge pursuant to subdivision~~
20 ~~(b) of Section 54711 shall be preapproved to receive, upon~~
21 ~~completion of high school, a fee waiver under the California~~
22 ~~Community College Board of Governor's fee waiver program for~~
23 ~~two years of enrollment at a California community college.~~

24 ~~(2) A pupil who has signed the pledge and transfers out of a~~
25 ~~participating school district shall not be preapproved for the fee~~
26 ~~waiver set forth in paragraph (1) unless he or she attends another~~

27 *(f) (1) Consistent with Article 1 (commencing with Section*
28 *76300) of Chapter 2 of Part 47 of Division 7 of Title 3, a pupil*
29 *who signs the pledge shall receive, upon enrollment at a community*
30 *college, a fee waiver under the California Community College*
31 *Board of Governor's fee waiver program for two or more years*
32 *of enrollment at a California community college, as long as the*
33 *student is a California resident and continues to show financial*
34 *need on a completed free application for federal student aid.*

35 *(2) A pupil who has signed the pledge and transfers out of a*
36 *participating school district shall not receive the recognition set*
37 *forth in subdivision (d) of Section 54712, unless he or she attends*
38 *another school district that is participating in the program. The*
39 *new school district may obtain the pupil's record of participation*
40 *in the program from the original school district or the pupil may*

1 request to sign the pledge again, including after grade 9, only if
2 he or she provides documentation that he or she was enrolled in
3 the program in his or her original school district.

4 54714. (a) The Legislature encourages the California
5 Community Colleges, the University of California, the California
6 State University, independent colleges *and universities*, the
7 California Student Opportunity and Access Program, the Student
8 Aid Commission, and other nonprofit, business, or other
9 community organizations to provide support services as needed
10 in coordination with school districts.

11 (b) Nothing in this article prohibits public and private colleges
12 and universities from maintaining existing, or entering into new,
13 supplemental agreements with school districts and their pupils to
14 offer a guarantee of admission, supplemental services,
15 supplemental financial aid, or other opportunities for alignment
16 of prerequisites or curriculum.

17 54715. On or before November 1, 2018, the Superintendent
18 shall submit to the Legislature a recommendation on whether the
19 program should be continued.

20 54716. This article, as of January 1, 2020, is repealed, unless
21 a later enacted statute, that becomes operative on or before January
22 1, 2020, deletes or extends that date.