
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 2259
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Urgency: No
Consultant: Lynn Lorber
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: School accountability: dropout recovery high schools

SUMMARY

This bill extends the sunset by three years on the ability of dropout recovery high schools to use an individual student growth model for purposes of school accountability.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), with the approval of the State Board of Education (SBE), to develop an Academic Performance Index (API) to measure the performance of schools and school districts, especially the academic performance of students. (Education Code § 52052(a))
- 2) Requires the SPI, with approval of the SBE, to develop an alternative accountability system for schools under the jurisdiction of a county board of education or a county superintendent of schools, community day schools non-public schools (special education), and alternative schools serving high-risk students. Existing law allows these schools to receive an API score, but prohibits them from being included in the API rankings of schools. (EC § 52052(g))
- 3) Requires that the SPI and the SBE, as part of the alternative accountability system or any successor system, to allow up to 10 dropout recovery high schools to report, in lieu of other indicators, the results of an individual student growth model that is proposed by the school and certified by the SPI.
- 4) Requires a dropout recovery high school to submit a proposed individual student growth model, and requires the SPI to review and certify that model if it meets all of the following criteria:
 - a) The model measures learning based on valid and reliable nationally normed or criterion-referenced reading and mathematics tests.
 - b) The model measures skills and knowledge aligned with state standards.
 - c) the model measures the extent to which a student scored above an expected amount of growth based on the individual student's initial achievement score.

- d) The model demonstrates the extent to which a school is able to accelerate learning on an annual basis.
- 5) Defines “dropout recovery high school” as a school offering instruction in any of grades 9-12, in which at least 50% of its students are either designated as dropouts, as defined, or left a school and were not otherwise enrolled in a school for a period of at least 180 days, and the school provides instruction in partnership with any of the following:
 - a) The federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
 - b) Federally-affiliated Youthbuild programs.
 - c) Federal job corps training or instruction provided pursuant to a memorandum of understanding with the federal provider.
 - d) The California Conservation Corps or local conservation corps. (EC § 52052.3)
- 6) Sunsets provisions related to an individual student growth model for dropout recovery high schools on January 1, 2017.

ANALYSIS

This bill extends the sunset by three years on the ability of dropout recovery high schools to use an individual student growth model for purposes of school accountability. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Extends by three years, from January 1, 2017, to January 1, 2020, the sunset on the requirement that the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and the State Board of Education allow up to 10 dropout recovery high schools to report the results of an individual student growth model that is proposed by the school and certified by the SPI.
- 2) Updates terminology, from the federal “Workforce Investment Act” to the federal “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.”

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** Existing law authorizes dropout recovery high schools to submit a proposed individual pupil growth model to the California Department of Education, and requires certification of the model if it meets certain criteria. California has adopted new standards (the common core academic content standards), defunded the Alternative Schools Accountability Model thereby rendering it inoperative, and is now undertaking the development of a new accountability system for K-12 schools. According to the author, “AB 2259 will allow schools to apply for certification and ensure that an individual growth model strategy remains available. This bill helps to maintain an important component of the accountability system for dropout recovery high schools. Also, it allows the

State Board of Education and the Legislature to complete deliberations on appropriate accountability.”

- 2) ***Individual pupil growth model.*** Dropout recovery high schools serve students whose skills are generally credit deficient, and enter and exit high school on an irregular schedule. For these reasons, using an annual “point in time” measure to gauge the performance of these schools does not yield useful data, particularly for evaluation of a school’s performance. To get a more accurate picture of student and school achievement, current law authorizes the state to instead use an individual pupil growth model, which measures student growth over time relative to grade level content standards, using nationally normed assessments. According to the author, California Department of Education has not yet certified an individual pupil growth model authorized by current law. The authorizing legislation for this model was enacted after the alternative school accountability model was rendered inoperative.
- 3) ***Status of the K-12 school accountability system.*** The existing school accountability metric, the Academic Performance Index (API), has been suspended due to the shift to new assessments that are aligned to the common core academic standards. The State Board of Education is in the process of designing a new accountability system for the state’s schools, built on the foundation of the local control funding formula, local control and accountability plans, evaluation rubrics, and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. The API was developed prior to the creation of the alternative school accountability model. There is a desire to allow the new accountability system to be fully developed prior to the recreation of an accountability system for alternative schools. This bill helps keep the focus on the use of an individual student growth model for accountability for alternative schools.
- 4) ***Recent report on alternative school accountability.*** A May 2016 report by the Legislative Analyst’s Office found that the state does not have sufficient information to determine how well alternative schools are educating students, and recommended that the alternative accountability system should use indicators that parallel the state’s regular school accountability program whenever possible, better short-term alternative performance indicators should be developed, and longer-term student success should be measured. The Analyst notes that annual standardized test scores are not a good measure of student achievement in alternative schools because those students are enrolled in school for less than a full school year. The Analyst also notes that current dropout and graduation rate data are also not useful because they do not reflect transfers back to traditional schools, and that a four-year cohort graduation rate does not work for alternative schools because students seldom enroll for four years. [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_516PWR.pdf]

SUPPORT

Association of California School Administrators
California School Boards Association
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
School for Integrated Academics and Technologies (SIATech)

OPPOSITION

None received.

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