SB 1440 – PADILLA
Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act

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Summary

SB 1440, The Student Transfer Achievement Reform (STAR) Act, would increase the number of students who successfully transfer from California Community Colleges (CCC) to the California State University system by establishing transfer degrees. Those who earn the new transfer degree would be guaranteed admission to the California State University (CSU) with junior status. Clarifying and streamlining the process would result in students graduating more quickly allowing community colleges and the CSU to serve more students.

Background

California’s economy is directly dependent on our highly trained and educated workforce. Due to the impending retirement of a generation of baby boomers California faces a looming workforce shortage in job sectors requiring a bachelor’s degree and above.

As many as 100,000 state employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 43% of the U.S. private labor force is also eligible to retire between 2004 and 2012.

In addition, eight of the top ten fastest growing occupations require postsecondary education and six require a bachelor’s degree.

Since the adoption of the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education, preparing students to transfer to a four-year university has been a core function of the CCC system. In fact 73% of college students attend community colleges. However, only 25% of those who intend to transfer to four-year universities actually do.

A key barrier to student transfer is the inconsistent, duplicative and ever-changing coursework requirements that students face. These barriers frustrate and discourage students and add expense to students and inefficiency to the college system.

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A study by the CCC Chancellor’s Office reports that the average transfer student completes 80 semester units of coursework when only 60 are required. The problem continues after they transfer. At the CSU, transfer students are taking excess units due to duplicative degree requirements and course credits that did not transfer from community college.

Arizona, Florida, North Carolina and Oregon have each created transfer degree programs that help students transfer seamlessly. As a result, more students successfully transfer to a 4-year university and earn a bachelor’s degree in less time, allowing them to enter the job market more quickly. The money saved allows the higher education system to serve more students.

**Existing Law**

The coursework necessary to transfer to the CSU or the University of California can vary widely from campus to campus. Students seeking to transfer are frustrated and discouraged by conflicting and duplicative requirements. Students planning on applying to several CSU campuses for the same major may need to have completed different prerequisites to attend each institution. Many students are unable to effectively qualify for more than one transfer option.

Existing law does not require alignment between the CCC and universities. The resulting confusion surrounding transfer requirements delays degree attainment, increases costs, and reduces access for additional students seeking admission.

**This Bill**

The Student Transfer Achievement Reform (STAR) Act would do the following:

- Mandates that CCCs create AA degrees for transfer to a CSU with areas of emphasis.
- Guarantees that students who earn the transfer degree are admitted to the CSU with upper division junior status.
- Precludes CCCs from requiring additional courses for this degree.
- Assures that transfer students will graduate with a bachelor’s degree with 120 semester units or 180 quarter units, with the exception of certain majors.

**Support**

- Campaign for College Opportunity (Co-Sponsor)
- California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (Co-Sponsor)
- California State University (Co-Sponsor)
- Student Senate for California Community Colleges (Co-Sponsor)
- California Student Senate Association (Co-Sponsor)
- A Place Called Home Advancement Project
- Alliance for a Better Community Associated Students Incorporated
- Bakersfield College
- Bay Area Council
- Cabrillo College
- California Business for Education Excellence
- California Business Roundtable
- California Catholic Conference
- California Chamber of Commerce
- California Communities United Institute
- California Postsecondary Education Commission
- California State University, Monterey Bay
- Californians for Justice
- Central City Neighborhood Partners
- Cerritos Community College District
- Chicano Latino Intersegmental Convocation (CLIC)
- Citrus College
- City of Bell Gardens
- Coastline Community College
- College of Marin
- College of the Canyons
- College of the Desert
- College of the Sequoias
Parents Investing for a Quality Education (PIQE)
Statewide
Pasadena City College
Pierce College
PolicyLink
Progressive Christians Uniting
Project Grad
Public Advocates
Rancho Santiago Community College District
Rio Hondo College
Riverside Community College District
San Bernardino Community College District
San Diego Community College District
San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Southern California College Access Network (SoCal CAN)
Southwestern College
Stanislaus County Office of Education
SunGard Higher Education
The Greenlining Institute
The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS)
The Women's Foundation of California
University of California
University of Southern California, Center for Enrollment Research, Policy and Practice
Valley Industry and Commerce Association (VICA)
West Valley Mission Community College District
Yosemite Community College District
Youth Policy Institute
Yuba Community College District

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