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AB-447 Public postsecondary education: students with disabilities: inclusive college programs. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Bill No. 447

CHAPTER 654

An act to add Section 66031 to the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.

[Approved by Governor October 10, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 10, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 447, Arambula. Public postsecondary education: students with disabilities: inclusive college programs.

Existing law states the intent of the Legislature that public higher education in California strive to provide educationally equitable environments that give each Californian, regardless of age, economic circumstance, or certain specified characteristics, including mental disability, a reasonable opportunity to develop fully their potential.

This bill, subject to an appropriation for its purposes, would expressly authorize the California State University, and request the University of California, to establish and maintain inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at 4-year public postsecondary educational institutions, as provided. The bill would request inclusive college programs operated by the California State University, and inclusive college programs operated by the University of California, to do certain things, including, among other things, provide students with a person-centered planning process and the opportunity to pursue an educational credential, including, but not limited to, a degree, certificate, or nondegree credential issued by the institution.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that California lacks the programs to provide inclusive college opportunities for students with disabilities.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to establish or expand upon existing inclusive college programs with the goal of providing inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at four-year public postsecondary educational institutions.

SEC. 2. Section 66031 is added to the Education Code, to read:

66031. (a) Subject to an appropriation of funds by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act or another statute for purposes of this section, the California State University may, and the University of California is requested to, establish and maintain inclusive college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at four-year public postsecondary educational institutions. Program funds may be used to establish new inclusive college programs at campuses that currently do not have a

program or have a program in development, or to provide continuing support to established inclusive college programs to help those programs reach capacity and sustainability.

(b) Inclusive college programs operated by the California State University, and inclusive college programs operated by the University of California, are requested to do all of the following:

- (1) Serve students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are at least 18 years of age, even if the students are not taking courses for credit or may not be seeking a traditional degree.
- (2) Provide students with a person-centered planning process and the opportunity to pursue an educational credential, including, but not limited to, a degree, certificate, or nondegree credential issued by the institution.
- (3) Provide inclusive academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, and integrated work experiences that develop career skills that can lead to gainful employment.
- (4) Provide individual supports and services for academic and social inclusion in academic courses, extracurricular activities, housing, and other aspects of campus life.
- (5) Establish strategies to recruit and support students from historically underserved communities.

(c) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for purposes of this section may be used for any of the following purposes:

- (1) Administrative salaries, including a program director at a campus with an inclusive pilot program and other administrative staff, including academic coordinators, employment and internship coordinators, social inclusion coordinators, and residential coordinators.
- (2) Additional program staff, including instructors, peer mentors, residential support staff, and administrative assistants.
- (3) Training for higher education faculty in evidence-based best practices.
- (4) Augmentation of existing assistive technologies and other academic support services offered by campus disability programs and resource centers.
- (5) Scholarships for student tuition, fees, and living expenses.
- (6) Additional student supports, including counseling, residential needs, mentor services, and transportation services.
- (7) Outreach, including internet website design, disseminating information to high school transition programs, local educational agencies, special education local plan areas, and college and career centers, and advertising placements and campaigns, including the cost of printing any materials.
- (8) Data collection and dissemination.

(d) (1) An inclusive college program shall comply with the requirements for, and shall apply for, federal status as a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program so that its students can apply for federal financial aid.

(2) An inclusive college program shall investigate long-term sustainability by securing funding from multiple sources, including funds from the Department of Rehabilitation, regional centers, and financial aid programs.

(e) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Intellectual and developmental disabilities" has the same meaning as "developmental disability," as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 4512 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- (2) "Local educational agencies" means school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education.