



## SB-895 Community colleges: Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program. (2023-2024)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2023–2024 REGULAR SESSION

### SENATE BILL

NO. 895

Introduced by Senators Roth and Caballero

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Reyes)

(Coauthors: Senators Dodd, Jones, Portantino, Seyarto, Skinner, Wiener, and Wilk)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alanis, Cervantes, Megan Dahle, Hoover, Jackson, Jim Patterson, Pellerin, Santiago, and Ta)

January 03, 2024

An act to add and repeal Article 3.3 (commencing with Section 78045) of Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, relating to postsecondary education.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 895, Roth. Community colleges: Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program.

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Existing law establishes community college districts throughout the state, under the administration of community college district governing boards, and authorizes these districts to provide instruction at the community college

campuses they operate. Existing law establishes a statewide baccalaureate degree program that authorizes up to a total of 30 baccalaureate degree programs at community college districts to be approved per academic year, as provided.

This bill would require the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that authorizes select community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The bill would limit the pilot program to 10 community college districts statewide and would require the chancellor's office to identify and select eligible community college districts based on specified criteria. The bill would require the chancellor's office to develop a process designed to assist community college districts with nursing programs that are applying for national accreditation for the purpose of qualifying for the pilot program, as provided. The bill would require each participating community college district to give priority registration for enrollment in the pilot program to students with an associate degree in nursing from that community college district. The bill would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to conduct an evaluation of the pilot program to determine the effectiveness of the program and the need to continue or expand the program, as specified, to be submitted to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2032. The bill would repeal these provisions as of January 1, 2034.

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

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

### **SECTION 1.** (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) California has had a shortage of registered nurses for decades. The shortage has been exacerbated in recent years due to a global pandemic and is expected to worsen due to projected retirements. While this is a national problem, it is particularly acute in California, where there are only 995 registered nurses per 100,000 people, ranking 40th out of 50 states. California nursing school capacity has been insufficient in keeping up with demand. During the 2021–22 school year, 74.2 percent of qualified applications for a California nursing program were rejected, resulting in 47,687 potential nursing students being turned away.

(2) For over 40 years, the community college Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) has been the basic credential requirement for employment as a registered nurse in a health care facility, and public California State University and University of California nursing schools along with private nursing school programs have historically awarded the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree to those who elect to pursue a four-year degree. While there is an overall shortage of registered nurses, whether ADNs or BSNs, there is also a need for more BSN-degreed nurses in the workplace. Due to a push by credentialing organizations to increase the percentage of nurses holding BSN degrees to 80 percent of those employed in health care facilities, the BSN degree is becoming the new industry standard for employment in California hospitals, and it is one of the prerequisites for admission to Master's Degree in Nursing and Doctorate of Nursing Practice programs. This demand for production of BSN-credentialed registered nurses continues to increase without a corresponding increase in capacity to train them at our public nursing schools. In California, a 2021 HealthImpact report found that 18 percent of California hospitals surveyed stated that a BSN was required for employment, twice the percentage noted in 2017, and 54.3 percent reported a preference for hiring BSNs. In addition, 31.5 percent of the new ADN registered nurses surveyed stated that the lack of a BSN degree was given as the reason for their failure to be hired.

(3) This bill would allow a limited number of community college ADNs who complete their degree program and pass the National Council Licensure Exam to secure the additional coursework necessary to earn a BSN degree at their community college, thereby supplementing the work of existing public and private BSN programs by adding additional BSN-degreed nurses to the workforce who are qualified to become supervisors and managers in health care facilities, and who are qualified to become master's- or doctorate-degreed nurse practitioners in independent practice settings, and as members of nursing school faculty.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that community colleges establish ADN-to-BSN concurrent enrollment partnership programs with the California State University, the University of California, or an independent institution of higher education, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 66010 of the Education Code.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature that community colleges maintain ADN-to-BSN concurrent enrollment partnership programs for the duration of the community college's participation in the Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program.

**SEC. 2.** Article 3.3 (commencing with Section 78045) is added to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, to read:

#### **Article 3.3. Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program**

**78045.** (a) Notwithstanding Section 66010.4, the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program that authorizes select community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

(b) (1) The pilot program shall be limited to 10 community college districts statewide. The chancellor's office shall identify and select eligible community college districts based on the following criteria:

(A) The chancellor's office is encouraged to ensure there is equitable access between the northern, central, and southern parts of the state to the pilot program.

(B) Priority shall be given to community college districts located in underserved nursing areas.

(C) The community college districts shall have a nationally accredited nursing program.

(D) The chancellor's office shall give positive consideration to a community college district's request for participation in the pilot program where the community college district has a successful associate degree in nursing to bachelor of science in nursing concurrent enrollment partnership with the California State University, the University of California, or an independent institution of higher education, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 66010.

(2) A community college district selected for the pilot program shall continue to offer an associate degree in nursing program.

(3) The total number of associate degree in nursing and bachelor of science in nursing students at a community college district shall be limited to the community college district's associate degree in nursing class size approved by the Board of Registered Nursing, and the total number of participants in a pilot program established pursuant to this article shall be limited to 25 percent of that class size, or 35 students, whichever is greater.

(c) (1) Community college districts without a nationally accredited nursing program, but that are in "candidate" status, may be provisionally selected to participate in the pilot program, and may commence the program upon final accreditation. With regard to this paragraph, priority shall be given to community college districts located in the central valley. If a community college district that is provisionally selected is found to be making untimely progress toward accreditation, after notice and an opportunity to cure, the chancellor's office may withdraw the provisional selection and may select a different community college district to participate in the pilot program.

(2) The chancellor's office shall develop a process designed to assist community college districts with nursing programs that are applying for national accreditation for the purpose of qualifying for the pilot program, and that assistance shall be made available to community college districts upon request.

(d) Each participating community college district shall give priority registration for enrollment in the pilot program to students with an associate degree in nursing from that community college district.

(e) (1) The Legislative Analyst's Office shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program to determine the effectiveness of the program and the need to continue or expand the program. The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(A) How many, and which specific, community college districts applied for the pilot program.

(B) The number of pilot programs implemented, including information identifying the number of enrollments and degree recipients.

(C) Which of the selected community college districts developed a pilot program in an underserved nursing area.

(D) Which community college districts were selected to participate in the pilot program and why they were selected.

(E) The pilot program costs and the funding sources that were used to finance each of the pilot programs.

(F) The cost charged to students, including tuition and any additional fees.

(G) The extent to which instruction was provided in person or online.

(H) Current completion rates, if available, for each cohort of students participating in a pilot program.

(I) Time-to-degree rates and completion rates for each pilot program.

(J) The extent to which each pilot program established pursuant to this article is in compliance with the requirements of this article.

(K) Other factors to consider when expanding bachelor of science in nursing opportunities across the state.

(L) Recommendations on whether and how the authorization establishing the pilot program should be extended.

(2) Each participating community college district shall submit the information necessary for the evaluation conducted pursuant to paragraph (1), as determined by the Legislative Analyst's Office, to the chancellor's office. The chancellor's office shall

provide the information received from the participating community college districts to the Legislative Analyst's Office upon request.

(3) The results of the evaluation shall be submitted to the Legislature, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code, on or before July 1, 2032.

(f) Article 3 (commencing with Section 78040) does not apply to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing offered pursuant to this article.

(g) For purposes of this section, "underserved nursing area" means a registered nurse shortage area designated at a high-, medium-, or low-severity level as identified by the Department of Health Care Access and Information.

(h) This article shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2034, and as of that date is repealed.