SB-1183 Community colleges: registered nursing programs. (2023-2024)

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Senate Bill No. 1183

CHAPTER 786

An act to amend Section 78261.5 of the Education Code, relating to community colleges.

[Approved by Governor September 27, 2024. Filed with Secretary of State September 27, 2024.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1183, Hurtado. Community colleges: registered nursing programs.

Existing law authorizes a community college registered nursing program that determines that the number of applicants to the program exceeds its capacity to admit students using a multicriteria screening process, a random selection process, or a blended combination of random selection and a multicriteria screening process, as specified. Existing law requires that the criteria applied in a multicriteria screening process include, among other criteria, consideration of the life experiences or special circumstances of an applicant, as listed, and proficiency or advanced level coursework in languages other than English, as provided. Existing law requires credit to be received for languages identified by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges as high-frequency languages. Existing law requires the chancellor to report annually to the Legislature and the Governor on students admitted to community college registered nursing programs through a multicriteria screening process, as provided. Existing law repeals these provisions relating to admission to community college registered nursing programs on January 1, 2025.

This bill would add living in a medically underserved area or population, as designated by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, to the list of life experiences or special circumstances specified for consideration in a multicriteria screening process. The bill would explicitly reference the various languages of the African continent as languages that may be identified by the chancellor as high-frequency languages. The bill would extend operation of these provisions relating to admission to community college registered nursing programs until January 1, 2030.

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

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

SECTION 1. Section 78261.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:

78261.5. (a) A community college registered nursing program that determines that the number of applicants to that program exceeds its capacity may admit students in accordance with any of the following procedures:

(1) Administration of a multicriteria screening process, as authorized by Section 78261.3, in a manner that is consistent with the standards set forth in subdivision (b).

(2) A random selection process.

(3) A blended combination of random selection and a multicriteria screening process.

(b) A community college registered nursing program that elects, on or after January 1, 2008, to use a multicriteria screening process to evaluate applicants pursuant to this article shall apply those measures in accordance with all of the following:

(1) The criteria applied in a multicriteria screening process under this article shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

(A) Academic degrees or diplomas, or relevant certificates, held by an applicant.

(B) Grade-point average in relevant coursework.

(C) Any relevant work or volunteer experience.

(D) Life experiences or special circumstances of an applicant, including, but not limited to, the following experiences or circumstances:

(i) Disabilities.

(ii) Low family income.

(iii) First generation of family to attend college.

(iv) Need to work.

(v) Disadvantaged social or educational environment.

(vi) Difficult personal and family situations or circumstances.

(vii) Refugee or veteran status.

(viii) Living in a medically underserved area or population, as designated by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

(E) Proficiency or advanced level coursework in languages other than English. Credit for languages other than English shall be received for languages that are identified by the chancellor as high-frequency languages, as based on census data. These languages may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

(i) American Sign Language.

(ii) Arabic.

(iii) Chinese, including its various dialects.

(iv) Farsi.

(v) Russian.

(vi) Spanish.

(vii) Tagalog.

(viii) The various languages of the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

(ix) The various languages of the African continent.

(2) Additional criteria, such as a personal interview, a personal statement, letter of recommendation, or the number of repetitions of prerequisite classes, or other criteria, as approved by the chancellor, may be used, but are not required.

(3) A community college registered nursing program using a multicriteria screening process under this article may use an approved diagnostic assessment tool, in accordance with Section 78261.3, before, during, or after the multicriteria screening process.

(4) As used in this section:

(A) "Disabilities" has the same meaning as used in Section 2626 of the Unemployment Insurance Code.

(B) "Disadvantaged social or educational environment" includes, but is not limited to, the status of a student who has participated in Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS).

(C) "Grade-point average" refers to the same fixed set of required prerequisite courses that all applicants to the nursing program administering the multicriteria screening process are required to complete.

(D) "Low family income" shall be measured by a community college registered nursing program in terms of a student's eligibility for, or receipt of, financial aid under a program that may include, but is not limited to, a fee waiver from the board of governors under Section 76300, the Cal Grant Program under Chapter 1.7 (commencing with Section 69430) of Part 42 of Division 5, the federal Pell Grant program, or CalWORKs.

(E) "Need to work" means that the student is working at least part time while completing academic work that is a prerequisite for admission to the nursing program.

(5) A community college registered nursing program that uses a multicriteria screening process pursuant to this article shall report its nursing program admissions policies to the chancellor annually, in writing. The admissions policies reported under this paragraph shall include the weight given to any criteria used by the program, and shall include demographic information relating to the persons admitted to the program and the persons of that group who successfully completed that program.

(c) The chancellor is encouraged to develop, and make available to community college registered nursing programs by July 1, 2008, a model admissions process based on this section.

(d) (1) The chancellor shall submit a report on or before March 1, 2015, and on or before each March 1 thereafter, to the Legislature and the Governor that examines and includes, but is not necessarily limited to, both of the following:

(A) The participation, retention, and completion rates in community college registered nursing programs of students admitted through a multicriteria screening process, as described in this section, disaggregated by the age, gender, ethnicity, and the language spoken at the home of those students.

(B) Information on the annual impact, if any, the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012 had on the matriculation services for students admitted through the multicriteria screening process, as described in this section.

(2) The chancellor shall submit the annual report required in paragraph (1) in conjunction with its annual report on associate degree nursing programs required by subdivision (h) of Section 78261.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2030, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2030, deletes or extends that date.