

EDUCATION CODE

SECTION 69560-69566

69560. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Lack of information about postsecondary educational opportunities and low achievement levels are primary barriers to a college education for students from schools that have low eligibility and college participation rates.

(b) The Student Opportunity and Access Program, initiated in 1978 to increase postsecondary educational opportunities, has been successful in meeting its goals to increase the availability of information, improve students' access to higher education by raising their achievement levels, and reduce the duplication of services by coordinating outreach efforts.

(c) The intersegmental consortium nature of the program has proven to be a highly effective mechanism in coordinating existing services and in fostering the cooperation of the various education segments involved.

(d) An essential core of state funding for the program is required to maintain its intersegmental character, which has generated better communication, understanding, and teamwork resulting in an impact enhanced by the collective effort, while minimizing duplication of services in a geographic area.

(e) The anticipated growth in the state's schoolage population indicates an increasing demand for services provided by the program to assist students to compete successfully for admission to postsecondary educational institutions.

(f) Salaries for college students of low-income backgrounds to provide informational and tutorial help for students from schools that have low eligibility and college participation rates is a cost-effective method of increasing access and of providing student financial aid.

69561. (a) The Student Opportunity and Access Program is administered by the Student Aid Commission.

(b) The Student Aid Commission may apportion funds on a progress payment schedule for the support of projects designed to increase the accessibility of postsecondary educational opportunities for any of the following elementary and secondary school students:

(1) Students who are from low-income families.

(2) Students who would be the first in their families to attend college.

(3) Students who are from schools or geographic regions with documented low-eligibility or college participation rates.

(c) These projects shall primarily do all of the following:

(1) Increase the availability of information for these students on the existence of postsecondary schooling and work opportunities.

(2) Raise the achievement levels of these students so as to increase the number of high school graduates eligible to pursue postsecondary learning opportunities.

(d) Projects may assist community college students in transferring to four-year institutions, to the extent that project resources are available.

(e) Projects may provide assistance to low-income fifth and sixth grade students and their parents in order to implement outreach efforts designed to use the future availability of financial assistance as a means of motivating students to stay in school and complete college preparatory courses.

(f) Each project shall be proposed and operated through a

consortium that involves at least one secondary school district office, at least one four-year college or university, at least one community college, and at least one of the following agencies:

- (1) A nonprofit educational, counseling, or community agency.
 - (2) A private vocational or technical school accredited by a national, state, or regional accrediting association recognized by the United States Department of Education.
- (g) The commission, in awarding initial project grants, shall give priority to proposals developed by more than three eligible agencies. Projects shall be located throughout the state in order to provide access to program services in rural, urban, and suburban areas.

(h) The governing board of each project, comprising at least one representative from each entity in the consortium, shall establish management policy, provide direction to the project director, set priorities for budgetary decisions that reflect the specific needs of the project, and assume responsibility for maintaining the required level of matching funds, including solicitations from the private sector and corporate sources.

(i) Prior to receiving a project grant, each consortium shall conduct a planning process and submit a comprehensive project proposal to include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- (1) The agencies participating in the project.
- (2) The students to be served by the project.
- (3) The ways in which the project will reduce duplication and related costs.
- (4) The methods for assessing the project's impact.

(j) Each project shall include the direct involvement of secondary school staff in the daily operations of the project, with preference in funding to those projects that effectively integrate the objectives of the Student Opportunity and Access Program with those of the school district in providing services that are essential to preparing students for postsecondary education.

(k) Each project shall maintain within the project headquarters a comprehensive student-specific information system on students receiving services through the program in grades 11 and 12 at secondary schools within the participating districts. This information shall be maintained in a manner consistent with the law relating to pupil records.

(l) At least 30 percent or the equivalent of each project grant shall be allocated for stipends to peer advisers and tutors who meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) Work with secondary school students.
- (2) Are currently enrolled in a college or other postsecondary school as an undergraduate or graduate student.
- (3) Have demonstrated financial need for the stipend.

(m) Each project should work cooperatively with other projects in the program and with the commission to establish viable student services and sound administrative procedures and to ensure coordination of the activities of the project with existing educational opportunity programs. The Student Aid Commission may develop additional regulations regarding the awarding of project grants and criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the individual projects.

69562. The Student Aid Commission shall establish a 12-member project grant advisory committee to advise project directors and the commission on the development and operation of the projects, and consisting of the following:

- (a) Three representatives of outreach programs, representing the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges, appointed by their respective governing boards.
- (b) One representative of private colleges and universities,

appointed by the Association of California Independent Colleges and Universities.

(c) One representative of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, appointed by the commission.

(d) Two secondary school staff, appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(e) Two persons representing the general public, one appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and the other by the Senate Rules Committee.

(f) Two postsecondary students, both appointed annually by the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

(g) One college campus financial aid officer, appointed by the commission.

69563. The California Postsecondary Education Commission shall periodically review and evaluate the Student Opportunity and Access Program as part of the commission's regular assessment of student academic development programs in the state. The commission shall include in the evaluation an assessment of the admission, progress, retention, and graduation of program participants from postsecondary institutions.

69564. Allocation of any funds appropriated for purposes of this article shall be limited to those consortia meeting requirements of this article who will provide equal matching resources from existing or budgeted increases in federal, state, local, and private funds. It shall be the goal of the program that the total resources provided by the Student Opportunity and Access Program shall match state funding on at least a 1.5 to 1 ratio. Any new projects approved through expansion of the program shall provide equal matching resources for the first three years of operation and shall be encouraged to increase the matching resources to a 1.5 to 1 ratio with the state grant thereafter.

69565. The initial grant for a proposed new project in an area that has demonstrated need for services provided by the Student Opportunity and Access Program may be utilized for planning and development. Full project grant funding shall be allocated when the consortium meets the criteria established in Section 69561.

69566. It is the intent of the Legislature that funding for the purposes of this article be appropriated in the annual Budget Act.
