

**California Community Colleges
Government Relations
2007-08 Legislative Bill Analysis**

BILL No.	AUTHOR	SUBJECT	BILL VERSION (DATE)	STATUS/LOCATION
AB 218	Portantino	Higher Education Accountability	February 3, 2009	Assembly Committee on Higher Education
POSITION	POSITION STATUS	ANALYSIS VERSION (DATE)	GR STAFF	DIVISION LIAISON
		2/26/09	S. Ortiz-Mercado	TRIS: Patrick Perry

Summary: This bill requires the state to establish a statewide accountability framework to biennially assess and report on the collective progress made by the four system's of postsecondary education in meeting state educational and economic policy goals.

Background Regarding Academic Policies: AB 218 is based on SB 325 (Scott) that was vetoed by the Governor. In his veto message, the Governor wrote that SB 325 did not provide for "consequences that would modify behavior to meet any policy objectives." Other than changes in the implementation timelines contained in SB 325, AB 218 does not have any significant language changes in comparison and remains primarily unchanged.

AB 1417 (Pacheco, Statutes of 2004) required the CCC Board of Governors to provide recommendations regarding the design of a structure for the annual evaluation of college-level performance in meeting statewide educational outcomes. The Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) is the net result of this legislation. ARCC is in its third year of reporting and provides information on a variety of indicators showing college-level progress in key areas, such as student progress and achievement rates for transfer, completion of degrees and certificates, workforce development and basic skills. Many of the ARCC indicators align with the indicators proposed in AB 218. While ARCC focuses on progress made at the CCC college-level, SB 325 focuses on measuring the collective progress of the institutions of higher education at the statewide level.

The purpose of the legislation is to establish one set of statewide educational goals for the segments of higher education to achieve, using consistent data that cuts across all the segments of higher education for measuring progress.

Policy Analysis:

(1) The bill requires that the state establish an accountability framework for the purpose of biennially assessing the collective progress of the state's system of postsecondary education in meeting specified goals that answer the following questions:

1. **Are enough Californians prepared for postsecondary education?**
2. **Are enough Californians going to college?**
3. **Is the state's postsecondary education system affordable to all Californians?**
4. **Are enough Californians successfully completing certificates and degrees?**
5. **Are college graduates prepared for life and work in California?**
6. **Are California's people, communities, and the economy benefitting?**

(2) The above questions will be answered by collecting a select number of indicators that measure progress over time.

- (3) The bill identifies the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) as the central repository for collecting and maintaining all data for the framework and making the data available in a statewide aggregate format. The segments are required to submit specified data to CPEC for this purpose.
- (4) The bill establishes that the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) and DOF convene a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to coordinate the technical specifications of the indicator data needed to comply with the bill's provisions. TAC includes representatives from each segment of higher education, CPEC, the LAO, and up to three individuals with expertise in similar state accountability efforts, and from any state agency that maintains data that is helpful in responding to the statewide policy questions. TAC is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, Legislature and Director of Finance by January 30, 2010.
- (5) Beginning August 1, 2010, the bill requires CPEC to report biennially the information collected under the framework.
- (6) The bill requires the LAO to provide an analysis of the data in the report assessing progress on the six questions, along with an analysis of the trends.
- (7) Requires the governing boards of the four segments of higher education to provide biennial reports beginning May 31, 2010, as part of the accountability record, to include system priorities, major activities underway, system-derived indicators used to measure institutional priorities, each system's goals for improving student learning, and any major system highlights. These reports may be presented biennially by each segment at a joint hearing of the appropriate legislative education policy and budget subcommittees, beginning December 30, 2010.

Fiscal Analysis: The legislation requires new workload on a biennial basis for the system office to: 1) cut new data that currently is not part of the ARCC (the goal is to minimize the use of new data), and; 2) assemble the "state of the system" report to the legislature and Governor. An additional PY would be needed to address the new workload contained in this legislative proposal and help absorb new reporting requirements for ARCC.

Argument FOR: While each segment of higher education in California participates in system-specific accountability efforts, there is a lack of meaningful data and analysis that assesses the collective progress of the higher education segments and guides sound state fiscal and policy decisions in meeting statewide educational needs. Additionally, the statewide accountability system provides a formal venue for showcasing progress and key issues tracked by ARCC. This statewide accountability tool helps legislators make important fiscal and policy decisions based on analytical data and determine where to make stronger investments.

Argument AGAINST: This higher education accountability proposal adds another layer of accountability to the Community College system reporting requirements potentially working at cross-purposes with system priorities.