ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1703 (Bloom)
As Amended April 29, 2019
Majority vote

SUMMARY:

Requires, contingent on appropriation, the formation of a neurodiversity and learning collaborative, with the intent of bringing together brain researcher and educators to use brain research to improve teaching of students with neurodiversity, including dyslexia and literacy issues.

Major Provisions

1) Requires the University of California (UC) at Los Angeles (UCLA), the California State University (CSU) at Dominguez Hills and CSU campuses serving the Los Angeles Basin, as selected by the CSU Trustees, to develop new interventions and teaching practices, based on brain research, and test them in public schools that volunteer to participate.

2) Requires the collaborative to develop a teacher training curriculum for teacher credentialing.

COMMENTS:

One in five children in the United States (U.S.) have learning and attention issues according to the National Center for Learning Disabilities. The most frequent learning issue is related to literacy. Dyslexia is estimated to affect roughly 15% of the U.S. population, meaning about one million children in California schools have a literacy-related learning disability.

Without early identification and effective intervention, the impact of learning issues can be significant and long-lasting for the individual, and for society. The long-term effects include social costs - unemployment, mental health problems, welfare costs, and ongoing remedial education programs.

This bill is intended bring together California's leading brain science and K-12 education experts for a collaborative venture using emerging knowledge to inform the creation of innovative teaching methods for application throughout the K-12 system. The proposed collaborative will focus on three areas:

1) Increasing language and concept development for children 0 to 5 years of age by working with California's early childhood programs.

2) Assessing children at age 5 for literacy issues with teachers trained to give targeted intervention in the primary grades.

3) Development of fluent comprehension by grade four, by designing professional development for all current teachers and by creating new foundational literacy components to be embedded into teacher education programs.

According to the Author:
Great progress has been made in understanding neurodiversity on a scientific level, including the cognitive and neurobiological bases of diverse learning needs, and this research can now inform teaching methods to better support the success of all types of learners.

Arguments in Support:
According to UCLA, "AB 1703 is an opportunity for California's policy leaders to better utilize existing expertise from the CSU and UC campuses to collaboratively and strategically achieve more effective and efficient educational systems for all types of learners."

Arguments in Opposition:
There is no opposition on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS:

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

1) Ongoing General Fund costs, in the $500,000 range, for at least two CSU campuses to participate in the program.

2) Ongoing General Fund costs, in the $250,000 range, for UC to participate in the program.

3) Unknown Proposition 98 General Fund or General Fund for schools test the interventions and techniques.

4) No additional General Fund costs to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, as costs likely would be covered by the existing credentialing process.

VOTES:

ASM HIGHER EDUCATION: 11-0-1
YES: Medina, Choi, Quirk, Bloom, Gabriel, Irwin, Kiley, Levine, Low, Santiago, Weber
ABS, ABST OR NV: Patterson

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 18-0-0
YES: Gonzalez, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonta, Brough, Calderon, Carrillo, Chau, Diep, Eggman, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Maienschein, Obernolte, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Robert Rivas

UPDATED:

VERSION: April 29, 2019

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