
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1555 (Hadwick) - Community colleges: exemption from nonresident tuition fee: College of the Siskiyou

Version: March 19, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: June 15, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill authorizes the College of the Siskiyou to exempt its nonresident tuition fee for 200 students per academic year residing in specified counties in Oregon and claim state apportionment funding for those students qualifying for an exemption.

Fiscal Impact: The Chancellor's Office indicates that the bill would not result in additional Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressures since the College of the Siskiyou is already authorized to exempt nonresident students from the nonresident tuition fee and report these students as resident full-time equivalent students (FTES) for state apportionment purposes. Staff notes that to the extent the bill results in an increase in students above the statutory cap, this could lead to additional Proposition 98 General Fund costs under the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). However, such increases may be funded through future SCFF growth budget allocations.

Background: Existing law authorizes the California Community College Board of Governors to enter into an interstate attendance agreement with any statewide public agency of another state that is responsible for public institutions of postsecondary education providing the first two years of college instruction, and that is an agency of a state that is a member of Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), which is a regional interstate higher education compact between 15 states in the western United States.

Existing law authorizes a community college district (CCD) to admit nonresident students and requires that these students be charged a tuition fee, with specified exemptions, and requires that CCDs use one of several statutorily outlined options for the calculation of the nonresident tuition fee.

Existing law exempts no more than 200 students in any academic year from paying all or part of nonresident tuition fees if they attend the Lake Tahoe CCD and reside in specified communities in the State of Nevada.

Existing law exempts, until January 1, 2028, no more than 150 full-time equivalent students (FTES) from paying all or part of nonresident tuition fees if they are low-income students who are residents of Mexico who register for lower division courses at specified community colleges near the California-Mexico border and who reside within 45 miles of the California-Mexico border.

Proposed Law: This bill authorizes the College of the Siskiyous to exempt all or some of its nonresident tuition fee for 200 students per academic year residing in the Oregon counties of Jackson County, Josephine County, and Klamath County.

This bill authorizes the College of the Siskiyous to claim state apportionment funding for students qualifying for an exemption of nonresident tuition fees and requires the College of the Siskiyous to charge these students a per-unit fee that is one and one-half times the fee for residents.

This bill requires the governing board for the College of the Siskiyous to adopt rules and regulations for determining a student's residence classification and establishing procedures for an appeal and review of the residence classification.

This bill requires that a student will be determined to have residence in one of the specified Oregon counties if they have lived in the county for more than one year immediately before seeking the nonresident tuition fee exemption. The bill provides that residence be determined pursuant to existing laws for the determination of student residence, as specified.

Related Legislation: AB 91 (Alvarez, Chapter 796, Statutes of 2023) exempts a maximum of 150 FTES from paying all or part of their nonresident tuition fees if they are low income students who are residents of Mexico and register for lower division courses at specified community colleges near the California-Mexico border, and who reside within 45 miles of the California-Mexico border. This exemption is provided until January 1, 2028.

SB 605 (Gaines, Chapter 657, Statutes of 2015) provided a nearly identical statutory exemption for students residing in specified communities in Nevada from paying nonresident tuition fees while attending Lake Tahoe CCD, with a sunset date of July 1, 2022.

SB 436 (Dahle, Chapter 573, Statutes of 2021) removed the sunset date for the specified exemption for Lake Tahoe CCD.

Staff Comments: The College of the Siskiyous is located in Weed, CA and is the northern-most community college in the state and closest to the California-Oregon border. The Oregon border is about 50 miles, or an hour, to the north of College of the Siskiyous. There are three counties on the southern Oregon border—Josephine County, Jackson County, and Klamath County. In the 2025-26 academic year, the College of the Siskiyous enrolled 61 students from these counties and 112 students from Oregon in total. Existing law permits the College of the Siskiyous to annually serve a maximum of 100 FTES through the Western Undergraduate Exchange, where participating western states and territories from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education may apply to enroll in college programs at a reduced tuition level. The College of the Siskiyous currently serves 50 FTES from Oregon through WUE.

This bill seeks a stand-alone exemption for 200 students residing in specified communities in Oregon from paying nonresident tuition fees while attending the College of the Siskiyous. According to the author, "along the California-Oregon border, residents see themselves not as Californians or Oregonians, but as one cross-border

community. Residents of this bi-state community in Siskiyou County interact daily with neighboring Oregon communities for work, healthcare, commerce, and education. Recent data indicates 90 percent of community college students go to college within 50 miles of their home. The CoS provides workforce programs that South Oregon University and nearby colleges cannot meet. ... However, Oregon applicants face significantly higher costs due to nonresident tuition and the total cost of college—often paying up to ten times more than California residents.

Assembly Bill 1555 allows the CoS to enroll Oregon students as in-state students. ... Current law already authorizes the Lake Tahoe Community College District to enroll an unlimited number of nonresident Nevada students in Lake Tahoe Community College as resident full-time equivalent students.”

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