THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1713
Author: Ransom (D)
Amended: 7/1/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/3/26
AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes
NO VOTE RECORDED: Cabaldon

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0, 5/11/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: students with disabilities: verification: academic accommodations

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill (1) requires the California Community Colleges (CCCs) and the California State University (CSU), and requests the University of California (UC), to accept a student's individualized education program (IEP), Individual Program Plan (IPP), or Section 504 plan as verification of disability for purposes of requesting academic accommodations; (2) prohibits public postsecondary institutions from requiring students to obtain new or additional diagnostic evaluations solely to verify a disability, while authorizing institutions to request supplemental information necessary to evaluate accommodation requests and determine appropriate reasonable accommodations; and (3) clarifies that an IEP, IPP, or Section 504 plan serves only to verify the existence of a disability and does not require a public postsecondary institution to provide the accommodations, modifications, or services identified in those documents.

Senate Floor amendments of 7/1/26 (1) expand this bill to recognize an Individual Program Plan (IPP) developed by a regional center as documentation that may be used to verify a student's disability; (2) clarify that public postsecondary institutions may request supplemental information reasonably necessary to

evaluate a student's request for accommodations and assess the student's functional limitations for purposes of determining appropriate reasonable accommodations, while prohibiting institutions from using that information to dispute or invalidate the underlying disability determination; and (3) specify that an IEP, IPP, or Section 504 plan serves only to verify the existence of a disability and does not require a public postsecondary institution to provide the specific accommodations, modifications, or services identified in those documents.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

1) Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and requires entities receiving federal financial assistance, including public postsecondary institutions, to provide equal access to educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

2) Prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

3) Prohibits postsecondary educational institutions that receive state financial assistance from discriminating on the basis of disability or other protected characteristics.

4) Defines "disability" for purposes of the Equity in Higher Education Act to mean a mental or physical disability.

5) Expresses legislative intent to provide funding for Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) at the CCCs, including funding for disability-related counseling, mobility assistance, interpreter services, testing accommodations, specialized tutoring, and other supports for students with disabilities.

6) Requires, beginning in fall 2026, the CSU to establish, and requests the UC and independent institutions to establish, a Disability Access and Compliance Training Program to ensure campus personnel understand their legal responsibilities related to accommodations for students with disabilities.

7) Provides that provisions of the Donahoe Higher Education Act do not apply to the UC unless adopted by the Regents.

This bill:

1) Defines the following terms for purposes of this bill:

a) "504 plan" to mean a plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1974.

b) "IEP" to mean an individualized education program adopted pursuant to state and federal special education law.

c) "IPP" to mean an individual program plan developed pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 4640) of Chapter 5 of Division 4.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

d) "Local educational agency" to mean a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

e) "Public higher education institution" to mean a campus of the CCCs, the CSU, or the UC.

2) Requires, beginning September 1, 2027, a public higher education institution that requires documentation to verify a student's disability for purposes of academic accommodations to accept an IEP, IPP, a Section 504 plan, or any combination thereof, issued by a local educational agency (LEA) or regional center, as verification of the student's disability.

3) Prohibits, beginning September 1, 2027, a public higher education institution from requiring a student to obtain a new or additional diagnostic evaluation to verify a disability if the student has provided an IEP or Section 504 plan documenting the disability.

4) Authorizes a public higher education institution to request supplemental information reasonably necessary to evaluate a student's request for academic accommodations, assess the functional limitations associated with the student's disability, and determine appropriate reasonable accommodations.

5) Prohibits a public higher education institution from using supplemental information to invalidate or dispute a student's disability as documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

6) Specifies that an IEP, IPP, or Section 504 plan accepted pursuant to this bill serves only to verify the existence of a student's disability and does not require a public higher education institution to provide the accommodations, modifications, or services identified in those documents.

7) Requires implementation of this bill to be consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

8) Specifies that this bill does not apply to a public higher education institution's implementation of Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972.

9) Applies this bill's provisions to the UC, contingent upon action by the Regents.

Comments

Need for this bill. According to the author, "AB 1713 is focused on providing students with disabilities recognition of their unique needs to ensure they are able to participate in California's world-renowned higher education system without difficulty or discrimination. AB 1713 will require institutions of higher education to accept a student's diagnosis from their IEP or Section 504 Plan from their previous educational institution, fast-tracking their access to the accommodations they need and allowing them to spend more time in the classroom and less time in the doctor's office."

Standardizing the disability verification practices across California's public higher education systems. This bill addresses the documentation process students with disabilities encounter when seeking accommodations in higher education. Under current practice, postsecondary institutions may establish their own standards regarding what documentation is necessary to verify a disability and determine eligibility for accommodations. As a result, documentation standards and verification practices may vary across campuses and higher education segments.

This bill establishes a statewide standard requiring public postsecondary institutions to accept an IEP, IPP, or Section 504 plan as sufficient documentation that a disability exists, while still preserving institutional discretion to determine appropriate accommodations in the higher education environment.

K-12 and higher education disability systems serve different legal and operational purposes. The provisions of this bill operate between two distinct disability accommodation systems. In the K-12 system, schools are responsible for identifying students with disabilities, evaluating eligibility, and proactively developing plans and services intended to support student success. By contrast, higher education institutions generally operate under an access-based framework in which students self-identify, request accommodations, and participate in an interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations.

As a result, while IEPs, IPPs, and Section 504 plans may establish the existence of a disability, the accommodations provided in K-12 settings do not necessarily translate directly into the postsecondary environment. This bill appears to acknowledge that distinction by requiring institutions to accept these documents for disability verification purposes, while still permitting institutions to request supplemental information necessary to determine reasonable accommodations at the college level.

Could reduce duplicative evaluation costs and administrative burdens for some students. Students with disabilities transitioning from the K-12 system into higher education may encounter differing institutional documentation requirements when seeking accommodations. In some cases, students who previously received services pursuant to an IEP or Section 504 plan may nonetheless be asked to obtain updated medical or psychoeducational evaluations to verify a disability in the postsecondary setting.

This bill establishes greater consistency across California's public higher education systems by requiring institutions to recognize existing K-12 disability documentation as sufficient verification of a disability. To the extent students would otherwise be required to obtain additional evaluations solely for verification purposes, this bill could reduce both administrative burdens and out-of-pocket costs associated with securing accommodations.

At the same time, this bill preserves institutional authority to request supplemental information necessary to determine reasonable accommodations in the postsecondary environment, recognizing that accommodations appropriate in K-12 settings may not always translate directly to higher education coursework, instructional models, or campus environments.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 7/8/26)

California Association for Postsecondary Education and Disabilities
California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office
Southwestern Community College District

OPPOSITION: (Verified 7/8/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0, 5/11/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ramos, Ransom, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Gallagher, Lowenthal, Quirk-Silva, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Solache, Soria

Prepared by: Ian Johnson / ED. / (916) 651-4105
7/30/26 14:49:19

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