
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1769	Hearing Date:	July 1, 2026
Author:	Ramos		
Version:	May 18, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Student transfer: tribal colleges.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCC) that offer a baccalaureate degree, and requests the University of California (UC), to develop and implement transfer and articulation pathways for students attending California tribal colleges and universities (TCUs).

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

Federal

- 1) Defines “Indian tribal government” as the governing body of any tribe, band, community, or group of Indians, or (if applicable) Alaska Natives, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, to exercise governmental functions. (Title 26, United States Code § 7701 (a)(40))

State

- 1) Establishes the Donahoe Higher Education Act, setting forth the mission of the UC, the CSU, and the CCC; and defines “independent institutions of higher education” as nonpublic higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that are formed as nonprofit corporations in California and are accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. For purposes of any code or statute, a national or regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education as of January 1, 2025, shall retain that recognition until July 1, 2029, provided that the accrediting agency continues to operate in substantially the same manner as it did on January 1, 2025. (Education Code (EC) § 66010, et seq.)
- 2) Includes TCUs in the definition of “public institution of higher education.” (EC Section 94858.5(b))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CSU Trustees and the CCC Board of Governors, and requests the UC Regents, to develop and implement transfer agreements and articulation programs that include general education and transfer curricula to support and enhance the transfer of students attending TCUs to UC, CSU, and CCCs.
- 2) Requires that a transfer agreement and articulation program include all of the following:
 - a) Enrollment and resource planning.
 - b) Intersegmental faculty curricular efforts.
 - c) Coordinated counseling.
 - d) Financial aid and transfer services.
 - e) Specific efforts to improve diversity.
 - f) Early outreach activities.
 - g) Concurrent enrollment opportunities.
 - h) Support centers.
- 3) Requires the CSU Trustees, the CCC Board of Governors, and requests UC Regents to develop and implement, to the extent capacity is available, concurrent enrollment programs that allow students attending TCUs to enroll in courses offered at UC, CSU or CCC for purposes of expanding opportunities for students attending TCUs to potentially transfer to UC, CSU or CCC.
- 4) Requires the CSU and CCCs and requests UC in consultation with other involved entities as appropriate, assess tools, systems, or curricula designed to facilitate student transfer for purposes of building upon those that are most effective in communicating articulation for students attending TCUs that must include the California Articulation Number system, the Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum, the General Education Transfer Curriculum, and the Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer.
- 5) Defines "TCU" to mean tribal colleges and universities geographically located in California that are operated by an Indian tribal government, as defined in Section 7701(a)(40) of Title 26 of the United States Code. "TCU" includes, but is not limited to, California Indian Nations College, California Tribal College, and Kumeyaay Community College.
- 6) States Legislative findings and declarations related to the benefits of articulation agreements and effective transfer pathways.
- 7) States that it is the Legislature's intent to facilitate articulation and seamless transfer pathways for students attending TCUs to public postsecondary

educational institutions. The goal of developing and implementing transfer agreements and articulation programs is to ensure that students attending TCUs can earn certificates and degrees that allow them greater job-earning potential in the workforce, and to ensure the effective and efficient progression of students attending TCUs when they transfer to UC, CSU, or CCCs, in order to minimize duplication of coursework.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) offer culturally relevant education and serves to bridge the gap in postsecondary education for Native American students. When students who are enrolled at a TCU decide to transfer to one of California’s higher education institutions, they may be met with the challenge of ensuring courses they have taken are accepted at their new university. To ensure these students are not burdened by duplicative courses if they decide to transfer, we must work to establish transfer agreements. This would offer a helpful tool when it comes to transferring and aim to ensure effective and efficient progression for these students as they continue their pursuit in higher education.”
- 2) **Accreditation and transferability of coursework.** The bill requires the CSU and CCCs and requests the UC to develop transfer agreements, articulation programs, and concurrent enrollment opportunities for students attending TCUs. However, the bill does not establish any minimum standards regarding the accreditation status of participating TCUs. Of the three TCUs specifically identified in the bill, California Indian Nations College is institutionally accredited, while the remaining institutions are not currently accredited or pursuing accreditation. Given that transfer credit determinations and articulation agreements are generally informed by institutional accreditation and academic review processes, the absence of an accreditation standard may create uncertainty regarding the transferability of coursework and implementation of transfer goals. For this reason, **Committee staff recommends that the bill be amended to** clarify that nothing in the bill requires the UC, CSU, or CCC to articulate coursework completed at a TCU that is not institutionally accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.
- 3) **Development of transfer pathways.** According to the California Indian Nations College, students transferring from a TCU often do not know how their coursework will be applied toward degree requirements until after admission because formal articulation pathways generally do not exist. As a result, students may receive elective credit for completed coursework rather than credit that satisfies lower-division general education or major preparation requirements. This bill requires the CSU, CCCs, and requests the UC, in consultation with other involved entities as appropriate, to assess existing tools, systems, and curricula designed to facilitate student transfer. Given that articulation agreements are typically developed through faculty review and ongoing curriculum alignment between institutions, **Committee staff recommends that the bill be amended to** clarify that consultation includes faculty and other appropriate institutional representatives, as appropriate.

- 4) **Concurrent enrollment.** The bill also requires the public segments to develop concurrent enrollment opportunities for students attending TCUs to simultaneously enroll in courses offered by CSU, UC, and CCCs to the extent capacity is available. The extent to which concurrent enrollment programs are implemented would largely be left to the discretion of the participating institutions.
- 5) **Existing transfer systems.** Public higher education institutions currently have authority to evaluate coursework, establish articulation agreements, and develop transfer pathways with other institutions. The bill requires the CSU, CCCs, and requests the UC to assess existing transfer tools and systems, including the Cal-GETC, as part of developing transfer pathways for students attending TCUs. Ensuring eligible TCUs are able to not only participate in transfer pathways, but are integrated into the Cal-GETC (which is the singular general education pathway for CCC students to fulfill lower-division general education requirements necessary for transfer and admission to both the CSU and the UC), and Assist.org (the official course transfer and articulation system for California colleges and universities) could ease the transfer process for TCU students. While the bill identifies these existing resources, it does not specifically establish expectations for participation. For this reason, ***Committee staff recommends that the bill be amended to*** encourage participating institutions to identify opportunities to align coursework, where appropriate, with Cal-GETC and lower-division major preparation requirements to further the bill's goal of creating seamless transfer pathways for students attending TCUs.
- 6) **Related legislation.**
- AB 1641 (Jackson and Ramos, 2026) expands the definition of California's public higher education system to formally include TCUs located in California and operated by a federally recognized tribal government.

SUPPORT

California Indian Nations College (co-sponsor)
 Table Mountain Rancheria (co-sponsor)
 California Teachers Association
 Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake
 Morongo Band of Mission Indians
 NextGen California
 Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
 Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
 Yurok Tribe

OPPOSITION

None received

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