

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2374 (Fong)

As Amended April 13, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Establishes criteria and procedures for a postsecondary education institution in California to receive a designation as a "California Asian American – and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander – Serving Institution" (AANHPI designation).

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires the governing board to assign the AANHPI designation to a qualifying applicant, if 2/3 of the board approves for the applicant to receive the AANHPI designation. If approved by the governing board, the initial AANHPI designation is valid for five years; at which point, a recipient of the AANHPI designation may seek a renewal of the AANHPI designation. A renewal of the AANHPI designation, as approved by the board, will be valid for five years.
- 2) Establishes an array of protocols and application requirements an applicant of the AANHPI designation to complete in order to be eligible for the initial and renewal of the AANHPI designation.
- 3) Encourages an applicant to consult with the academic senates of the college or university in the compilation of the application (either initial or renewal) for the AANHPI designation.
- 4) Designates a managing entity to act as the neutral administrative body of the AANHPI designation. Authorizes the managing entity to conduct the following duties:
 - a) Develop the application process for the initial and renewal of the AANHPI designation;
 - b) Accept initial and renewal applications from colleges and universities. There will be two application deadlines each year as determined by the managing entity;
 - c) Process each application received and present those applications to the governing board twice a year on dates determined by the governing board;
 - d) Inform applicants of the outcome of the application and the governing board's decision to either confer or deny the AANHPI designation to the applicant; and,
 - e) Prepare and deliver to an approved applicant, the appropriate AANHPI designation insignia.
- 5) Establishes a governing board to oversee the approval or denial process of the AANHPI designation. The governing board will include in its membership the following:
 - a) The Lieutenant Governor, or their designee;
 - b) One member of the public appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, who will serve a two year term;

- c) One member of the public appointed by the President of the Pro Tempore of the Seante who will serve a two year term;
 - d) The designee of the President of the UC;
 - e) The designee of the Chancellor of the CSU;
 - f) The designee of the Chancellor of the CCC;
 - g) The designee of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities; and,
 - h) The chair of the California Asian American and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus or their designee.
- 6) Clarifies any designee identified or assigned to the governing will have the full authority of the board member they are representing.
- 7) States it is the intent of the Legislature for any member of the public as appointed to the governing board will have a strong interest in the further development and improvement of the academic success of AANHPI students.
- 8) Designates the Lieutenant Governor or the Lieutenant Governor's designee as the Chair of the governing board for the first two years of operations. Requires the governing board, after two years, to select a subsequent Chair of the governing board with a 2/3 vote.
- 9) Requires the governing board to do the following:
- a) Convene twice a year to approve or deny applications for the AANHPI designation; and,
 - b) Approve or deny each application as presented to the governing board by the managing entity.
- 10) Clarifies all decisions of the governing board require a 2/3 votes of the members who are present for the vote.
- 11) Subjects the governing board to the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act.

COMMENTS

Asian American – and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students at public higher education institutions. Of the 2.2 million students enrolled at a community college in the 2024-2025 academic year, 248,686 identified as Asian and 7,979 identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. In 2025, the California State University (CSU) enrolled 471,451 students, of whom 71,413 identified as Asian and 1,333 identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The University of California (UC) enrolled 237,616 students in fall 2025 with 131,933 identifying as Asian and 2,454 identifying as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Other than the UC, AANHPI students comprise a minority of the overall student population on California higher education campuses. Providing for a safe and inclusive environment is paramount, when 1 in 10 Asian American adults in Californians experienced a hate crime in a

single year. This measure seeks to accomplish this by providing a California AANHPI designation to help students make informed decisions regarding colleges and universities who are actively providing academic and basic needs support to assist in the academic success of all of their students.

The provision of the measure asks institutions who are seeking the AANHPI designation to provide a strategic plan for how they will provide targeted support opportunities for AANHPI students to improve graduation and retention rates. In 2022, due to advocacy efforts by the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs, the State provided \$16 million in ongoing funding to the CSU and the CCC to establish the AANHPI student achievement program. The purpose of the funds was to be used to "provide culturally responsive services to enhance student educational experiences and promote higher education success for low-income, underserved, and first generation AANHPI students and other underrepresented students." The Chancellor's Office of the CCC provided \$100,000 to 51 eligible colleges and the CSU provided funds to all 23 CSU campuses to provide students with the following services: culturally responsive learning communities, advising and counseling services, mental health counseling, career development, supplemental instruction/tutoring, AANHPI ethnic studies courses and curriculum development, and internship/mentorship opportunities.

The measure expands upon the work completed by the Legislature to provide additional services to AANHPI students. The measure requires applicants for the designation to develop a strategic plan to provide similar services to those currently being provided at the CCC and CSU through the AANHPI student achievement program.

Who is the managing entity? The measure requires a managing entity to oversee and facilitate the application process for the purpose of awarding postsecondary education institutions in California an AANHPI designation. However, the measure does not designate a managing entity. It is the understanding of the Committee staff that the author is asking for more time to determine who would be the best entity to oversee the administrative process of the California AANHPI designation.

For the designation for California Black-Serving Institutions (BSI designation), the CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success oversees the administrative process for the BSI designation. SB 1255 (Reyes) of 2026 has identified the CSU Chancellor's Office to oversee the designation for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI designation). Some options the author's office may wish to consider for the managing entity include:

- 1) The CSU AANHPI Student Achievement Program Central Office;
- 2) UC, Los Angeles (UCLA) Asian American Studies Center;
- 3) UC Berkeley Institute for the Study of Societal Issues – Asian American Research Center;
and,
- 4) California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs.

Each of these entities have demonstrated the administrative ability to process the application requirements and would be able to assist the governing board in complying with the requirements of the Bagley – Keene Act.

Please see the policy committee analysis for a full discussion of the bill.

According to the Author

As denoted by the author, "California's Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students come from diverse backgrounds and income levels. AB 2374 establishes a state level designation to recognize public and private higher education institutions that show commitment toward supporting AANHPI students in increasing retention and graduation rates. With the increase in anti-Asian hate sentiments and attack on immigrant communities, the designation will help AANHPI students make important enrollment decisions at institutions where they know they will be welcomed and supported in a cultural context."

Arguments in Support

As the sponsors of the measure, the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs (Commission) states "California's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students comprise diverse populations whose educational experiences and outcomes are often obscured by aggregated data and persistent stereotypes, masking documented equity gaps among specific subpopulations. Despite this, a statewide designation that honors organizations that serve this population does not yet exist. AB 2374 fills this need by providing a transparent and fair application process for designation and demonstrating long-term commitment via strategic planning and accountability."

The Commission further states, "A statewide designation process for AANAPHI serving institutions will encourage institutional accountability, strategic planning, and targeted support structures aligned with statewide equity and student success goals. In addition to creating conditions where AANHPI students may flourish both academically and personally, it pushes schools to improve their student support programs. This designation is a testament to California's leadership in promoting educational fairness and advancing disadvantaged communities. We also acknowledge your leadership and dedication to the advancement of the entire AANHPI community, paving the road to our continued success. AB 2374 will benefit students, families, and institutions throughout the state in a significant and long-lasting way."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations:

Minor and absorbable costs to the California State University (CSU), University of California (UC), and California Community Colleges (CCC), to participate in the designation of California Asian American- and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions.

The bill does not name a managing entity but to the extent that future legislation names the UC, CSU, or CCC Chancellor's Office as the managing entity, the bill would result in General Fund cost pressures likely in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars to support that administrative workload.

VOTES

ASM HIGHER EDUCATION: 7-3-0

YES: Fong, Boerner, Jackson, Muratsuchi, Patel, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

NO: DeMaio, Macedo, Tangipa

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-4-0

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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