



The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges

PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
DATE: November 17-18, 2014

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| SUBJECT: Accreditation Regulation (PUBLIC HEARING) | | Item Number: 3.2 | |
| | | Attachment: Yes | |
| CATEGORY: | Minimum Condition | TYPE OF BOARD CONSIDERATION: | |
| Recommended By: |  Brice W. Harris, Chancellor | Consent/Routine | |
| | | First Reading | X |
| Approved for Consideration: |  Brice W. Harris, Chancellor | Action | |
| | | Information | |

ISSUE: A change is proposed to section 51016, of title 5, of the California Code of Regulations, requiring community colleges to be accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) as a condition of the receipt of state aid.

BACKGROUND: Current regulations require that all community colleges be accredited by the ACCJC as a condition of receipt of state aid. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 51016.) On June 26, 2014, the California State Auditor issued an audit report entitled *California Community Colleges Accreditation: Colleges Are Treated Inconsistently and Opportunities Exist for Improvement in the Accreditation Process*. The audit report provided both a review of the ACCJC and the accreditation process in general, as well as a more-in-depth examination of recent events related to the City College of San Francisco. One of the recommendations of the state auditor was to “remove language from its regulations naming the commission as the sole accreditor of California community colleges while maintaining the requirement that community colleges be accredited.” (California State Auditor Report 2013-123, p. 49.)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Proposed amendments to the regulation are presented to the Board of Governors for a first reading. The Board of Governors must hold a public hearing for receipt of comments, both written and oral, which are offered concerning the proposed action. It is anticipated that the proposed amendments to the regulation will be presented to the Board for adoption at its January 20-21, 2015, meeting.

ANALYSIS: As a condition of the receipt of federal funding postsecondary institutions must be accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Secretary of Education as a reliable authority regarding the quality of education offered by the institutions it accredits. (34 CFR, § 602.1(a).) Currently the Secretary of Education recognizes only the ACCJC as an accreditor for California’s community colleges. Additionally, since 1983, California community colleges have been required to be accredited by the ACCJC as a minimum condition for the receipt of state aid. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 51016.)

Proposed amendments to section 51016, of title 5, of the California Code of Regulations would permit the Board of Governors, at the recommendation of the Chancellor, to specify a different accrediting agency that would be responsible for accrediting California’s community colleges as a minimum condition for the receipt of state aid. The Chancellor could only recommend an accrediting agency whose scope of recognition by the Secretary of Education includes California’s community colleges. In the event an accrediting agency other than ACCJC is specified by the Board of Governors for purposes of section 51016, it is anticipated that there would be a migration period in which more than one accrediting agency would be responsible for accrediting California’s community colleges. Other than during the migration period, the proposed changes would permit California’s community colleges to be accredited by only a single accrediting agency.

The proposed regulatory change is included as Attachment 1.