

Department of Planning and Budget

2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB631

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Dunnavant

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: Virginia Community College System.

5. Summary: Makes several changes to the Virginia Community College System to ensure a standard quality of education at all comprehensive community colleges, and to ensure in the transfer of community college credit to four-year public institutions of higher education in order to provide higher education as efficiently and cost effective as possible. The bill requires the development of a standard Passport Program and a Uniform Certificate of General Studies program to be offered at each community college. Initially, the Passport Program course offerings would be accepted as credit at a four-year institution, unless a four-year institution had applied for and received a waiver from accepting a particular course for a particular major, with a goal of making all courses in the Uniform Certificate transferrable. Four-year institutions, in cooperation with the Community College System, would be required to map out career education pathways to allow students to see the classes necessary to complete a four-year degree in a particular field of study. The Virginia Community College System would be required to create a single online repository where the public may access all transfer agreements and dual enrollment agreements with four-year institutions. Finally, the State Board for Community Colleges is required to implement an annual review for each community college, and to standardize the course offerings across the community college system.

The bill adds the Virginia Community College System to the Virginia Online Network, and requires that all Passport Program courses be made available through the Network. A community college would be required to indicate whether dual enrollment courses offered at local school division would be eligible for transfer. The Community College system would also be required to maintain a database of all dual enrollment course offered across the Commonwealth.

The bill contains enactment clauses that mandate that the State Board for Community Colleges develop an initial plan for standardization to be presented no later than September 1, 2018, and that Richard Bland College also offer a Uniform Certificate of General Studies and Passport Program.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes. Item 210.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary. See Item 8.

- 8. Fiscal Implications:** This bill would require the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to establish and maintain a public repository of all dual enrollment course offerings, transfer agreements, and course-equivalency tools. The VCCS will require funds for creation and maintenance of the database, as well as for related software licensing fees. Total cost to the VCCS would be an estimated \$600,000 annually.

The VCCS would be responsible for coordinating with the Department of Education, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), and four-year institutions to ensure standardization of quality of dual enrollment and community college courses, but can do so with existing resources. The bill also would require Richard Bland College to ensure its course offerings are in line with the Passport Program and Uniform Certificate as developed by SCHEV, which will require dedication of resources and staff time.

Additionally, the bill would place an administrative burden on SCHEV, as they would be responsible for developing guidelines for career education pathways, consulting with four-year institutions to develop pathway maps in accordance with those guidelines, and granting waivers from specific transfer credits to four-year schools. Finally, SCHEV is responsible for a new annual report on success of transfer pathways. SCHEV can absorb administrative costs with existing resources.

- 9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Virginia Community College System, Department of Education, all four-year institutions of higher education, Richard Bland College, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: Companion bill to HB 919.