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Master Plan for Education Signed, Praised By Brown

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EXAMINER BUREAU, SACRAMENTO, April 26.---Governor Edmund G. Brown today signed into law a "master plan" which he said will put California ahead of all other states in "giving direction and purpose to higher education."

"This is the most significant step California has ever taken in planning for the education of our youth," Brown declared.

The bill, by Senator George Miller, Jr., of Martinez, is a statutory substitute for a constitutional amendment proposed to the Legislature by a statewide "liaison committee" and its working task force.

Enrollment Rising

The program was devised as a partial answer to the problems to be met during an expected rise in California college and university enrollments from 276,000 to 536,000 within the next 10 years.

Brown pointed out this will necessitate doubling the University of California's present facilities and nearly tripling existing state college facilities, with a huge expansion of the junior college system.

The Legislature declined to cement all the recommendations of the liaison committee into the constitution and elected instead to write the major provisions into statutory law, where it will be more flexible and subject to legislative adjustment if any bugs develop during the trial run.

The program is aimed at specifically defining the academic and research jurisdictions of the University of California, the State-junior-colleges and to end long standing competition between the university and State colleges for frequently overlapping geographical campuses and academic prestige.

CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL

A 15 member "Co-ordinating Council" made up of three representatives each of the university, State colleges, independent colleges, junior colleges and the public at large will be empowered to make policy recommendations to the Legislature. The Legislature, in effect, pledged itself not to authorize any new State colleges or university branches without a recommendation from the Co-ordinating Council.

A new State College Board of Trustees, composed of 16 appointive members and five other State officials, will take over policy and management functions of the State Board of Education and, moving further ahead, will have full power and responsibility in the construction of any State college campus, and any buildings or other facilities or improvements connected with the State college system.

The Governor and the bill's author were frankly skeptical of this provision because it could mean letting of millions of dollars of work now performed by the State Division of Architecture to private architects and result in costly duplication and over lapping of governmental services.

The appointive College Board members will serve four-year terms, with the first appointees staggered at levels below four years, and these will be extended to eight years if the voters approve a constitutional amendment on the November election ballot.

The 10 Board of Education members in office when the law takes effect automatically will become members of the new college board. The present State Board of Education will continue its present policymaking jurisdiction over junior colleges, which essentially are locally controlled schools.

The new law becomes fully effective on July 1, 1961, giving the Legislature time to iron out any differences in the present law at its regular session convening next January.