
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 2063
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Version: April 13, 2016
Urgency: No
Consultant: Lynn Lorber
Hearing Date: June 8, 2016
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Work-based learning opportunities: work experience education and job shadowing

SUMMARY

This bill establishes an additional option by which a student who is at least 14 years old may participate in work experience education, and increases the time a student may participate in job shadowing from 25 to 40 hours per semester if certain conditions are met.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Provides for various career technical education programs for the purpose of integrating academic and vocational education and motivating students to stay in school and graduate with the skills necessary to advance into postsecondary education, advanced workforce training, or the workforce. (Education Code § 54690, et seq. and § 52300, et seq.)
- 2) Authorizes the governing board of school districts maintaining a high school to establish work-based learning or work experience education programs for the purpose of providing students with instruction in skills, attitudes, and understandings necessary for employment success, including providing guidance and supervision, arranging credit for work experience education courses, and authorizing the district to purchase liability insurance for students enrolled in programs of study involving work experience or vocational education at locations off school grounds. (EC § 51760)
- 3) Requires the governing board of any school district offering work experience education to grant credit to students satisfactorily completing a work experience education program, in an amount not to exceed a total of 40 semester credits, of which no more than 10 credits may be conferred in any one semester, provided the student meets all of the following requirements:
 - a) At the time of enrollment, the student is at least 16 years of age.

- b) During the course of the student's enrollment, the student receives as a minimum the equivalent of one instructional period per week of classroom instruction or counseling by a certificated employee.
 - c) The work experience education program meets all of the requirements of law governing these programs. (EC § 51760.3)
- 4) Authorizes students *under the age of 16 years* to receive credit for work experience education under the following conditions:
- a) The student is in grade 11 or higher.
 - b) The principal of the school certifies that the student is in need of immediate work experience in order to pursue employment opportunities.
 - c) The principal of the school certifies that there is a probability that the student will no longer be enrolled as a full-time student without being provided the opportunity to enroll in a work experience education program.
 - d) The student's individualized education program prescribes the type of training for which participation in work experience education is deemed appropriate. (EC § 51760.3)
- 5) Provides that the school district, county superintendent of schools, or any school administered by the California Department of Education, under whose supervision work experience education, cooperative vocational education, community classrooms, a job shadowing experience, or student apprenticeship programs, to be considered the employer of students receiving this training unless the student is being paid a cash wage or salary by a private employer (except in the case of registered student apprentices, as specified). (EC § 51769)
- 6) Defines a "job shadowing experience" as a visit to a workplace for the purpose of career exploration for no less than three hours and no more than 25 hours in one semester, intersession, or summer school session. (EC § 51769)

Existing regulations require work experience education to consist of one or more of the following paid and unpaid types of on-the-job experiences which the school district may offer through a formal training agreement with each employer: career technical work experience education, general work experience education, and exploratory work experience education. (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, § 10071)

ANALYSIS

This bill establishes an additional option by which a student who is at least 14 years old may participate in work experience education, and increases the time a student may participate in job shadowing from 25 to 40 hours per semester, as specified. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Authorizes a student to receive credit for work experience education if the student is at least 14 years of age and the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled certifies that it is necessary for the student's participation in a career technical education program.
- 2) Notwithstanding the existing cap of 25 hours per semester for participation in job shadowing to authorize a student to participate in a job shadowing experience for up to 40 hours in one semester, intersession, or summer school session if the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled certifies that it is necessary for the student's participation in a career technical education program.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Work experience education programs teach valuable life skills like financial literacy, business operations, and time management. Moreover, these programs help students choose a career path based on their skills and interests. Expanding access to these programs will help California close the predicted 1.5 million worker gap and could also help lower dropout rates. Exposing students to career technical education at a younger age is crucial."
- 2) ***Work experience education.*** According to the California Department of Education's website, work experience education is a course of study that may be established by a governing board of any local educational agency to provide paid or unpaid on-the-job experiences for high school students through training agreements with employers. Work experience education programs combine an on-the-job component with related classroom instruction designed to maximize the value of the on-the-job experiences. Local educational agencies may offer any one or more of the following types of work experience education programs:
 - a) **Exploratory Work Experience Education:** The goal of this program is to provide career guidance and ascertain their interests and aptitudes for specific careers through opportunities to observe and sample a variety of conditions of work. Exploratory work experience education includes a combination of job observations and related classroom instruction in work experience education. Students enrolled in this program may be as young as 12 years of age.
 - b) **General Work Experience Education:** The purpose of this program is to provide students with opportunities for applying the basic skills of reading, writing, and computation through a combination of supervised paid employment in any occupational field and related classroom instruction.
 - c) **Career Technical Work Experience Education:** The purpose of this program is to reinforce and extend vocational learning opportunities for students through a combination of related classroom instruction and supervised paid employment in the occupation for which their career technical course prepares the student.

- 3) ***Age of students participating in work experience education.*** Existing law authorizes students under the age of 16 years to receive credit for work experience education if:
- a) The student is enrolled in grade 11 or higher.
 - b) The school principal certifies that the student needs to participate to pursue employment or that the student would otherwise not be enrolled in school full-time.
 - c) The student's individualized education program specifies that type of training.

This bill establishes an additional option for participation by a student who is at least 14 years old if the school principal certifies that it is necessary for the student's participation in a career technical education program. This option recognizes the modern nature of work experience by referencing career technical education.

- 4) ***Fiscal impact.*** According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee analysis, this bill would have no significant state fiscal impacts, as expansion of work experience education to 14 year olds is permissive.

SUPPORT

California School Boards Association
Kern County Superintendent of Schools
Los Angeles County Office of Education

OPPOSITION

None received.

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