
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

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Subject: Teachers: California Teacher Corps Act of 2016: teacher residency programs

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the California Teacher Corps program that would provide matching grants to local school districts to create or expand teacher residency programs in which the funds can be used to pay for master teacher stipends, stipends and tuition for residents, and costs of mentoring and induction.

BACKGROUND

The 2013-14 Budget Act implemented the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and permanently consolidated the vast majority of categorical programs, including the Beginner Teacher Support and Assessment Program (an induction program of mentorship and support for new teachers) and the Professional Development Block Grant (which supported professional development activities such as teacher recruitment and retention incentives) into a single source of funding along with revenue limit apportionments. The statutory and programmatic requirements for almost all of these categorical programs were also eliminated, leaving any related activities left to local districts' discretion. While school districts may choose to undertake these activities with their LCFF entitlements, the state has provided funding specifically for teacher support activities. For example, as part of the 2015-16 Budget Act, the state provided \$490 million in one-time Proposition 98 funds for the educator effectiveness block grant, which school districts can use for a variety of teacher-related purposes, such as professional development and beginning teacher support and mentoring.

Existing law authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to issue intern credentials as an alternate route to earning a teaching credential. This credential is valid for a period of two years and authorizes the holder to teach in a self-contained classroom while completing their teacher preparation course work. Approved intern programs are sponsored by colleges, universities, school districts, or county offices of education. To qualify, an individual must possess a bachelor's degree, satisfy the basic skills requirements, meet subject matter competence, and obtain character and identification clearance. University intern programs are cooperative teaching, counseling, school psychology, and administrative programs between a university and an employing school district that are administered by the university. District intern programs are for teachers only and are administered by employing school districts

whose programs may or may not involve university course work. Completion of an intern program results in the issuance of a preliminary or clear credential. (Education Code § 44325, et seq.)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the California Teacher Corps Act of 2016.
- 2) Makes various findings and declarations, as specified, including:
 - a) The shortage of qualified teachers in California is reaching critical levels in a number of teaching areas.
 - b) Education experts agree that shortages of effective teachers in high-poverty schools and in specific teaching fields create a need for high-quality teachers who will enter, stay in, and be effective in, these areas.
 - c) At least 30 percent of new teachers leave the profession in the first five years, and the proportions are generally higher in low-income communities.
- 3) Makes the following definitions:
 - a) Experienced mentor teacher: teacher who meets specified requirements, including at least three years' teaching experience and a clear teaching credential in the field in which he or she will be mentoring, has taught in a high-need school, receives specific training for the mentor teacher role, and engages in ongoing professional learning and networking with other mentors.
 - b) High-need local educational agency (LEA): an LEA that is determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to be among the highest 40 percent of LEAs in the state in terms of the percentage of unduplicated pupils, as specified.
 - c) High-need consortium of LEAs: two or more LEAs, at least 50 percent of which are high-need LEAs.
 - d) LEA: a school district, county office of education, charter school, or charter management organization.
 - e) Teacher residency program: a school-based teacher preparation program that is accredited by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and in which a prospective teacher does all of the following:
 - i) Teaches at least one-half time alongside a teacher of record, who is designated as the mentor teacher, for at least one full academic year while engaging in initial preparation coursework.

- ii) Receives instruction in specified areas, including the teaching of the content area in which the teacher will become certified to teach and the management of the classroom environment.
 - iii) Receives tuition assistance that eliminates training costs and provides a living stipend.
 - iv) Attains a preliminary teaching credential upon completion of the program.
 - v) Receives mentoring and induction support following the completion of the initial credential program necessary to obtain a clear credential and ongoing professional development and networking opportunities during his or her first years of teaching.
 - vi) Has the option of completing a master's degree before completion of the program.
- 4) Provides that a teacher residency program does all of the following:
- a) Seeks out academically able individuals who expand the racial, ethnic, gender, and linguistic diversity of the teaching force and meet hiring needs of the local educational agency (LEA) for teachers in difficult-to-fill content areas and hard-to-staff schools. Admissions priorities are developed in concert with the hiring objectives of the LEA, which commits to hire graduates from the teacher residency program who obtain a preliminary teaching credential, pass the program's Teacher Performance Assessment if that is a condition for receiving a license, and meet the standards set for hiring.
 - b) Allows residents to learn to teach in the same LEA, in which they will work, learning the instructional initiatives and curriculum of the LEA.
 - c) Groups teacher candidates in cohorts to facilitate professional collaboration among residents, and places them in teaching schools or professional development programs that are organized to support a high-quality teacher learning experience in a supportive work environment.
 - d) Assigns a high priority to the recruiting of mid-career professionals, military veterans, and recent college graduates as prospective participants in the teacher residency program.
 - e) Builds coursework for residents and mentors around the classroom experience in ways that are aligned to pupil needs.
 - f) Offers structured feedback and coaching systems organized around the California Standards for the Teaching Profession to ensure that participants engage in a meaningful classroom teaching experience.

- g) Ensures that candidates are prepared to pass a teacher performance assessment if that is required by the state as a condition of the initial license.
 - h) Maintains a program evaluation system that focuses on continual improvement for residents, mentors, teacher education faculty, and the teacher residency program itself.
 - i) Is developed collaboratively with teacher representatives with the LEA.
- 5) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction, from funds made available for purposes of this chapter, to make grants to high-need LEAs or high-need consortium of LEAs to assist those agencies to establish and maintain teacher residency programs. Provides that these LEAs shall work with one or more teacher preparation institutions, and may work with other community partners or nonprofit organizations to develop and implement teacher residency programs of preparation and mentoring for prospective teachers who will be supported through teacher residency program funds and subsequently employed by the sponsoring LEA.
- 6) Requires that to be eligible to participate in a teacher residency program, a prospective participant must become enrolled simultaneously in a teacher credentialing program in a university or college or other eligible institution that satisfies either of the following conditions:
- a) It has entered into a written agreement relating to that program with the high-need local educational agency (LEA) or high-need consortium of LEAs that is the recipient of a grant under this chapter.
 - b) It has been determined to meet professional preparation requirements, as specified, by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- 7) Requires a participant in a teacher residency program, under the supervision of an experienced mentor teacher, to complete not fewer than nine months of teaching a class or set of classes in a school chosen by the high-need LEA that is the recipient of a grant.
- 8) Requires a participant to agree in writing to be placed, after successfully completing the initial year of preparation, as a teacher of record in a school within the high-need LEA.
- 9) Requires the placement to be for a period of at least four school years, as specified. Provides that once a participant is licensed, he or she shall be eligible to be hired as a teacher in a high-need, underserved area or in a high-need subject area.
- 10) Provides that a participant who fails to complete the period of placement, or the first four school years of the placement if the period is more than four school years, is required to pay back the cost of the training on a pro rata basis, relative to the amount of time served in proportion to the total pledged.

- 11) Provides that if a participant is unable to complete an academic year of teaching, that academic year may still be counted toward the required four complete and consecutive academic years if any specified conditions occur, including whether the participant has completed at least one-half of the academic year or the employer deems the participant to have fulfilled his or her contract requirements for the academic year for the purposes of salary increases, tenure, and retirement.
- 12) Provides that the grants provided shall be for a period of no less than three school years, and may be in an annual amount of up to thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) per resident of the jurisdiction of the LEA, as matched by that LEA, or a total of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) over three school years, as matched by that LEA, whichever is less.
- 13) Provides that these funds may be applied to expenditures for master teachers' stipends, stipends and tuition for residents, teacher residency program management, and costs of mentoring and induction following initial preparation.
- 14) Provides that the Superintendent of Public Instruction may make an unspecified number of grants each fiscal year, commencing with the 2017-18 fiscal year.
- 15) Prohibits a high-need local educational agency (LEA) or consortium of LEAs from receiving more than one grant in any fiscal year.
- 16) Requires a high-need LEA or consortium of LEAs to submit an application at a time, in a manner, and containing information prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI).
- 17) Requires the SPI to award grants on a competitive basis.
- 18) Requires the SPI to reserve up to three percent of the funds appropriated for an evaluation of the program to determine its effectiveness in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers in high-need teaching fields and high-need schools.
- 19) Requires grant recipients to provide matching funds in an amount equal to fifty percent of the funds provided to the LEA which may be provided by community partners, institutions of higher education, or others.
- 20) Provides that this program shall not be implemented unless funding for its purposes is provided in the annual budget or another statute.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author's office, "California is ranked last in student-to-teacher ratios of the 50 states in the country. The state would need 100,000 additional teachers just to increase that ratio to the national average. At the same time, several other factors have exacerbated the teacher shortage, including the retirement of a large number of teachers, a decade of teacher

layoffs, and a decline in enrollment for teacher credentialing programs. This decimated teaching pool has created a teacher shortage that threatens to leave our classrooms empty.”

Additionally, the author’s office notes that “research indicates underprepared teachers are more likely to leave the profession in the first five years, experiencing frustration and a lack of job satisfaction. Studies show teachers in residency programs are 50 percent more likely to stay in the profession. Teacher training and mentorship is particularly crucial to meeting the needs of a student population that is increasingly diverse ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically.”

SB 933 is part of a legislative package along with SB 915 (Liu) and SB 62 (Pavley) to help address the looming teacher shortage. Specifically, SB 933 is intended to address the demand for trained and credentialed teachers by providing local school districts funds to recruit, train, mentor, and retain teachers through residency programs. The author believes this will also help ensure that a new generation of teachers will be trained for success and establish a pipeline for those teachers to serve in high need districts where the teacher shortage is most severe.

- 2) **Teacher shortage.** The Learning Policy Institute (LPI) recently released a report, “Addressing California’s Emerging Teacher Shortage: An Analysis of Sources and Solutions.” In this report, the LPI included the following summary: “After many years of teacher layoffs in California, school districts around the state are hiring again. With the influx of new K-12 funding, districts are looking to lower student-teacher ratios and reinstate classes and programs that were reduced or eliminated during the Great Recession. However, mounting evidence indicates that teacher supply has not kept pace with the increased demand.” The report included the following findings:
 - a) Enrollment in educator preparation programs has dropped by more than 70 percent over the last decade.
 - b) In 2014-15, provisional and short-term permits nearly tripled from the number issued two years earlier, growing from about 850 to more than 2,400.
 - c) The number teachers hired on substandard permits and credentials nearly doubled in the last two years, to more than 7,700 comprising a third of all the new credentials issued in 2014-15.
 - d) Estimated teacher hires for the 2015-16 school year increased by 25 percent from the previous year while enrollment in the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) teacher education programs increased by only about 3.8 percent.
- 3) **Learning Policy Institute (LPI) recommendations.** The LPI report offered several policy recommendations for consideration. These recommendations include the establishment of incentives to attract diverse, talented individuals to

teach in high-need locations and fields. This can be accomplished through programs that provide funding for candidates who prepare and teach in such schools and subject areas, e.g. the Assumption Program of Loans for Education, which is the focus of SB 62 (Pavley). The report also recommends the creation of more innovative pipelines into teaching, such as high school career pathways or teacher preparation models that encourage and support young people and others to go into teaching in their own communities. Additionally, the report indicates that programs which allow novice teachers to teach in classrooms under the direction of a mentor teacher are linked to successful teachers who stay in the profession.

The LPI notes several findings regarding the teacher residency model and the long-term benefits for school districts and the students they serve. Specifically, “initial research suggests that residencies bring greater gender and racial diversity in the teaching workforce” and that “rigorous studies of teacher residency programs have found significantly higher retention rates for graduates of these programs.”

- 4) **Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) assessment.** As part of its Proposition 98 Education Analysis for the 2016-17 Governor’s Budget released in February 2016, the LAO includes a section on teacher workforce trends in which it examines evidence for teacher shortages in specific areas, identifies and assesses past policy responses to these shortages, and raises issues for the Legislature to consider going forward in terms of new policy responses. In the report, the LAO indicates that the statewide teacher market will help alleviate existing shortages over time and that the shortages may decrease without direct state action. However, the LAO notes there are perennial staffing difficulties in specific areas, such as special education, math, and science, for which they encourage the Legislature to address with narrowly tailored policies rather than with broad statewide policies. At the same time, the report indicates that “teacher induction programs have repeatedly been shown to significantly increase the retention of new teachers.”
- 5) **Differences between teacher residencies and internships.** Teacher intern credentials authorize the credential holder to be the teacher of record in a classroom while completing and paying for his or her teacher preparation course work. To qualify, an individual must possess a bachelor’s degree, satisfy the basic skills requirements, meet subject matter competence, and obtain character and identification clearance. Completion of an intern program results in the issuance of a preliminary or clear credential.

While teacher residency programs have many similarities, there are several noteworthy differences. Typically, there is up to a full-year of teaching alongside an expert mentor teacher rather than being the teacher of record. There is also added financial incentive for candidates under teacher residency programs. This bill would allow the grants to be used for a resident’s tuition at his or her teacher preparation program, unlike the existing intern model whereby the teacher is responsible.

- 6) **Funding priority.** The bill currently requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in administering the teacher residency program, to award the grants on a competitive basis. However, it does not prescribe any priority criteria so it is unclear what the SPI would use in awarding the grants. To address this issue, at the request of the author, **staff recommends** an amendment to provide preference to applicants based upon the amount of federal Title II (Part A) funds received per pupil received by the applicant LEA. The author's office indicates that this amendment would prioritize schools with high needs, given the priority that Title II provides for those with high poverty but also addresses the size of a school. At the same time, it would allow all local educational agencies (LEAs) to apply for a grant and ensure a robust pool of applicants. Lastly, using this criteria could point to existing Title II funds as a basis for a matching grant.

As conforming amendments, at the request of the author, **staff also recommends** to amend the definition of "high-need LEA" by eliminating the 40 percent threshold for unduplicated pupils and also eliminate the requirement that a "high-need" consortium of LEAs consist of at least 50 percent of high-need LEAs.

- 7) **Related legislation.**

SB 62 (Pavley) makes various programmatic changes and issues additional warrants for the existing Assumption Program of Loans for Education. This bill is currently pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 915 (Liu) re-establishes the California Center on Teaching Careers (Cal Teach) for the purpose of recruiting qualified individuals into the teaching profession. This bill passed this Committee on March 9, 2016, and is currently pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

California Association of Suburban School Districts
 California Catholic Conference, Inc.
 Common Sense Kids Action
 EdVoice
 Future is Now
 Public Advocates
 StudentsFirst
 Students Matter
 Superintendent of Public Instruction

OPPOSITION

None received.

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