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California State Senate

EDUCATION



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AGENDA

Wednesday, April 9, 2025
9 a.m. -- 1021 O Street, Room 2100

MEASURES HEARD IN FILE ORDER

- | | | | |
|------|--------|------------|---|
| 1. | SB 249 | Umberg | County boards of education: elections: consolidation. |
| *2. | SB 373 | Grove | Special education: nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies. |
| *3. | SB 374 | Archuleta | Local educational agencies: annual reporting requirements: IDEA Addendum. |
| *4. | SB 478 | Ashby | School accountability: Statewide School Library Lead. |
| 5. | SB 761 | Ashby | CalFresh: student eligibility. |
| *6. | SB 568 | Niello | Pupil health: epinephrine delivery systems: public schools and programs. |
| 7. | SB 539 | Cabaldon | School facilities. |
| 8. | SB 744 | Cabaldon | Community colleges: credit for students with prior learning. |
| 9. | SB 685 | Cortese | California State University: financial aid for homeless students: pilot program. |
| 10. | SB 743 | Cortese | Education finance: Education Equalization Act: Equalization Reserve Account. |
| 11. | SB 835 | Ochoa Bogh | Pupil instruction: Cambridge International Education programs. |
| *12. | SB 619 | Education | Public postsecondary education. |
| 13. | SB 845 | Pérez | Pupil instruction: career technical education, career education, and apprenticeships. |

***Consent Items**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 249	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Umberg		
Version:	March 10, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: County boards of education: elections: consolidation.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Elections and Constitutional Amendments*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the Committee on *Elections and Constitutional Amendments*.

SUMMARY

This bill requires any election for the members of a county board of education to be consolidated with the statewide general election, beginning January 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

Timing of elections for county boards of education

- 1) Requires the regular election to select governing board members in any school district, community college district, or county board of education to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each odd-numbered year. (Elections Code (ELEC) § 1302)
- 2) Requires members of the county board of education to be elected on the date and in the manner prescribed for the election of members of governing boards of school districts (when all school districts within the county have their board elections on the same day, whether that is during the primary or the general election); otherwise, the election must be consolidated with the direct primary election. (Education Code (EC) § 1007)
- 3) Authorizes, after the initial election (held pursuant to # 1 above) of a county board of education school district governing board, or community college governing board, the election to be established to regularly occur on the same day as the statewide direct primary election, the statewide general election, or the general municipal election. The board must first adopt a resolution, which becomes operative upon approval by the board of supervisors. If a school district, community college district, or county board of education is located in more than one county, the district may not consolidate an election if any county in which the district is located denies the request for consolidation. (ELEC § 1302)

- 4) Requires the board of supervisors, within 60 days from the date of submission, to approve the resolution unless it finds that the ballot style, voting equipment, or computer capacity is such that additional elections or materials cannot be handled. Prior to the adoption of a resolution to either approve or deny a consolidation request, the board or boards of supervisors may obtain a report on the cost-effectiveness of the proposed action from the elections official. (ELEC § 10404.5)

Assuming office and staggering of terms

- 5) Requires members elected at the time of the direct primary to take office on the first day of July, and members elected at the date on which members of school district governing boards are elected to take office on the second Friday in December subsequent to their election. The county committee on school district organization shall determine the manner in which the county board of education first elected shall effect a staggering of terms. (EC § 1007)
- 6) Requires, in the event that the election day for a school district governing board or county board of education is established pursuant to # 3 above, the term of office of all then incumbent members of that governing board or county board of education to be extended accordingly. (ELEC § 10404.5)

Vacancies upon expiration of term in even-numbered years

- 7) Requires, in counties in which the election of members of county boards of education are required to be held on the same date as prescribed for the election of members of governing boards of school districts, the offices of members of the county board of education whose terms have been fixed to expire in even-numbered years to become vacant upon the expiration of those terms. The vacancies arising are to be filled by the majority of the remaining members of the board, and the appointees are to hold office only until the first day of July following the election of their successors. (EC § 1017)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

Timing of elections

- 1) Requires any election for the members of a county board of education to be consolidated with the statewide general election, beginning January 1, 2026.
- 2) Strikes existing provisions in existing law that reference elections for county boards of education during a primary election.
- 3) Strikes references in existing law that allow county boards of education to choose, by resolution, to move their elections from the primary to the general election (leaving intact the authority for the governing boards of school districts and community college districts to do so). This bill further strikes existing law relative to the process for county boards of education to seek approval by the

county board of supervisors to change the timing of their elections.

Assuming office

- 4) Strikes existing provisions in the Education Code that reference the assumption of office in July (subsequent to an election during the primary).

Term of office

- 5) Requires, beginning January 1, 2026, the term of office of all incumbent members of a county board of education to be extended accordingly, and the county committee on school district organization shall determine the manner in which the county board of education shall effect a staggering of terms, if necessary.
- 6) Strikes references in existing law to terms of office for situations in which elections were held during a primary election.

Vacancies in even-numbered years

- 7) Strikes references in existing law to vacancies on county boards of education upon the expiration of terms in even-numbered years, and how those vacancies are to be filled until the next election (due to # 5).

General provisions

- 8) Provides that elections held for county boards of education are to be conducted by the county board of education, except for elections for both county boards of education and school district governing boards, which are to be conducted by the county elections official.
- 9) Strikes references in existing law to the timing of organizational meetings of boards that occur after an election held during a primary election.
- 10) Strikes existing references to organizational meetings and terms relative to timelines for elections occurring in primary elections.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Currently, counties throughout California can make the final determination on the winner of a seat in a low voter turnout primary election rather than allowing voters in higher turnout general elections that occur in November to make that determination. Elections in November have higher turnout and are thus more representative of the desires of more voters. Moving plurality elections to the general election from the primary election will increase the ballots cast for candidates in those races and create a more representative and democratic process. Therefore, SB 249 will require any election for the elected members of a county board of education to be

consolidated with the statewide general election. This bill will also require the term of office of all incumbent elected members of a county board of education to be extended accordingly, and would require the county committee on school district organization to determine the manner in which the county board of education elected shall effect a staggering of terms, if necessary.”

- 2) ***Timing of elections for county boards of education.*** Existing law requires the regular election to select governing board members in any school district, community college district, or county board of education to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each odd-numbered year.

After the initial election, county boards of education are specifically authorized to pass a resolution to change their elections to coincide with the statewide primary election, the statewide general election, or the general municipal election. Within 60 days of submission, the board of supervisors must approve the resolution unless it determines that handling additional elections or materials would be challenging due to ballot style, voting equipment, or computer capacity.

Based on data collected by the California Elections Data Archive (CEDA), a collaborative project between California State University, Sacramento, and the Secretary of State (SOS), it was found that most county boards of education conduct their elections alongside the statewide general election. In the years between 2017 and 2020, county board of education elections were held in 45 counties. Of these 45 counties, 36 (80 percent) had their county board of education elections solely with the statewide general election. Five counties (11 percent) - Alameda, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and San Joaquin counties - held their county board of education elections with the statewide primary election.

To date, committee staff is unaware of any attempt by any of these five county boards of education to adopt such a resolution or request to consolidate its election into the statewide general election.

- 3) ***Implications of elections during a statewide primary election.*** According to voter participation statistics on SOS’s website, voter turnout in primary elections is historically lower than in general elections. For example, data shows the following:

- For the 2024 primary, turnout was 35 percent of registered voters.
- For the 2022 general, turnout was 51 percent of registered voters.
- For the 2022 primary, turnout was 33 percent of registered voters.
- For the 2020 general, turnout was 80 percent of registered voters.

As noted in comment # 2, most but not all elections for county boards of education are held during statewide general elections. All elections for county board of education that are held during the primary election are considered plurality elections, where the candidate with the most votes wins outright (there is

no subsequent runoff or top-two election held during the general election).

4) ***Prior legislation.***

SB 907 (Newman, 2024) would have increased the membership size of the Orange County Board of Education (OCBOE), and required an election for a member of the OCBOE to be consolidated with the statewide general election. SB 907 was vetoed by the Governor, whose veto message read:

I appreciate the author's intent to increase representation on the OCBOE. However, there are local processes for altering the number of members on a county board of education and changing when local elections are held. State circumvention of these local procedures, especially with respect to a single county board of education, should be avoided absent extraordinary circumstances. Unfortunately, I am not convinced those circumstances exist in the context of this legislation.

SB 286 (Min, 2021) would have required the election for seats on the OCBOE to be consolidated within the November statewide general election. SB 286 was held in Assembly Appropriations committee.

SB 1450 (Umberg, 2020) would have required an election for an office that is determined by the plurality of the votes cast for that office, with no possibility of a runoff, that is consolidated with a statewide election shall be consolidated with the statewide general election in November. SB 1450 was never heard due to the shortened legislative calendar in 2020.

SUPPORT

Asian Law Caucus
California Common Cause
California School Employees Association

OPPOSITION

Orange County Board of Education

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 373 **Hearing Date:** April 9, 2025
Author: Grove
Version: March 26, 2025
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: Special education: nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies.

SUMMARY

This bill expands student protections and oversight requirements for nonpublic, nonsectarian schools (NPSs) serving students with disabilities. Specifically, it expands procedural safeguards, strengthens certification and monitoring duties for the state and local educational agencies (LEAs), and adds safeguards related to pupil dignity, abuse prevention, behavioral interventions, and confidential communication.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires LEAs to identify, locate, and assess students with exceptional needs and to provide them with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. (Education Code (EC) § 56301)
- 2) Requires parents to be provided with a copy of their procedural safeguards annually and at specified milestones. (EC § 56301)
- 3) Permits LEAs to contract with NPSs for special education services if the school is certified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). (EC § 56366)
- 4) Requires the SPI to conduct an onsite review before initial certification of an NPS and annually thereafter. (EC § 56366.1)
- 5) Requires LEAs to conduct at least one onsite monitoring visit per year for each NPS they contract with. (EC § 56366.1)
- 6) Requires NPSs to ensure private and confidential communication between students and members of their individualized education plan (IEP) team. (EC § 56366.12)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires both parents and pupils to be given information on how to contact the California Department of Education (CDE) Equitable Services Ombudsman and receive a copy of procedural safeguards, upon request.

- 2) Requires SPI, before certifying an NPS, to:
 - a) Review restraint and isolation policies for compliance with state law.
 - b) Ensure students are informed of their rights and that ombudsman contact information is posted.
 - c) Evaluate the existence and functionality of a confidential grievance process.
 - d) Examine informed consent protocols for treatment or therapy.
 - e) Interview students about how they are treated by staff.
 - f) Assess whether positive behavioral supports are used instead of punitive discipline.
 - g) Review training and records for signs of abuse, including hospitalizations or injuries.
- 3) Expands LEA monitoring to require:
 - a) A private, in-person meeting with the pupil to evaluate health and safety.
 - b) Use of the CDE “Local Educational Agency Onsite Visit for Nonpublic School” form.
 - c) CDE to update this form by July 1, 2026, to include findings on dignity, behavioral supports, and abuse screening.
 - d) Quarterly unmonitored phone check-ins with each pupil attending the NPS.
- 4) Requires NPSs to notify CDE and the LEA within one business day of any pupil-involved incident involving law enforcement.
- 5) Authorizes unannounced SPI investigations where there is reason to believe a student is in immediate danger, requires findings to be reflected in certification status, and mandates record retention for 10 years.
- 6) Requires that students be allowed confidential telecommunication with their IEP team and the ombudsman.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California has long been a leader in safeguarding our children. Yet, many vulnerable students in out-of-state placements lack the protections they need. I am dedicated to ensuring that every

child in a special education program receives top-quality care and oversight. SB 373 will deliver the transparency and accountability our children deserve.”

- 2) ***What are NPSs?*** NPSs are privately operated schools that contract with LEAs to serve public school students with disabilities whose needs cannot be met in traditional settings. Students are placed by their IEP team, remain enrolled in public school, and their tuition is publicly funded. As of 2022–23, 202 in-state and 47 out-of-state NPSs served 6,163 students. NPSs primarily serve students with autism (40%) or emotional disturbance (31%). Placement is based on individual need and governed by state-certified master contracts. Though enrollment has declined in recent years, NPSs continue to serve students with the most intensive needs.
- 3) ***Strengthening Student-Centered Oversight and Building on Past Reforms.*** The Legislature has acted in recent years to strengthen oversight of NPSs, most notably through AB 1172 (Frazier, Chapter 454, Statutes of 2019), which responded to a student death in an NPS by requiring LEA monitoring visits, incident reporting, and administrative credentialing. This bill would build on that framework by embedding student voice and trauma-informed care more deeply into oversight processes. It requires in-person interviews during site visits, quarterly check-ins, review of abuse and neglect indicators, and improved access to grievance systems. These changes move the oversight system beyond basic compliance to one that is more responsive to student experiences.
- 4) ***What is the Equitable Services Ombudsman?*** Under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), each state must designate an Equitable Services Ombudsman to monitor and enforce provisions related to equitable services for students enrolled in private schools. In California, the Ombudsman is housed within the CDE and serves as a point of contact for private school families, educators, and LEAs regarding the implementation of equitable services. Although originally focused on Title I and Title VIII services, the Ombudsman is named in this bill to ensure that students in NPSs have an external, independent channel for confidential communication. This may offer students an additional layer of protection and a trusted resource outside of the school or LEA when concerns arise about their treatment, safety, or educational experience.

SUPPORT

11:11 Media Impact (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 374	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Archuleta		
Version:	March 20, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: Local educational agencies: annual reporting requirements: IDEA Addendum.

SUMMARY

This bill (1) extends by one year the sunset date on the requirement for the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide a report to the Superintendent, the Governor, and the Legislature on the number and types of reports that local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to annually submit; and, (2) eliminates the requirement that the State Board of Education (SBE) adopt an IDEA Addendum relating to improvements in services for individuals with exceptional needs.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

Report on reports

- 1) Requires CDE to provide a report, by March 1, 2025, to the Superintendent, the Governor, and the Legislature on the number and types of reports that LEAs are required to annually submit, and requires the report to include all of the following:
 - a) Information on each type of report, including if the report is required by a particular program.
 - b) The purpose of each report.
 - c) Recommendations for both of the following:
 - i) Which reports can be consolidated or eliminated to reduce the total number of reports LEAs are required to annually complete.
 - ii) Which reports can be truncated to shorten any reports LEAs are required to annually complete. (Education Code (EC) § 33318.2)
- 2) Requires CDE, in determining recommendations, to seek voluntary input from a diverse array of LEAs that vary in size, type, geographic location, and student and staff demographics. (EC § 33318.2)
- 3) Encourages the Assembly and Senate Education Committees, the Assembly Committee on Budget, the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, and any other relevant subcommittees to hold a hearing, within 30 days of receiving a

report from CDE, to allow for the Superintendent of Public Instruction to present the report. (EC § 33318.2)

- 4) States legislative intent that the information collected for reports will help alleviate future burdens and costs on LEAs. (EC § 33318.2)
- 5) Sunsets the requirement for CDE to report on reports on January 1, 2026. (EC § 33318.2)

IDEA Addendum

- 6) Requires the governing board of each school district to adopt a local control and accountability plan (LCAP) using a template adopted by the SBE, and requires adopted LCAPs to include, for the school district and each school within the school district, all of the information specified in the template adopted by the SBE. (EC § 52060)
- 7) Requires the SBE to adopt a template for a LCAP and an annual update to the LCAP, and requires the template to include specified information. (EC § 52064)
- 8) Requires the SBE to adopt, by January 31, 2027, an IDEA Addendum relating to improvements in services for individuals with exceptional needs, and requires CDE to develop a process to design the template for the IDEA Addendum that, at minimum, does all of the following:
 - a) Provides opportunities for input from educational partners.
 - b) Results in a template that meets the oversight and monitoring requirements of CDE and SBE under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
 - c) Facilitates all the requirements of # 10 (below), including, but not limited to, facilitating the ability to identify areas of the IDEA Addendum that are in alignment with the LCAP. (EC § 52064.3)
- 9) Requires LEAs, upon identification by CDE that an improvement plan is necessary pursuant to federal regulations, to complete the IDEA Addendum. (EC § 52064.3)
- 10) Requires each LEA that is required to develop an IDEA Addendum to do both of the following by July 1, 2027:
 - a) Develop the IDEA Addendum in conjunction with, and attached to, the LCAP and annual update to the LCAP, be adopted by the governing board of a school district, by a county board of education, or by the governing body of a charter school, and be updated on an annual basis thereafter.
 - b) Submit the IDEA Addendum to CDE within 15 days of adoption by the governing board of a school district, county board of education, or governing body of a charter school. (EC § 52064.3)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

Report on reports

- 1) Extends by one year, from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027, the sunset date on the requirement for CDE to provide a report to the Superintendent, the Governor, and the Legislature on the number and types of reports that LEAs are required to annually submit.

IDEA Addendum

- 2) Eliminates the requirement that the SBE adopt an IDEA Addendum relating to improvements in services for individuals with exceptional needs.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “As California struggles to fill the funding gap potential federal funding cuts could create, it is vital for California to ensure taxpayer dollars are used responsibly. School districts throughout the state are required to produce 170 reports annually, nearly equivalent to the statutorily required 180 instructional days in the school year. The sheer number of reports can be suffocating for school districts and detracts from their ability to meet the educational needs of students. In 2024, I introduced and the governor signed SB 1315, which directed the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide a report on the number and types of reports that local education agencies (LEAs) are required to submit annually in order to provide recommendations for which reports could be consolidated, eliminated, or truncated. SB 1315 would have alleviated the administrative costs and burdens placed on school districts – especially important at a time when they are working hard to make ends meet. While the CDE continues to work on finalizing its work on providing actionable recommendations to condense or reduce the amount of reports LEAs are faced with, SB 374 would extend the sunset date of the provisions of SB 1315 by one year to 2027. It would also delete the statutory provision for the IDEA addendum, enacted to ensure that annual reporting data was provided regarding special education students to meet the oversight monitoring requirements, which is now largely duplicative as the same information is required through annual LCAP reporting.”
- 2) ***Report on reports.*** Existing law requires CDE to provide a report, by March 1, 2025, to the Superintendent, the Governor, and the Legislature on the number and types of reports that LEAs are required to annually submit, and requires the report to include specified information. This report was completed on time, yet LEA stakeholders are concerned with the quality of this report and its recommendations. Specifically, the report does not contain recommendations for consolidating or eliminating reports that LEAs are required to complete. Instead, the report lays out a plan to complete the work necessary to make the recommendations for consolidating or eliminating reports.

This bill extends the sunset date on provisions requiring CDE to complete this report, but does not require CDE to revise or redo the report. According to the author, the CDE is continuing to finalize its work on providing actionable recommendations, and extending the sunset merely allows the conversations between CDE and stakeholders to continue.

- 3) **IDEA Addendum.** This bill eliminates the requirement that the SBE adopt an IDEA Addendum relating to improvements in services for individuals with exceptional needs. The requirement for an addendum to LEAs' LCAPs that is specific to students receiving special education (the IDEA Addendum) was enacted to ensure that annual reporting data was provided to meet the oversight monitoring requirements as part of the "Emma C" litigation. The IDEA Addendum was to be completed as California worked to include special education students in the California School Dashboard and annual reporting provisions. The court has since approved California's work to include all students in reporting systems and lifted the consent decree. Therefore, the language requiring the adoption of an IDEA Addendum is obsolete.

SUPPORT

California School Boards Association

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 478 **Hearing Date:** April 9, 2025
Author: Ashby
Version: February 19, 2025
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Therresa Austin

Subject: School accountability: Statewide School Library Lead.

SUMMARY

This bill requires, on or before July 1, 2026, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) and Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to select an applicant county office of education (COE) to serve as a Statewide School Library Lead (SSLL) to work collaboratively with the CCEE, the State Board of Education (SBE), the State Department of Education (CDE), and others to establish library and literacy services that support the statewide system of support.

BACKGROUND

Existing Law:

- 1) Requires the governing board of each school district to provide school library services for the students and teachers of the district by establishing and maintaining school libraries or by contractual arrangements with another public agency. (Education Code (EC) § 18100)
- 2) Authorizes the county superintendent of schools to, with the approval of the board of supervisors and the county board of education, agree with the county librarian to take over all existing contracts for supplementary books and other material adopted for the course of study between the school districts or community college districts and the county librarian. Requires, thereafter the county superintendent of schools to generally perform such library services for the school districts or community college districts as were theretofore performed by the county library. (EC § 1770)
- 3) Authorizes the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to issue a services credential authorizing service as a library media teacher upon completion of specialized preparation. States that the standards for these credentials are a baccalaureate degree or higher degree from an institution approved by the CTC, a valid teaching credential, and specialized and professional preparation. (EC § 44269)
- 4) Establishes the CCEE to advise and assist school districts, county superintendents of schools, and charter schools in achieving the goals set forth in a local control and accountability plan (LCAP) by facilitating continuous

- improvement for local educational agencies (LEAs) within California's system of public school support. (EC § 52074)
- 5) Requires the CCEE, in consultation with the CDE, to select California Geographic Lead Agencies (Geo Leads), to assist in building the capacity of COEs within the Geo Lead's defined geographic area to provide effective assistance and support to school districts under the state priorities for purposes of a LCAP. (EC § 52073)
 - 6) Establishes an Expert Lead in Literacy (ELL) within the statewide system of support. Requires the ELL to be a COE, selected by the CDE in partnership with the CCEE, to support grantees to build statewide professional learning networks and provide technical assistance to increase statewide capacity in implementing effective literacy instruction. (Uncodified; Section 114 of SB 98 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review Chapter 24, Statutes of 2020))
 - 7) Establishes the California State Library, under the direction of the State Librarian, and lists among the responsibilities of the office to purchase and maintain materials and equipment as necessary to carry out California State Library programs and services consistent with well-established library standards. (EC § 19320 et seq.)
 - 8) Establishes the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy to organize and offer professional learning opportunities, and to select providers of high-quality professional learning for administrators and other school leaders. (EC § 44690)
 - 9) Establishes the California Community Schools Partnership Program to support schools' efforts to partner with community agencies and local government to align community resources to improve student outcomes. These partnerships provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. (EC § 8900 et seq.)
 - 10) Establishes the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program to provide funding for afterschool and summer school enrichment programs for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. (EC § 46120)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires, on or before July 1, 2026, the CCEE and the SPI to select an applicant COE to serve as a SSSL to work collaboratively with the SBE, the CDE, and the CCEE, among others, to establish library and literacy services that support the statewide system of support.
- 2) Requires the selected COE to employ at least one fully credentialed teacher librarian.

- 3) Specifies that the SSSL's duties shall include the following:
 - a) Enhancing the state's investments in literacy and aligning those efforts with the California Comprehensive Literacy Plan.
 - b) Working collaboratively with Local Literacy Lead Agencies, the California Dyslexia Initiative, Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant recipients, the California Scaling Up Multi-Tiered System of Support Statewide (SUMS) Initiative, and Reading Instruction and Intervention Grant recipients.
 - c) Working directly with LEAs to build capacity to develop excellent school library services and accelerate literacy and learning, including coordinating support, providing direct technical assistance, and delivering professional learning.
 - d) Working with local and regional entities to promote school libraries as safe spaces that create a positive school climate, champion intellectual freedom, and support social and emotional learning, mindfulness, and well-being.
 - e) Working with local and regional entities to engage with families and communities to better synthesize, integrate, and extend literacy programs in a coherent and comprehensive manner.
 - f) Providing support for LEAs, subject matter projects across the state, the 21st Century California Leadership Academy, the California Community Schools Partnership Program: Regional Technical Assistance Center, and the Statewide System of Support for Expanded Learning.
- 4) Provides that the implementation of this bill is contingent upon an appropriation for these purposes in the annual Budget Act or another statute.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "California ranks next to last in literacy rates across the United States. SB 478 seeks to address our growing literacy crisis by establishing a statewide School Library Lead, who will work directly with K-12 schools to improve their library resources, implement literacy initiatives, and help our students meet their literacy benchmarks. There are few things more impactful in the educational journey of a young person than their confidence and capacity to learn through reading. It's critical that the state invests in resources that support early literacy development, and SB 478 will serve as a tool designed to bring together existing state resources to support literacy through our school libraries."
- 2) ***The CCEE and the statewide system of support.*** The CCEE was established in 2013 by the Legislature and then-Governor Jerry Brown to advise and assist school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools in achieving the

goals and objectives in their LCAPs. It was created as part of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) legislation that redesigned California's school funding formulas to ensure that there would be sufficient support for students who required additional resources to ensure their success.

California's System of Support is a central component of the state's accountability and continuous improvement system. Its overarching goal is to help LEAs and their schools meet the needs of each student they serve, with a focus on building local capacity to sustain improvement and to effectively address disparities in opportunities and outcomes.

- 3) ***Expert Lead in Literacy.*** SB 98 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 24, Statutes of 2020) appropriated \$50 million to establish the Early Literacy Support Block Grant Program and requires the CDE to award funds to LEAs with the 75 schools that have the highest percentage of students in grade three scoring at the lowest achievement standard level on the State Summative English Language Arts assessment. SB 98 also appropriated \$3 million to establish an Expert Lead in Literacy within the California Statewide System of Support. The Expert Lead in Literacy must be a COE, selected by the CDE in partnership with the CCEE, to support grantees to build statewide professional learning networks and provide technical assistance to increase statewide capacity in implementing effective literacy instruction. The Sacramento County Office of Education was selected as the Expert Lead.

This bill calls for the selection of a SSLL to work with existing California Collaborative for Education Excellence, the statewide literacy lead, and other lead agencies and stakeholders to establish library and literacy services that support the statewide system of support.

- 4) ***Model School Library Standards.*** In 2010, the SBE adopted the *Model School Library Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*, which sought to set a clear vision for strong school library programs across the state that would improve student achievement, foster literacy, produce a technology-competent workforce, and nurture lifelong learning. The Library Standards include two types of standards:
- a) "School Library Standards for Students" that delineate what students should know and be able to do at each grade level or grade span to enable students to succeed in school, higher education, and the workforce.
 - b) "School Library Program Standards" that describe base-level staffing, resources and infrastructure, including technology, required for school library programs to be effective and help students to meet the school library standards.

The Library Standards recognize that school libraries have evolved from simply providing print materials to offering rich selections of print, media, and digital resources; from teaching students how to search a card catalog to teaching students strategies for searching a variety of print, media and digital resources;

from teaching basic reading literacy to teaching information literacy (the ability to access, evaluate, use, and integrate information and ideas effectively). The student standards also include the legal, ethical and safe use of information both in print and online, other aspects of cyber safety, and use of technology.

- 5) ***Credentialed Teacher Librarians.*** The CTC's Teacher Librarian Services Credential authorizes the holder to perform various duties including (1) instructing students in accessing, evaluating, using and integrating information and resources in the library program; (2) planning and coordinating school library programs with the instructional programs of a school district through collaboration with teachers; (3) developing programs for and deliver staff development for school library services; and (4) supervising classified personnel assigned school library duties. To be fully credentialed, teacher librarians must satisfy the following requirements:

- a) Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university;
- b) Hold a valid California teaching credential;
- c) Complete one of the following:
 - i) A Commission-approved Teacher Librarian Services Credential program, securing the formal recommendation of the California college or university where the program was completed.
 - ii) A professional preparation program in teacher librarian services including successful completion of a supervised field work, or the equivalent, in a program taken outside California of at least 30 graduate semester units, that is comparable to a program accredited by the CTC Committee on Accreditation.
- d) Possess an English learner authorization issued by the CTC.

School libraries may also employ non-credentialed classified staff as well as those with Administrative Services Credentials to support library services. While the requirements and qualifications necessary to become a classified school library worker vary by district, the scope of their duties are defined in the CTC's [Authorizations for Librarian Services](#).

In the 2022-23 school year, 4,004 of California's total 9,951 schools provided survey data for CDE's [California School Libraries Evaluation Viewer GeoHub](#). 91% (3,631 schools) had reported having school libraries and of those, only 21% (773 school libraries) had credentialed staff.

This bill requires the COE that is selected to serve as the SSLL to employ at least one fully credentialed teacher librarian.

- 6) ***Recent budget developments.*** The Governor's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget includes the following allocations to support Literacy Instruction:

- a) \$500 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund for TK-12 Literacy and Mathematics Coaches, expanding upon the existing Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists Grant Program. Of the total allocation, \$235 million is proposed for a third cycle of Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists Grant Program for schools with 94 percent unduplicated pupils.
- b) \$40 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund in 2025-26 to support necessary costs, including purchasing screening materials and training for educators, to administer literacy screenings.
- c) \$25 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund (\$5 million annually) through the 2029-30 fiscal year to launch a Literacy Network within the Statewide System of Support to serve as a clearinghouse for state-developed literacy resources, elevate high performing districts and best practices, and provide support to select LEAs facing persistent performance challenges.
- d) \$1.8 billion for the Student Support and Discretionary Block Grant which can fund professional development for teachers on the ELA/ELD Framework and the Literacy Roadmap.

7) ***Related legislation.***

AB 535 (Irwin, 2023) would have required the SPI select an applicant county office of education to serve as a Statewide School Library Lead to work collaboratively with the CCEE to establish library and literacy services that support the statewide system of support. *SB 478 is nearly identical to AB 535, as introduced. AB 535 was gutted, amended, and reassigned a new author after it was heard in Senate Education Committee.*

AB 181 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 52, Statutes of 2022) established the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant, funding for various literacy coach initiatives, and established the Learning Recovery Emergency Block Grant.

AB 2465 (Mia Bonta, 2022) would have established the Family and Community Literacy: Supporting Literacy and Biliteracy in Schools, Families, and Communities Grant Program and the California Family Literacy Innovation Project to support early literacy. *AB 2465 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

SB 488 (Rubio, Chapter 678, Statutes of 2021) requires the CTC to ensure, by July 1, 2025, that an approved teaching performance assessment (TPA) for a preliminary multiple subject credential and a preliminary education specialist credential assesses all candidates for competence in instruction in literacy, revises the definition of literacy instruction for purposes of teacher preparation and requires the CTC to ensure that its standards for program quality and effectiveness align to this definition, and provides an alternate means of meeting the current reading instruction competence assessment (RICA) for some credential candidates affected by COVID-19 test center closures.

SB 98 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 24, Statutes of 2020) establishes the Early Literacy Support Block Grant, which requires the CDE to award funds to LEAs with the 75 schools that have the highest percentage of students in grade three scoring at the lowest achievement standard level on the state ELA assessment. Appropriates \$50 million for this purpose and authorizes \$3 million of this amount to be used to establish an Expert Lead in Literacy at a COE, to serve within the Statewide System of Support. Appropriates \$50 million for the purpose of funding California SUMS. Authorizes \$9.8 million for the RII Grant Program to generate and disseminate professional learning opportunities for kindergarten through grade twelve educators in the areas of evidence-based literacy, intensive literacy interventions, and support of pupils' executive functioning skills.

AB 1684 (Maienschein, 2019) would have required the CDE to develop and implement a professional development program to support educators in teaching literacy and reading, including providing dedicated funds to schools identified by the state's accountability system as needing special ELA support, consistent with the Statewide System of Support. *AB 1684 was held in the Senate Education Committee.*

AB 1808 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018) appropriated \$4 million to establish the California Geographic Lead Agencies to build the capacity of COEs to ensure that counties are equipped to build the capacity of their LEAs to support the continuous improvement of student performance within the state priorities for purposes of a LCAP.

SB 494 (Hueso, 2017) would have established the Golden State Reading grant program for the purpose of assisting LEAs in ensuring that all students meet reading standards and language progressive skills by the end of grade 3. This bill was vetoed by Governor Brown with the following message:

“Local educational agencies already have the flexibility under the Local Control Funding Formula to provide students the support they need to ensure that appropriate reading and language skills are achieved.”

SUPPORT

California School Library Association (co-sponsor)
California Teachers Association (co-sponsor)
Los Angeles County Office of Education (co-sponsor)
American Association of School Librarians
California Charter Schools Association
Ventura County Office of Education

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 761	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Ashby		
Version:	March 26, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: CalFresh: student eligibility.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Human Services*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the Committee on *Human Services*.

SUMMARY

This bill (1) requires the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to amend the Cal Grant application to ensure CSAC identifies students who may be eligible for CalFresh; (2) deems campus-based programs of study at a public institution of higher education, as specified, as a state-approved local education program that increases employability, has an “employment and training component” and qualifies for the student exemption for CalFresh eligibility.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

CalFresh

- 1) Establishes in federal law the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the nation’s population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. Federal regulations establish SNAP eligibility requirements, including adjusted net income that is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level and is determined to be a substantial limiting factor in permitting a recipient to obtain a more nutritious diet. (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7 § 271.1 and § 273.9)
- 2) Establishes the CalFresh program as the state’s program to administer the provisions of federal SNAP benefits to low-income families and individuals meeting specified criteria. (Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) § 18900 et seq.)

College students ineligible for CalFresh without a waiver

- 3) Federal law prohibits an individual who is enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education from eligibility for SNAP benefits, unless the student qualifies for an exemption. To be eligible for an exemption, a student must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a) Be age 17 or younger, or age 50 or older.
- b) Be physically or mentally “unfit.”
- c) Be receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) under Title IV of the federal Social Security Act (known as CalWORKs in California).
- d) Be employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- e) Be participating in a state or federally financed work-study program during the regular school year, as specified.
- f) Be participating in an on-the-job training program, as specified.
- g) Be responsible for a child under 6.
- h) Be responsible for the care of a child 6-11 years old when the State agency has determined that adequate child care is not available to enable the student to attend class and comply with the work requirements.
- i) Be a single parent enrolled in an institution of higher education on a full-time basis (as determined by the institution) and be responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 12.
- j) Be enrolled in an employment and training or another job-training program, as specified. (7 CFR § 273.5)

CSAC

- 4) Establishes the Cal Grant Program under the administration of CSAC. (Education Code (EC) § 69431 et seq.)
- 5) Requires CSAC to notify, in writing, a recipient of a Cal Grant award if that student’s grant includes any amount of funding that has been derived from the TANF block grant or state match, in order for the student to verify that the student qualifies for the exemption from the CalFresh program student eligibility rules. (EC § 69519.3)
- 6) Requires CSAC to notify students of their exemption from the CalFresh program student eligibility rules and their potential eligibility for CalFresh benefits, to the extent CSAC possesses the pertinent information and is permitted by federal law to use information to determine a student’s CalFresh eligibility. (EC § 69519.3)
- 7) Requires each campus of the California State University (CSU) and each community college district, and requests and each campus of the University of California (UC), each independent institution of higher education, and each private postsecondary educational institution, to use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) data to identify students who meet the income qualifications for CalFresh. (EC § 66023.6)

- 8) Requires each CSU campus and each community college district to send an email to the campus-based email account associated with a student identified pursuant to # 7, informing the student that they may qualify for CalFresh if the student can also meet one of the exemptions. The email must encourage the student to contact the local county welfare agency to apply for CalFresh and include the contact information for the local county welfare agency and the designated campus staff who can assist the student in applying for CalFresh. (EC § 66023.6)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

CSAC

- 1) Requires CSAC to amend the Cal Grant application, by January 1, 2027, to ensure both of the following:
 - a) CSAC identifies students who might be eligible for CalFresh through those students' Cal Grant applications.
 - b) Students identified as potentially eligible for CalFresh have the ability to give permission to have the student's contact information shared with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to enable direct outreach pursuant to # 2 below.

DSS contact students

- 2) Requires DSS, beginning with the 2027-28 academic year, to contact all students who opted in to have their contact information shared with DSS for the purposes of determining their eligibility for CalFresh and receiving assistance in applying for the food benefits.

Program to increase employability

- 3) Requires any campus-based program of study at a public institution of higher education, to the extent permitted by federal law, to be considered as a state-approved local education program that increases employability that has a component that is equivalent to a required federal component, as specified.
- 4) Requires DSS to implement and administer the provisions in # 2 through all-county letters or similar instructions that shall have the same force and effect as regulations.
- 5) Requires DSS, by May 31, 2026, to issue a guidance letter to the California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor's Office, the CSU Chancellor's Office, and the Office of the President of UC that notifies them of the changes made pursuant to # 2.

Existing provisions for application for certification as increasing employability

- 6) Strikes existing provisions requiring DSS to issue a guidance letter to counties, the CCC Chancellor's Office, the CSU Chancellor's Office, and the Office of the President of UC relating to submission of a certification application for programs that increase employability.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Many college students, especially those from low income backgrounds are unable to access fresh meals. Half of California's college students experience food insecurity. Students are eligible for CalFresh, but fewer than 25% actually receive benefits. SB 761 addresses food access by streamlining CalFresh benefits. This bill would require the California Student Aid Commission to notify students of their potential eligibility for CalFresh. SB 761 further addresses the issue of food insecurity by broadening the programs of study that increase eligibility for CalFresh. SB761 ensures greater access to food assistance for all California college students."
- 2) ***Cal Grant application.*** Existing law requires each campus of the CSU and each community college district, and requests and each campus of the UC, each independent institution of higher education, and each private postsecondary educational institution, to use data from the FAFSA to identify students who meet the income qualifications for CalFresh.

This bill requires CSAC to amend the Cal Grant application, by January 1, 2027, to ensure it can identify students who might be eligible for CalFresh and to give students the ability to grant permission to have their contact information shared with DSS to enable direct outreach. There is no application for Cal Grants; students must submit either the FAFSA or the California Dream Act Application. **Staff recommends an amendment** to instead require CSAC to amend the *state grant delivery system* for the purposes described in this bill.

- 3) ***Sharing of student data.*** This bill requires CSAC to provide a way for students who may be eligible for CalFresh to give permission to have their contact information shared with DSS. This approach appears to be generally modeled on a data-sharing agreement between Compton Community College and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. Students enrolled in Compton College who have submitted a FAFSA are asked if they are interested in being evaluated for county services. Consent forms are provided to students who answer in the affirmative. Compton College then provides the county with student data to be matched with county caseload records to identify CalFresh participation among those students. Compton College uses the results to initiate targeted CalFresh outreach to students. According to the LA County Department of Public Social Services, of the 1,136 students who signed the consent form from the inception of this project, only 156 students were already receiving CalFresh (980 students were not). Of the 980 students who were not already receiving CalFresh, 470 students have since been connected to CalFresh through this partnership.

- 4) ***Student eligibility for CalFresh.*** CalFresh is California’s version of the federal SNAP program, which provides monthly food benefits to qualified low-income individuals and families. CalFresh is administered by DSS at the state level, and California’s 58 counties are responsible for administering CalFresh at the local level. CalFresh benefits are 100 percent federally-funded and national income eligibility standards and benefit levels are established by the federal government.

Student eligibility for CalFresh is constrained based on a number of factors that essentially disqualify most full-time college students from benefits unless they qualify for one of several exemptions. These exemptions include being employed at least 20 hours per week, being approved and anticipate participating in a work study program, being responsible for the care of a child, attending school as part of an employment and training program or participating in a program to improve employability, or receiving TANF funding.

According to a 2024 report by the California Policy Lab, among students who were estimated to be eligible for CalFresh, 26 percent of community college students received CalFresh benefits in the Fall of 2019, as compared to 22 percent of UC undergraduate students. “This means about 100,600 students received CalFresh benefits, but also that an estimated 297,400 eligible students missed out on benefits that could have paid for their food.”

- 5) ***Programs to increase employability.*** One of the criteria for students to be eligible for CalFresh is enrollment in an employment and training or another job-training program. Federal regulations require an employment and training program to include specified components, including educational programs or activities to improve basic skills, build work readiness, or otherwise improve employability including educational programs determined by the State agency (DSS) to expand the job search abilities or employability of those subject to the program.

In accordance with federal regulation, programs that qualify as a program that increases employability must meet two criteria:

- Be government-run; and,
- Contain the equivalent of a CalFresh employment and training component listed in federal regulations.

According to the federal regulations, allowable educational programs or activities may include, but are not limited to, courses or programs of study that are part of a program of career and technical education, adult basic skills, work readiness training, and instructional programs in English as a second language. The regulations further prescribe that only educational components that directly enhance the employability of the participants are allowable. A direct link between the education and job-readiness must be established for a component to be approved.

Campus based programs that meet these requirements must submit an application to DSS, which maintains a list of approved programs on its website.

Any newly qualifying programs that meet the eligibility requirements after September 1, 2022, must be identified within six months of the formation of the program. After September 1, 2022, the list will be updated monthly to identify new programs, newly qualifying programs and previously approved programs that no longer meet the criteria. As of May 1, 2023, there were over 8,300 programs in California institutions of higher education that have been approved by DSS as containing at least one employment and training component, making students who participate in these programs exempt from the CalFresh student eligibility rule. <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/calfresh-resource-center/policy>

This bill requires any campus-based program of study that has a component equivalent to an employment and training component (pursuant to federal regulations) to be considered as a state-approved local education program that increases employability (to the extent permitted by federal law). This change eliminates DSS' role in reviewing individual programs, leaving it up to the institutions of higher education to determine which programs have a component equivalent to an employment and training component.

This bill expands the pool of programs of study that are considered as increasing employability for purposes of the student waiver, therefore potentially allowing more students to be eligible for CalFresh benefits.

6) **Prior legislation.**

AB 1514 (Reyes, 2023) would have required DSS to convene a workgroup of various stakeholders to develop recommendations to allow data from the FAFSA to be released to county welfare departments in order to authorize students to apply to receive public social services based on data collected from their FAFSA application. AB 1514 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1393 (Calderon, 2023) would have authorized CSAC to establish a food benefit pilot program for the purpose of providing students, who receive financial aid through the California Dream Act, with funding for food. AB 1393 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy (co-sponsor)
 Southern California College Attainment Network (co-sponsor)
 Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California
 C5LA
 California Student Aid Commission
 College Access Plan
 Fulfillment Fund
 Go Public Schools
 Junior League of San Jose
 Kid City Hope Place
 Los Angeles Urban League
 MOSTe

San Diego Hunger Coalition
San Francisco Rising
Swipe Out Hunger

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 568	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Niello		
Version:	March 24, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Lynn Lorber		

Subject: Pupil health: epinephrine delivery systems: public schools and programs.

SUMMARY

This bill updates terminology from “epinephrine auto-injectors” to “epinephrine delivery systems” relative to the authority for a pharmacy to furnish epinephrine to local educational agencies (LEAs), the requirement that LEAs provide emergency epinephrine to school nurses or trained personnel, and the authority for school nurses or trained personnel to use epinephrine to provide emergency medical aid to a person suffering from an anaphylactic reaction.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to provide emergency epinephrine auto-injectors, to be stored in an accessible location upon need for emergency use, to school nurses or trained personnel who have volunteered, to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from an anaphylactic reaction. (Education Code (EC) § 49414)
- 2) Authorizes school nurses or trained personnel to use epinephrine auto-injectors to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering, or reasonably believed to be suffering, from an anaphylactic reaction. (EC § 49414)
- 3) Authorizes each private elementary and secondary school in the state to voluntarily determine whether or not to make emergency epinephrine auto-injectors and trained personnel available at its school. In making this determination, a school shall evaluate the emergency medical response time to the school and determine whether initiating emergency medical services is an acceptable alternative to epinephrine auto-injectors and trained personnel. A private elementary or secondary school choosing to exercise the authority provided under this subdivision shall not receive state funds specifically for purposes of this subdivision. (EC § 49414)
- 4) Defines “epinephrine auto-injector” as a disposable delivery device designed for the automatic injection of a pre-measured dose of epinephrine into the human body to prevent or treat a life-threatening allergic reaction. (EC § 49414)

- 5) Authorizes a pharmacy to furnish epinephrine auto-injectors to a school district, county office of education, or charter school if all of the following are met:
 - a) The epinephrine auto-injectors are furnished exclusively for use at a school district site, county office of education, or charter school.
 - b) A physician and surgeon provides a written order that specifies the quantity of epinephrine auto-injectors to be furnished. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 4119.2)
- 6) Requires school districts, county offices of education, or charter schools to maintain records regarding the acquisition and disposition of epinephrine auto-injectors furnished by a pharmacy, for a period of three years from the date the records were created. The school district, county office of education, or charter school shall be responsible for monitoring the supply of epinephrine auto-injectors and ensuring the destruction of expired epinephrine auto-injectors. (BPC § 4119.2)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Updates terminology from “epinephrine auto-injectors” to “epinephrine delivery systems” relative to the authority for a pharmacy to furnish epinephrine to LEAs, the requirement that LEAs provide emergency epinephrine to school nurses or trained personnel, and the authority for school nurses or trained personnel to use epinephrine to provide emergency medical aid to a person suffering from an anaphylactic reaction.
- 2) Clarifies and simplifies existing references to dosage, by striking language relating to “regular” and “junior” epinephrine auto-injectors and instead reference consideration of the ages and weights of individuals at the public school.
- 3) Changes references from “school district site, county office of education, or charter school” to “public school,” and defines “public school” as a school operated by a school district or county office of education or a charter school, including but not limited to, any program operated by or under contract with a school district, county office of education, or charter school. (This also clarifies that preschools operated by a LEA are covered under these provisions).

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “In 2014, the Legislature passed, on a bi-partisan basis, SB 1266 (Huff) which required epinephrine in public schools. This measure has helped safeguard children (saving countless lives to date) and has ensured our school health professionals have the necessary medication on hand at school to provide lifesaving treatment.

“According to Food Allergy Research Education (FARE), as many as 33 million Americans suffer from life threatening allergies. It is estimated that nearly 6

million of these people are children under the age of 18 – that is one in every 13 children - or 2 in every classroom. Many first time allergic reactions that require epinephrine happen at school.

“Anaphylaxis is a potentially lethal allergic reaction. It can happen when a person is stung by a bee, ingests food such as shellfish or nuts, or maybe even just comes in contact with something as simple as latex. Epinephrine is the first line of treatment for someone who is experiencing anaphylaxis. It can be easily administered and has very little side-effect. Allergic reactions can be severe, even fatal, without prompt administration of epinephrine.

“Since the passage of SB 1266, the state has made access to preschool a priority and is now expanding to Universal Preschool. State preschool was not contemplated under the original bill although the intent of the author was to provide access to all students. It is now necessary to not only modernize the code with medication delivery system language changes (as new and improved medication has come to market), but to also address the potential gap that preschoolers may have by not being specifically called out in the original bill.

“Some districts have expressed confusion if they are supposed to be providing the epinephrine in their preschool programs. This clarity is needed for schools to ensure they do not have any exposed liability for their preschool students.”

- 2) ***Auto-injector vs delivery system.*** On August 9, 2024, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved an epinephrine nasal spray for the emergency treatment of allergic reactions, including those involving anaphylaxis in adults and children weighing at least 66 pounds. This is the first epinephrine product that is not administered by injection. The FDA noted that “anaphylaxis is life-threatening, and some people, particularly children, may delay or avoid treatment due to fear of injections. The availability of epinephrine nasal spray may reduce barriers to rapid treatment of anaphylaxis.” As a result, it is necessary to broaden references in statute to enable the use of epinephrine nasal sprays in schools.
- 3) ***Additional references to auto-injectors.*** In addition to the provisions affected by this bill, the Education Code authorizes a school nurse or other designated school personnel to assist a student in administering prescribed auto-injectable epinephrine, and allows students to carry and self-administer prescription auto-injectable epinephrine. **Staff recommends an amendment** to also update that code section to strike reference to “auto-injectable epinephrine” and instead reference “epinephrine delivery systems.”

The Health and Safety Code includes references to training for the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors, in relation to child care settings. The author wishes to limit the scope of this bill to K-12 schools; this bill modifies the same sections of law that first authorized the use of epinephrine auto-injectors in educational settings. Committee staff notes that the requirement for child care providers to receive training on the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors was enacted well after provisions were put into place affecting K-12 schools (therefore it appears appropriate to update terminology to other areas of law in a piecemeal

approach).

4) ***Related legislation.***

AB 228 (Sanchez, 2025), an urgency measure, replaces references to “emergency epinephrine auto-injectors” to “emergency epinephrine delivery systems,” and modifies the requirement that LEAs provide emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to instead reference at least one type of FDA-approved emergency epinephrine delivery system. AB 228 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

5) ***Prior legislation.***

AB 2714 (Wallis, 2024) was substantially similar to this bill. AB 2714 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

Alameda County School Nurse Network
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
California Academy of Physician Assistants
California Society for Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
California State University, East Bay Department of Nursing
Elijah-Alavi Foundation
Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Connection Team
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
San Francisco State University

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 539	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Cabaldon		
Version:	March 27, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: School facilities.

SUMMARY

This bill expands eligibility for Facility Hardship funding within the state's School Facility Program (SFP) to include health and safety risks from wildfires, floods, and other declared emergencies. Further, the bill authorizes the use of design sequencing and machine learning to streamline project approval and delivery and requires periodic reviews of the school construction process to identify possible improvements.

BACKGROUND

The SFP, established by the Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998, is California's primary vehicle for funding K-12 public school construction and modernization. The SFP provides state matching funds to school districts through various grant programs, including New Construction, Modernization, Facility Hardship, Seismic Mitigation, Charter School Facilities, and Career Technical Education.

The SFP is administered by the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) under the direction of the State Allocation Board (SAB). Projects must be approved by the Division of the State Architect (DSA) for structural safety and accessibility and by the California Department of Education (CDE) for educational adequacy. School districts must establish eligibility before applying and follow a multi-step process, including approvals, funding apportionment, and fund release.

Facility Hardship grants are available when school facilities present an imminent threat to the health and safety of students and staff. These grants may support rehabilitation or replacement of facilities due to structural deficiencies, environmental hazards, or damage from natural disasters.

In 2024, the Legislature passed AB 247 (Muratsuchi, Chapter 81, Statutes of 2024), placing Proposition 2 on the ballot. Approved by voters in November 2024, Proposition 2 provided \$8.5 billion in new bond authority for school construction and modernization and introduced policy changes to the SFP. These include a revised state-local match formula, new supplemental grants, expanded disaster recovery authority, and increased access for small and high-need districts.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Expands eligibility for Facility Hardship funding under the SFP to include health and safety risks caused by wildfires, floods, and other Governor-declared emergencies.
- 2) Specifies that a risk to pupil health and safety includes the disruption of educational services due to facility damage or destruction.
- 3) Authorizes school districts to use design sequencing for Facility Hardship projects to allow for concurrent coordination and state approvals for expedited permitting, approval, and construction processes.
- 4) Allows CDE, DSA, and SAB to use machine learning to automate nondiscretionary elements of the permitting and approval process for these projects. Also authorizes school districts to use machine learning to prepare project documentation.
- 5) Defines “design sequencing” to mean a method of project delivery that enables the sequencing of design activities to permit each construction phase to commence when the design for that phase is complete, instead of requiring the design for the entire project to be completed before commencing construction.
- 6) Requires the Department of General Services (DGS), DSA, OPSC, and SAB, in coordination with the Government Operations Agency, to conduct a school construction process review every five years beginning July 1, 2026.
- 7) Requires a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2026, and every five years thereafter, with findings, recommendations for process improvements, and proposals for alternative project delivery methods.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “When we ask working Californians to send their students to leaking portable structures, or ask our neighbors recovering from wildfires to reestablish their lives without the stability of school for their children—we fail in the delivery and promise of government.

“Beginning 2026 and each five years after, SB 539 requires the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of General Services’ (DGS) Division of the State Architect (DSA) and the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) to undergo a process review and work collaboratively to streamline school planning, design, and the availability of state funding to help Local Educational Agencies address their facility need. Working with the Government Operation Agency, they will unleash new technology and borrow from innovations in design, construction, and financial management to build schools faster and more affordably.

“After the passage of Proposition 51, the Legislature approved Assembly Bill 203 (Chapters by Secretary of State - Chapter 837, Statutes of 2017), which enacted a feasibility study regarding the restructure of the funding application process to remove duplicative information submittals and address frustration over

how long it took to receive state agency approvals. When voters approved Proposition 2, the 2024 school facilities construction bond, they again trusted the Legislature to use bond dollars appropriately. Through consistent, data-driven, and proactive oversight—the Legislature can assess school construction timelines and ensure efficient, affordable school construction.”

- 2) ***The School Facility Program: State-Local Partnership with Shared Responsibilities.*** The SFP is a long-standing state-local funding partnership for school construction and modernization. It provides matching grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) and requires collaboration across multiple state entities—OPSC, DSA, and CDE—to ensure that projects meet structural safety, educational quality, and funding accountability standards. LEAs retain responsibility for planning, financing, and managing construction projects, while the state provides regulatory oversight and bond-funded assistance.

While the program has enabled thousands of school improvements since 1998, it has also drawn criticism for being difficult to navigate—especially for small districts and those unfamiliar with state processes. This bill aims to address that concern, particularly in the context of emergency rebuilding, by exploring new tools and workflows that could streamline access to state funding and approvals.

- 3) ***Proposition 2: Further Investment, Structural Reform, and an Equity-Focused Reset.*** In response to persistent funding shortages and structural barriers, the Legislature placed Proposition 2 on the November 2024 ballot through AB 247 (Muratsuchi, Chapter 81, Statutes of 2024). Approved by voters, the measure authorized \$8.5 billion for K-12 school construction and modernization and introduced significant structural reforms to the SFP.

These include:

- a) A sliding scale matching formula, providing greater state funding to districts with lower bonding capacity, high-need student populations, or small enrollment;
- b) A requirement that districts submit a five-year facilities master plan and facilities inventory to qualify for new construction or modernization funds;
- c) New supplemental grants for transitional kindergarten classrooms, career technical education spaces, energy-efficient buildings, essential campus facilities, and the replacement of buildings over 75 years old;
- d) Expanded authority for the SAB to provide assistance to districts impacted by natural disasters, including interim housing and expedited rebuilding;
- e) A higher bonding capacity threshold for financial hardship eligibility, expanding access to 100% state funding for more districts.

These reforms are now in effect and actively shaping program implementation. OPSC, CDE, and DSA are working with stakeholders to develop associated regulations and procedures.

- 4) ***Some Say the SFP Is Too Linear—But That Structure Exists for Good Reason.*** The SFP is often described as “linear” because many steps in the school construction process occur in sequence. While this structure can extend project timelines, much of it is by design and for good reason—intended to ensure safety, legal compliance, and responsible use of public funds.

Key reasons for sequential stages include:

- a) DSA structural and accessibility review must follow the completion of full architectural and engineering plans. Approving or constructing facilities before this review could jeopardize structural safety or violate state building codes.
- b) CDE’s review of site layout and educational adequacy must be based on complete, stable plans that reflect the district’s instructional priorities. If districts change designs midway through the process, those changes often necessitate additional state review.
- c) OPSC cannot apportion state bond funds until key documentation—such as plan approvals, eligibility certification, and cost estimates—is complete and verified.
- d) Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other local governance steps, such as site selection, bond passage, board approvals, and more.

While CDE, DSA, and OPSC do coordinate where possible, efforts toward streamlined approvals are often constrained by the state’s responsibility to verify accurate and complete plans. These sequential steps are not necessarily signs of inefficiency, but intentional safeguards—designed to ensure projects are safe, equitable, and built to serve students well for decades.

- 5) ***Proposition 2 Expanded Disaster Recovery Support—and Agencies Are Already Providing It.*** One of the most significant changes in Proposition 2 was the creation of a new disaster relief authority. It allows the SAB to provide interim housing and expedited reconstruction funding to districts affected by Governor-declared emergencies. This authority is already being exercised.

Following the January 2025 Southern California wildfires, which destroyed or severely damaged eight school sites in Los Angeles and Pasadena, the SAB voted to reserve its remaining \$177.5 million in General Fund authority to support affected districts. OPSC has been working directly with these districts—including both traditional and charter school operators—to prepare Facility Hardship applications and provide technical assistance. In parallel, DSA allows LEAs to place interim facilities immediately following a disaster without prior approval, provided they notify DSA and follow up with the appropriate documentation. This flexibility enables districts to resume operations quickly while still ensuring that safety and accessibility requirements are addressed. Together, these efforts

show that the existing framework already supports expedited response and meaningful flexibility in post-disaster situations.

6) ***This Bill Seeks to Accelerate Emergency Rebuilding—But Design Sequencing Should Be Studied Before Being Fully Authorized.***

This bill proposes a new approach for delivering Facility Hardship projects—those tied to imminent health and safety threats—by allowing phased construction to begin once a portion of a project’s design is complete, a method the bill refers to as “design sequencing.” It also authorizes both state agencies and school districts to use machine learning to automate nondiscretionary aspects of the permitting and approval process.

The goal of expediting rebuilding in disaster-affected communities has merit. However, reconstruction after a major event is rarely a straightforward replacement of facilities. Districts often use this opportunity to re-evaluate instructional needs, update site configurations, or redesign campuses entirely. This planning work—including community engagement and educational alignment—still takes time, even when state approvals are expedited.

Importantly, current law already provides school districts with meaningful flexibility in delivering projects. For example, DSA permits incremental plan review, which allows construction to begin on elements like grading or foundations before the full design is approved. In addition, school districts may already utilize alternative delivery methods such as design-build, lease-leaseback, construction manager at risk, and job order contracting. These methods are supported by more robust statutory frameworks and include key safeguards around safety, transparency, and accountability.

By contrast, “design sequencing” is a newly introduced term that has not yet been implemented within the SFP. As currently drafted, it is paired with a “notwithstanding any other law” clause—raising concerns about how it would interact with existing statutes and regulatory processes. Unlike other project delivery models currently in law, the design sequencing concept has not undergone the same level of policy development or stakeholder vetting.

Recognizing this, the bill includes a recurring school construction process review, beginning in 2026, to explore opportunities for improving delivery and permitting systems. Stakeholder input gathered during this review can help assess the viability, risks, and potential structure of design sequencing or other innovative approaches.

Therefore, ***staff recommends the following amendments*** to better align the bill’s implementation timeline with the intent of this review process:

- a) Strike the “notwithstanding any other law” clause in subdivision (c);
- b) Amend subdivision (c) to allow school districts to use any project delivery method allowable under existing law to support expedited permitting and approval;

- c) Strike the definition of “design sequencing” from the operative section of the bill; and
- d) Move the definition of “design sequencing” to the section of the bill establishing the school construction process review, to serve as a starting point for stakeholder discussion.

These changes maintain the bill’s focus on innovation and rebuilding flexibility, while ensuring that any new delivery method is developed with input from the agencies and stakeholders responsible for implementation.

- 7) ***What Is the Purpose of This Review—and Is It Justified?*** This bill draws inspiration from AB 203 (O’Donnell, Chapter 837, Statutes of 2017), which required DGS to convene a working group to study California’s school construction approval process. The resulting report, published in 2019, identified areas for improvement, including better interagency coordination, more transparency in review timelines, and opportunities to expand project delivery options.

While this bill would build on that effort by requiring a recurring process review rather than a one-time report, the policy rationale for doing so could benefit from further clarification. Is the goal to accelerate approvals, improve interagency communication, enhance public accountability, or something else? And how would success be measured—by reduced timelines, increased project approvals, or better educational outcomes?

Since the passage of Proposition 2, OPSC has moved quickly to operationalize new components of the SFP—including expanded disaster assistance and the rollout of new modernization and hardship funding provisions. This has involved new technical assistance efforts, stakeholder outreach, and updates to SFP timelines and policies. These efforts suggest that agency responsiveness may not be the bottleneck, particularly in post-disaster scenarios.

As the bill moves forward, the author may wish to more clearly define the intended outcomes of this recurring review and consider whether additional statutory direction is needed to ensure it adds value beyond existing efforts.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 744	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Cabaldon		
Version:	February 21, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Community colleges: credit for students with prior learning.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the California Community College (CCC) Chancellor to award credit for competency-based educational opportunities that recognize students' prior learning. It further expands the type of noncredit courses eligible for state apportionment funding to include individualized evaluation assessment and portfolio review of students' prior learning and competencies for the awarding of credit for competency-based educational opportunities.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the Chancellor of the CCC to establish, by March 31, 2019, an initiative to expand the use of course credit at the CCC for students with prior learning. It required the chancellor to submit, by January 1, 2020, a report on the initiative to the Legislature. (Education Code (EC) § 66025.7)
- 2) Requires the CCC Chancellor's Office and the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's Office, in collaboration with their respective Academic Senates, and requests the University of California (UC) to develop a consistent policy for awarding course credit for prior military education, training, and service, and periodically review and adjust the policy developed to align with policies of other postsecondary educational institutions. (EC § 66025.71)
- 3) Establishes a system through which state funds are apportioned to community college districts based on specified formulas and identifies certain noncredit community college courses and classes that are eligible for that state apportionment funding, including classes or courses in parenting, remedial education, English as a second language (ESL), citizenship for immigrants, workforce preparation, supervised tutoring, education programs for persons with substantial disabilities, older adults, home economics, short-term vocational programs, and health and safety education. (EC § 84760.5 and § 84757(a))
- 4) Prohibits state apportionment for a noncredit course or class that is not identified in EC § 84757 of the education code. (EC § 84757 (b))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CCC Chancellor to award credit for competency-based educational opportunities that recognize students' prior learning, help students advance toward a credential or degree and reduce redundant study and student expenses.
- 2) Requires the Chancellor's Office to establish competencies, with the advice of appropriate faculty and employers that are focused on the knowledge and skills a student needs to demonstrate in order to pass a course and to earn a degree or credential, or to transfer to a baccalaureate degree program.
- 3) Requires that the methods for awarding credit for competency-based educational opportunities include, but be not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Military service, as provided in existing state law for military personnel and veterans who have an official Joint Services Transcript.
 - b) Credit by examination. The Chancellor's Office, in coordination with the academic senate, is required to support faculty in developing, sharing, and redeploying assessments to award credit by examination for courses that articulate to a public university and courses with common identifier designations. Assessments are to be developed to enable students to demonstrate mastery and mapped to competencies.
 - c) Evaluation of trainings, certifications, apprenticeships, licenses, and service learning, including certifications earned as part of the Golden State Pathways Program or career technical education programs in secondary schools. The Chancellor's Office, in coordination with the Academic Senate, is required to establish guidelines by which certificated personnel are required to examine a student's training and determine whether the outcomes of that training correspond to the outcomes of a course. Where appropriate under the guidelines, a community college district is to be deemed eligible for apportionment funding available to certain noncredit courses when the evaluation, assessment, or portfolio review is organized as a noncredit course or a supervised student support service. The chancellor's office is required to prioritize prior learning and credit in programs leading to high-demand careers.
- 4) Requires that the credit granted for competency-based educational opportunities be reciprocal among CCC districts and accepted for transfer in the same manner and for the same purposes as regular course credit by each Cal Grant-qualifying institution.
- 5) Authorizes the State Allocation Board to consider the effectiveness of a community college district in further opportunities for students pursuant to the bill's provisions in evaluating and prioritizing funds allocated pursuant to existing state law.

- 6) Requires, by September 1, 2027, the Chancellor's Office to submit a report to the Legislature, on the credits awarded for competency-based educational opportunities, including, but not limited to, the number of students awarded credit, the number of courses awarded, and the number of units awarded. The report is not to include elective credit that does not satisfy a requirement for a credential or degree or for transfer to a baccalaureate degree program.
- 7) Expands the type of noncredit courses eligible for state apportionment funding to include individualized evaluation assessment and portfolio review of students' prior learning and competencies for the awarding of credit for competency-based educational opportunities.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, "Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) programs award students with academic credits for knowledge and skills acquired outside traditional academic settings; saving them time and money. CPL includes work experience, military service, and prior coursework. When students are able to utilize CPL, they are twice as likely to complete a degree. However, challenges remain in implementing and recognizing CPL across different segments of higher education.

"SB 744 aims to expand the use of CPL by requiring the California Community College system to establish standardized criteria for awarding credits based on students' training and experience. Additionally, the bill ensures that CPL credits are transferable to other universities and clarifies that faculty members that review CPL transcripts are eligible for funding.

"This policy will help students save time and money by reducing the number of courses they need to take, allowing them to graduate faster and pay less in tuition."

- 2) **Credit for prior learning.** Credit for prior learning generally refers to the awarding of college credit for skills learned outside the classroom, such as through work experience or military service. Students may earn credit for these experiences in various ways, including by passing an exam, submitting a portfolio of their work for faculty review, or demonstrating they have earned an industry credential that faculty have deemed equivalent to certain courses. Some definitions of credit for prior learning also include credit earned through standardized exams, such as Advanced Placement exams. Nationally, one of the most well-established forms of credit for prior learning applies to active duty military and veteran students. These students typically receive joint services transcripts from their branch of service documenting their military training and experiences. The American Council on Education, in turn, has developed recommendations for converting certain types of military training. The American Council on Education, in turn, has developed recommendations for converting certain types of military training and experiences into certain types and amounts of college credit. Colleges may consider these recommendations when deciding

how much credit to grant. Additionally, current law requires the CCC Chancellor's Office to develop a consistent policy for awarding course credit for prior military education, training, and service and periodically review and adjust the policy developed to align with policies of other postsecondary educational institutions.

In 2020, the CCC Chancellor's Office adopted regulations requiring all community college districts to have credit for prior learning policies. These locally developed policies are to include procedures for students to earn credit for prior learning through joint services transcripts, examinations, student-created portfolios, and industry-recognized credentials. The Chancellor's Office reports that all 115 credit-granting colleges in the system now offer some form of credit for prior learning, though the practice has not been implemented at scale at most colleges. Based on the best available data, the Chancellor's Office estimates that at least 4,100 veteran students earned a total of about 23,000 credits for prior learning in 2023-24. These students earned an average of about six credits each (the equivalent of two typical college courses). The Chancellor's Office further estimates that at least 36,000 other students earned credit for prior learning in 2023-24, though the number of credits earned by these other students is not well documented. (This count may also include students earning credit through standardized exams, such as Advanced Placement exams.)

- 3) **Colleges rather than Chancellor.** This bill requires the CCC Chancellor to award credit and establish competencies. However, it is individual colleges in partnership with faculty, not the Chancellor, which control the awarding of credit. Additionally, faculty are responsible for determining the competencies applicable to a course or degree. This bill affords faculty an advisory role. *Accordingly, the author may wish to consider changing this reference from the Chancellor to the colleges. The author may additionally wish to consider whether it is necessary to elevate the role of the faculty to ensure a collaborative process that takes into account their subject matter expertise.*
- 4) **Transferability of credits.** This bill attempts to ensure that the credit granted is transferable to each Cal Grant-qualifying institution, which includes UC, CSU, and some private colleges. However, the bill mandates that receiving colleges must accept the credit. The bill is silent on consultation from their faculty. *As such, the author may wish to consider including consultation with the Academic Senate of the CSU and the Academic Senate of the UC to ensure alignment with academic and competency standards to the extent possible.*
- 5) **Eligible for state apportionment funding.** As noted in the background of this analysis, under state law, certain noncredit courses are eligible for state apportionment funding. Those courses consist of classes relating to career development and college preparation, including instruction of some pre-transfer level courses, supervised tutoring, English as a Second Language courses, and Career Technical Education courses. This bill adds the evaluation, assessment, or portfolio review for the awarding of credit for competency-based educational opportunities to the list of apportionment eligible noncredit courses.
- 6) **Related budget activity.** As noted in the Senate Subcommittee 1 on Education analysis, the 2024-25 Budget Act provided \$6 million in one-time Proposition 98

General Fund for a credit for prior learning initiative within the CCC system. The Chancellor's Office indicates these funds are supporting the Mapping Articulated Pathways (MAP) Initiative, which it administers jointly with the Riverside Community College District. The MAP Initiative provides technology, training, and support to colleges in implementing credit for prior learning. With the 2024-25 appropriation, the Chancellor's Office reports the MAP Initiative is now available to all colleges across the system. While the spending plan for the \$6 million is still being finalized, the Chancellor's Office currently anticipates spending \$1.7 million in 2024-25 and the remaining \$4.3 million in 2025-26.

The Governor's 2025-26 budget proposal also attempts to expand credit for prior learning opportunities by providing \$7 million in ongoing funds and \$43 million in one-time funds from Proposition 98 General Funding to the CCC Chancellor's Office. With these funds, the Chancellor's office is to establish a systemwide credit for prior learning initiative that builds upon prior initiatives. The ongoing funds are for systemwide purposes, including coordination, technology infrastructure, and faculty work groups. The one-time funds are to support local implementation of credit for prior learning. The trailer bill language directs the Chancellor's Office to allocate the one-time funds to colleges based on metrics related to their use of credit for prior learning to increase access, increase completion, and advance career attainment. The language specifies that colleges must demonstrate they are doing those things prior to receiving any funding. The Governor presents this proposal as part of a Master Plan for Career Education.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 685	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Cortese		
Version:	March 26, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: California State University: financial aid for homeless students: pilot program.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Financial Assistance for Students Experiencing Homelessness Pilot Program, upon an appropriation by the Legislature and until July 1, 2031, to be administered by the three participating California State University (CSU) campuses, as defined, for the purpose of increasing access to postsecondary education for students who experienced homelessness during high school. It also requires the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to enter into a data-sharing agreement with the California Department of Education (CDE) for the purposes of identifying and supporting prospective qualifying students. Lastly, this bill requires CSAC and each participating CSU to designate an existing employee to serve as the point of contact for students and staff as well as provide application assistance and other related resources.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

Federal law

- 1) Defines, in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento), "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children who are sharing the housing of other people, living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds, emergency or transitional shelters, abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care placement, or who are living in a place not generally used for sleeping, cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, and migratory children living in the circumstances above. (Title 42 United States Code (USC) § 11434a(2))
- 2) Requires, under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, every local educational agency (LEA) to designate a local liaison for homeless children and youth, who, among other duties, is responsible for ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies, and ensuring that homeless families and homeless children and youth have access to and receive educational services for which such families, children, and youth are eligible. (42 USC § 11432(g))

- 3) Requires, under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, states that receive federal funds to serve homeless children and youth to establish or designate in the state educational agency an Office of the Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths. (42 USC § 11432(d))
- 4) For purposes of calculating annual average costs to attend college and determining financial need for student aid programs, defines “Cost of Attendance” as:
 - a) Tuition and fees normally assessed, including costs for required equipment, materials, or supplies;
 - b) An allowance for books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses, including a computer;
 - c) An allowance, as determined by the institution, for room and board costs, as specified;
 - d) For students enrolled less than half-time, tuition and fees and an allowance for specified costs; and
 - e) Allowances for students who are engaged in work study, are incarcerated, have dependents, or are disabled (20 USC § 1087II).

State law

- 5) Establishes the CSAC as the state agency charged with administering state financial aid programs to qualifying students enrolled in institutions of higher education throughout the state. (Education Code (EC) § 69510 et seq.)
- 6) Defines “cost of attendance” as the monetary costs of attending college or university for the purpose of determining financial aid eligibility. This includes the cost of mandatory systemwide tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses. (EC) § 66028.1(b))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the Financial Assistance for Students Experiencing Homelessness Pilot Program, upon an appropriation by the Legislature and until July 1, 2031, to be administered by the three participating CSU campuses, as specified, for the purpose of increasing access to postsecondary education for students who experienced homelessness during high school.
- 2) Requires, commencing with the 2026-27 academic year, each participating CSU to provide financial assistance to a qualifying student for the remaining balance of the student’s total cost of attendance that exceeds the amount of financial aid

received by the qualifying student during the first four years that the qualifying student is enrolled in the pilot program.

- 3) Requires, in order to receive the remaining balance of financial assistance, that the qualifying student meet all of the following conditions:
 - a) Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act application, including, if applicable, acknowledging past or current experience of homelessness.
 - b) Timely apply for all other federal, state, or institutionally administered grants or free waivers for which the student is eligible.
 - c) Be enrolled in courses leading toward the qualifying student's first baccalaureate degree at an institution of higher education.
 - d) Be enrolled full-time, as determined by the institution.
 - e) Maintain satisfactory academic progress.

- 4) Requires each participating CSU to:
 - a) Designate one existing employee as a liaison to serve as a point of contact for qualifying students and prospective qualifying students. The liaison can have other duties unrelated to their work as the liaison. This liaison is to provide qualifying students and prospective qualifying students with information regarding application assistance, financial assistance, support services, and other resources and assistance that are available to qualifying students.
 - b) Provide CSAC with the contact information for their respective designated liaison.
 - c) Publicize the availability of the pilot program for students experiencing homelessness on their respective websites and notify qualifying students of their eligibility to participate in the pilot program.
 - d) Adopt policies to administer the pilot program.

- 5) Requires CSAC to do all of the following:
 - a) Designate at least one existing employee to assist students experiencing homelessness and support designated high school personnel and prospective qualifying students in applying for and enrolling in a participating CSU.
 - b) Work with high school counselors or other designated personnel to identify prospective qualifying students.

- c) Provide support to designated high school personnel and prospective qualifying students in selecting a participating CSU and programs in which those students may want to enroll.
 - d) At the request of a prospective qualifying student, assist the prospective qualifying student with the completion of an institution's application for admission, the FAFSA, or the California Dream Act Application.
 - e) Enter into a data-sharing agreement with the California Department of Education to share personally identifiable student information for the purposes of identifying and supporting prospective qualifying students. The data-sharing agreement must ensure that any personally identifiable student information shared pursuant to the agreement is shared in compliance with all state and federal privacy laws, including, but not limited to, FERPA.
 - f) Adopt regulations necessary to carry out its duties in accordance with the bill's provisions.
- 6) Defines all of the following terms for purposes of the bill.
- a) "Cost of attendance" to mean the student's tuition and fees, books and supplies, living expenses, transportation expenses, and any other student expenses used to calculate a student's financial need for purposes of student aid programs under the federal Higher Education Act.
 - b) "Financial aid" to mean any private, state, or federal assistance, excluding any federal student loans, that a qualifying student receives.
 - c) "Institution of higher education" or "institution" means San Jose State University and two additional CSU campuses to be selected by the CSU Chancellor's Office to participate in the pilot program.
 - d) "Pilot program" means the Financial Assistance for Students Experiencing Homelessness Pilot Program established pursuant to the bill.
 - e) "Qualifying student" means a California resident who meets all of the following requirements:
 - i) Has been accepted for enrollment at an institution of higher education.
 - ii) Has been identified by designated school personnel as a homeless child or youth pursuant to Section 725 of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a), while residing in California at any time between the start of 9th grade and the end of 12th grade.
 - iii) Will be between 17 and 26 years of age, inclusive, at the time the student receives financial assistance under the pilot program.

- f) “Satisfactory academic progress” has the same meaning as defined in EC § 69406.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill:** According to the author, “Postsecondary education is increasingly essential for breaking the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Yet, youth experiencing homelessness encounter significant challenges in accessing and completing higher education, including barriers related to financial aid, college retention, and degree attainment. Without adequate support, many of these students struggle to pursue their academic and career aspirations, limiting their long-term opportunities.

“A study by the California Homeless Youth Project underscores the severity of this issue—while over 90 percent of surveyed youth had career goals requiring education beyond high school, only 16 percent felt confident in their ability to enroll in or complete college within five years. Systemic challenges, such as financial insecurity, unstable housing, and insufficient academic support, continue to hinder their educational progress.

“Financial aid plays a critical role in making higher education accessible for homeless students. At institutions like California State University (CSU), where approximately 3,200 students identified as homeless during the 2023-2024 financial aid application cycle, financial aid is often their primary means of affording tuition, housing, and basic living expenses. However, even with grants and work contributions, many students still face an unmet financial need of approximately \$10,000 annually—posing a significant obstacle to college persistence and graduation.

“Bridging this financial gap through additional resources and comprehensive support services is vital to improving college completion rates among homeless students. By addressing these disparities, we can empower more students to attain higher education, achieve stability, and build a future beyond homelessness.”

- 2) **Cost of attendance.** Cost of college attendance refers to the total direct and indirect costs of attending college each year. This total includes tuition and fees, housing expenses, transportation expenses, books, supplies, and miscellaneous personal expenses as defined in the federal Higher Education Act. Each college calculates this figure to estimate the net price of college for students and families, as well as to determine state and federal financial aid award amounts. This bill seeks to ensure that for a period of four years the full cost of attendance is covered for a student who experienced homelessness in high school.
- 3) **Packaging multiple offers of student aid.** When a student qualifies for more than one financial aid program, the campus financial aid office will package their aid to help meet the student’s financial need to cover the cost of attendance. A student’s total financial aid package will not exceed the student’s cost of

attendance, but it may not fully cover their remaining need either. The student aid program established in this bill attempts to bridge the remaining funding gap after accounting for other financial aid received by the student. In the absence of further aid, the remaining need informs the student of the extent to which they may need to rely on alternative sources, including increased work hours, loans, or parental contributions.

- 4) **Who is eligible?** Eligible participants are those who have experienced homelessness at some point while attending a high school in California. The bill defines homeless children and youth in accordance with the definition provided in the federal McKinney-Vento Act for supporting homeless students in schools, as outlined in the background section of this analysis. Temporary shelters, hotels/motels, unsheltered situations, or situations where the youth is temporarily doubled up are examples of dwelling types these students may have experienced. The bill identifies San Jose State University and two other CSUs selected by the Chancellor's office to participate in the pilot program. Only eligible students who enroll in a participating CSU may receive payments, which are administered by the campus.

This bill requires qualifying students to be California residents. Existing law established by AB 540 (Firebaugh, Chapter 814, Statutes of 2001) exempts certain nonresident students from paying nonresident tuition who have graduated from a California high school and meet the other applicable qualifications. Additionally, under the terms of the California Dream Act, these students became eligible to apply for student aid programs administered by public higher education institutions. ***Committee staff recommends that the bill be amended to clarify*** that a student who is exempted from nonresident tuition pursuant to Education Code Section 68130.5 qualifies for the program proposed in this bill.

- 5) **Award amounts.** The total unmet need of each student, after considering other forms of financial assistance, will vary. Accordingly, the award amount allocated under the proposed program will vary among its recipients. The author indicates that many students face an unmet financial need of approximately \$10,000 per year. This would necessitate an equivalent allocation of funding to bridge the gap. The bill's provisions are contingent upon a budget appropriation.
- 6) **Two last-dollar programs?** The Cal Grant program serves as the state's principal financial aid program, primarily aimed at covering tuition and fees. However, tuition may comprise less than half of the total cost of attendance. With the increase in housing costs and other living expenses, addressing non-tuition expenses is a central focus of financial aid reform and expansion efforts. These efforts include reconfiguring the Cal Grant program through Cal Grant reform policy and establishing basic needs centers on college campuses. Notably, in the 2022-23 academic year, the state implemented a new set of rules for the Middle Class Scholarship (MCS) program that focuses on the total cost of attendance instead of solely tuition fees. Under the new program, students may use their awards for non-tuition expenses, such as food and housing. CSAC calculates each MCS student's award amount by first determining their remaining cost of attendance, after accounting for other available gift aid, a student contribution from part-time work earnings, and a parent contribution for dependent students

with a household income of more than \$100,000. Then, CSCA will determine what percentage of each student's remaining costs to cover based on the annual appropriation for the program. The program proposed in this bill does not take into account a student or parent contribution. As such, the discrepancy in unmet financial need may be larger than what has been evaluated for MCS. Both programs operate on a last-dollar funding model. This may create implementation challenges, as it is unclear the order of application to a qualified student's financial aid package. Funds from the proposed pilot program may supplant MCS dollars for qualifying students if applied first, thereby potentially freeing up MCS dollars for other students. In 2025-26, the MCS program is estimated to cover only 18 percent of each student's remaining costs for eligible students. The proposed program provides a greater benefit for its qualifying students. *The author may wish to consider clarifying the operational sequence between the two programs.*

- 7) **Report back.** Pilot programs allow policymakers to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of proposed initiatives on a limited scale. The evaluation of the program relies on data to evaluate the program is an essential component of this process. As such, ***the author wishes, and committee staff agrees, that the bill be amended*** to require that the CSU Chancellor, by December 1, 2030, submit a report to the Legislature evaluating the efficacy of the pilot program based on the data collected from each participating campus that shows whether a student's participating in the pilot program improved retention rates, housing attainment, and food insecurity.
- 8) **Related legislation.** SB 33 (Cortese, 2025) requires, upon appropriation by the Legislature and until January 1, 2029, that the Department of Social Services establish the California Success, Opportunity, and Academic Resilience (SOAR) Guaranteed Income Program to provide monthly payments for four months to homeless youth in grade 12 who are enrolled in a public high school. SB 33 was approved by this committee on March 19.

SUPPORT

Alliance for Children's Rights
 Bill Wilson Center
 California Coalition for Youth
 Children's Fund
 Generation Up
 HomeFirst Services of Santa Clara County
 Student Homes Coalition
 Youth Alliance

OPPOSITION

None received

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 743	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Cortese		
Version:	March 26, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: Education finance: Education Equalization Act: Equalization Reserve Account.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Equalization Reserve Account in the General Fund to, upon appropriation, provide additional per-pupil funding for non-basic aid school districts. Funding for this account would be transferred from the General Fund in years when Proposition 98 increases from the prior year, subject to voter approval of an unspecified constitutional amendment.

BACKGROUND

Proposition 98, approved by voters in 1988, constitutionally guarantees minimum annual funding for K-14 education, adjusted annually based on specific economic conditions.

The California Constitution also imposes appropriations limits (the Gann Limit), restricting the total annual appropriations of the state and local governments from exceeding a specified amount, adjusted annually for population and inflation.

In 2013, California significantly restructured school finance through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The LCFF simplified the allocation of state funds to school districts based primarily on average daily attendance (ADA) and student needs, providing base grants and additional supplemental and concentration grants for districts serving higher proportions of disadvantaged students (low-income, foster youth, and English learners).

In 2014, California voters approved Proposition 2, which created the Public School System Stabilization Account (PSSSA), a state-level reserve within Proposition 98 designed to mitigate volatility in school funding.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the Equalization Reserve Account within the state General Fund, dedicated explicitly to addressing per-pupil funding disparities between basic aid and non-basic aid school districts.

- 2) In each fiscal year, when Proposition 98 increases relative to the prior fiscal year, requires the Controller to transfer funds from the General Fund into the Equalization Reserve Account. The amount transferred must be equal to the total amount transferred that same fiscal year from the General Fund into the PSSSA.
- 3) Requires funds deposited into the Equalization Reserve Account to only be appropriated by the Legislature specifically to increase per-pupil funding for non-basic aid school districts. However, the exact manner of distribution and eligibility criteria for these appropriations would be determined by future legislative action.
- 4) Becomes operative only upon voter approval of a constitutional amendment that excludes funds transferred to, or appropriated from, the Equalization Reserve Account from the Proposition 98 calculation and the Gann Limit.
- 5) Specifies that the required constitutional amendment must obligate the Legislature, whenever funds are transferred to the Equalization Reserve Account, to allocate a specified percentage of those funds in each fiscal year directly to increase per-pupil funding levels in non-basic aid districts.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Despite the state’s efforts to equalize school funding, districts primarily in high-income communities where property values generate per-student funding beyond what the state funds, known as basic aid districts, are widening the student achievement gap by outpacing non-basic aid schools. According to California Department of Education data, Palo Alto Unified, one of the wealthiest regions of the state, has a total local property tax Revenue of \$230 million and a per-pupil expenditure of \$29,876. Milpitas Unified, roughly twenty minutes east, has a total property tax revenue of \$75 million and a per-pupil Expenditure of \$16,504.

“Districts with higher spending per pupil tend to have a higher percentage of students meeting math, English, language, and arts standards. According to a study by the Learning Policy Institute, a \$1,000 per pupil increase over three years boosted math and reading achievement by an entire grade level, raised high school graduation rates by 8.2 percentage points, and improved college readiness. Additionally, suspension and expulsion rates decreased, especially for Black students, while investments in smaller classes and higher teacher pay further improved outcomes.

“Discrepancies in funding based on where a student lives are unjust and will have longer-term impacts on our most vulnerable student populations. Providing an additional funding source to non-basic aid districts will ensure that we are in alignment with our state’s equity goals and ensure economic mobility for students, no matter their zip code.”

- 2) ***LCFF: Major Advances in Equity, With Room for Further Progress.*** Before the LCFF was enacted in 2013, California’s education finance system relied on

revenue limits and categorical funding streams, resulting in substantial and widespread funding disparities across all districts. These categorical programs each had unique restrictions, complicating district budgeting and limiting local discretion. The LCFF represented a transformative shift toward funding simplicity, transparency, equity, and local flexibility, consolidating many categorical programs and targeting additional resources explicitly toward disadvantaged student populations (low-income, English learners, and foster youth).

As recent analyses have emphasized, the LCFF was a major step forward in educational equity, empowering districts to align funding decisions with local priorities and student needs. At the same time, it is widely recognized that the LCFF has limitations, and ongoing research and policy discussions continue to explore ways to strengthen the formula to better support all students.

- 3) ***Ongoing LCFF Research Highlights Areas for Improvement—But Not Basic Aid Disparities.*** Recent LCFF reports—including the 2021 analysis by Hahnel and Humphrey and both the 2023 and 2025 reports from the Learning Policy Institute (LPI)—have focused on improving base funding levels, increasing support for districts with high concentrations of disadvantaged students, and transitioning from attendance-based to enrollment-based funding to promote greater fiscal stability and equity. These analyses reflect a sustained effort to build upon the LCFF’s equity-centered foundation.

However, none of these major reports have directly addressed funding disparities between basic aid and non-basic aid districts. The absence of attention to this issue in recent research suggests that equity efforts under LCFF have primarily focused on system-wide structural reforms, rather than inter-district funding differences tied to local property tax variations. As such, this bill raises a funding issue that has not been a central focus in recent LCFF policy discussions.

- 4) ***Proposition 98, the PSSSA, and Fiscal Volatility.*** Proposition 98 constitutionally guarantees minimum education funding, yet annual fiscal volatility remains challenging. To mitigate this volatility, Proposition 2 (2014) established the PSSSA, a reserve account designed to stabilize school funding. Deposits into the PSSSA are triggered only under specific fiscal conditions: notably, state capital gains tax revenues must exceed a certain threshold (8% of General Fund revenues), the Proposition 98 “Test 1” funding scenario must apply (typically occurring during strong economic periods), no outstanding Proposition 98 maintenance factor obligations may exist, and overall Proposition 98 funding must have increased compared to the previous fiscal year. If all conditions are met, the portion of capital gains revenues above the 8% threshold must be deposited—up to a maximum of 10% of the Proposition 98 guarantee for that year.

Given these narrow conditions, PSSSA deposits have been infrequent and unpredictable since eligibility began in 2019-20:

- a) 2019-20: No deposit

- b) 2020-21: \$3.3 billion deposit
- c) 2021-22: \$4.8 billion deposit
- d) 2022-23: \$272 million deposit
- e) 2023-24: No deposit; withdrawal of \$8.4 billion
- f) 2024-25 (revised): \$1.2 billion deposit
- g) 2025-26 (proposed): \$376 million deposit

This variability underscores ongoing challenges with relying solely on the PSSSA to address fiscal volatility and stabilize funding for districts.

- 5) ***Fiscal Impact: A Second PSSSA Payment from Non-Proposition 98 Funds.*** This bill would create an Equalization Reserve Account, requiring annual transfers equal to the mandatory deposit into the PSSSA. By effectively establishing a double payment—this time funded from outside the Proposition 98 guarantee—the bill substantially increases the state’s total fiscal commitments during certain, and unpredictable, economic periods.

Key implications of this approach include:

- a) ***Budgetary Constraints:*** Matching deposits to both reserves could significantly limit General Fund flexibility, potentially restricting available funding for other critical state programs and services.
- b) ***Predictability and Stability:*** Due to the historical infrequency and volatility of PSSSA deposits, funding for non-basic aid districts via the proposed Equalization Reserve Account may similarly become unpredictable, complicating long-term planning for districts.
- c) ***Equity and Consistency Concerns:*** In years without PSSSA deposits, non-basic aid districts would receive no additional resources, possibly exacerbating fiscal uncertainties rather than resolving them.

The author should assess these fiscal and practical considerations when evaluating the overall effectiveness of this policy approach in achieving sustained equity improvements across school districts.

- 6) ***Constitutional and Appropriations Limit Interactions.*** Beyond budgetary implications, implementing the Equalization Reserve Account requires careful consideration of constitutional constraints and spending limits. This bill proposes exempting the Equalization Reserve Account from Proposition 98 calculations and the state’s appropriations limit (the Gann Limit), pending voter approval. California’s appropriations limit restricts state spending growth based on population and inflation, complicating budgeting for sustained educational investments. Exempting the Equalization Reserve Account from these limits would avoid triggering unintended budget constraints and might provide greater

fiscal predictability, but it requires careful constitutional consideration and voter endorsement.

- 7) ***Potential Unintended Consequences for Districts that are Very close to the Basic Aid Threshold.*** This bill's proposed Equalization Reserve Account treats all basic aid districts the same, failing to acknowledge that basic aid districts vary significantly in their fiscal conditions. Some basic aid districts consistently generate local property tax revenues substantially exceeding their LCFF entitlements, while others—known as “basic aid flippers” or marginal basic aid districts—exceed their state entitlements by only a slim margin and frequently alternate between basic and non-basic aid status.

According to 2023–24 state funding data, 139 school districts are basic aid. Among them, 16 districts exceeded their LCFF entitlement by less than 5%, and 32 districts by less than 10%, indicating a sizable number of basic aid districts are only narrowly above the threshold. On the other side, 20 non-basic aid districts received less than 5% of their LCFF entitlement from the state, and 40 received less than 10%, placing them just below the threshold and similarly vulnerable to small shifts in property tax revenue or enrollment.

Although future legislation would be required to determine how funds in the Equalization Reserve Account would be distributed, this bill draws a hard line that excludes all basic aid districts from eligibility—regardless of how far above the LCFF threshold they fall. By doing so, the bill does not account for the full spectrum of basic aid districts and risks leaving out districts that may not be significantly wealthier than their non-basic aid peers. The author should consider whether a more tailored policy approach is needed to avoid unintended fiscal disparities and ensure a more equitable distribution framework.

SUPPORT

DJM Capital Partners (co-sponsor)
 Latino Education Advancement Foundation (co-sponsor)
 Legislative Action Committee - Santa Clara County School Boards Association (co-sponsor)
 Silicon Valley Education Foundation (co-sponsor)
 Advanced Consulting
 Berryessa Union School District
 Franklin-Mckinley School District
 Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley
 Mountain View Los Altos High School District
 Oak Grove School District
 San Francisco State University
 Silicon Valley Leadership Group
 Veggielution
 One Individual

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 835 **Hearing Date:** April 9, 2025
Author: Ochoa Bogh
Version: March 25, 2025
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** No
Consultant: Therresa Austin

Subject: Pupil instruction: Cambridge International Education programs.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes the consideration of the Cambridge International Education program for the purposes of school principal evaluation and education counseling where Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations are currently specified. This bill also authorizes a school district that offers Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), or Advanced Subsidiary (AS) or Advanced (A) level courses and examinations, to help pay the test fees for pupils in need of financial assistance.

BACKGROUND

Existing Law:

- 1) Authorizes a school principal evaluation to include local and state academic assessments, state standardized assessments, formative, summative, benchmark, end of chapter, end of course, AP, IB, college entrance, and performance assessments. (Education Code (EC) § 44671)
- 2) Authorizes the governing board of a school district to, and urges it to, provide access to a comprehensive educational counseling program for all students enrolled in the school district. States the intent of the Legislature that a school district that provides educational counseling to its pupils implement a structured and coherent counseling program within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework. Authorizes educational counseling to include counseling in developing a list of coursework and experience necessary to assist and counsel each pupil to begin to satisfy the A–G requirements for admission to the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) and encourage participation in college preparation programs, including, but not limited to, the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, early college, dual enrollment, AP, and IB programs. (EC § 49600)
- 3) Authorizes a school district to help pay for all or part of the costs of one or more AP or IB examinations that are charged to economically disadvantaged pupils. (EC § 52242 and 52922)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Expands list of assessments that may be used to measure pupil academic growth for a principal evaluation to explicitly include the Cambridge International Level examinations.
- 2) Expands the scope of an educational counseling program to explicitly include encouraging participation in Cambridge International programs for the purposes of college preparedness.
- 3) Makes findings and declarations, including that a school district that offers Cambridge IGCSE, or Cambridge International AS or A Level courses and examinations, to help pay the test fees for pupils in need of financial assistance.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “SB 835 will simply update the Education Code to provide parity between the Cambridge International Education program and other established providers of advanced placement curriculum and assessments.

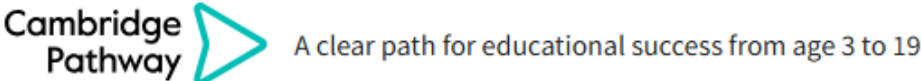
“The bill does not place additional requirements on school districts or students. However, placing Cambridge International in law will benefit current and future Cambridge International students.”

- 2) ***Cambridge International.*** Cambridge International offers a comprehensive K-12 educational system called the Cambridge Pathway which is made up of 5 stages. It combines teaching and learning with assessments that measure student mastery. Each stage of this pathway builds on learners’ development from the previous one. Schools have the flexibility to offer any of the stages and courses alongside other curricula. Over 10,000 schools in more than 160 countries provide Cambridge qualifications. According to Cambridge International’s 2024 Annual Report, 571,000 students from 145 countries took Cambridge exams. Cambridge University Press & Assessment is a not-for-profit organization and a part of the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

Currently, the Fullerton Joint Union High School District, Inglewood Unified School District, Canyon Elementary School District, Montebello Unified School District, and Placentia-Yorba Unified School District are the only California local education agencies (LEAs) utilizing Cambridge International.

Cambridge International AS Levels and A Levels are subject-based qualifications usually taken in the final two years of high school. AS Level is typically a one-year program of study, while A Level typically takes two years. Assessments take place at the end of each program. Cambridge International subject areas are comprised of the following: English, Mathematics, Science, Languages, Humanities, Technology, Social Sciences, the Arts, and General Studies.

The Cambridge International A Level is reported on a grade scale from A* (highest) to E (minimum required performance). There is no A* grade for Cambridge International AS Levels, which are reported from grade a to e. Cambridge IGCSE is graded A*-G. Grades are awarded only for subjects that students pass. If a student does not earn a passing score, the exam would be denoted as a “U” and receive an ‘ungraded’ result.



Cambridge Early Years	Cambridge Primary	Cambridge Lower Secondary	Cambridge Upper Secondary	Cambridge Advanced
<p>Age 3+</p> <p>A play-based programme, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a holistic curriculum • engaging resources • support to measure progress 	<p>Age 5+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, adaptable curriculum • Flexible assessment options • Support and resources • Insight to understand potential 	<p>Age 11+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, adaptable curriculum • Flexible assessment options • Support and resources • Insight to predict performance 	<p>Age 14+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad, adaptable curriculum • Fair, valid, reliable assessment • Support and resources • Insight to optimise achievement 	<p>Age 16+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth, adaptable curriculum • Fair, valid, reliable assessment • Support and resources • Insight to predict performance
<p>6 curriculum areas including Personal, social and emotional development</p>	<p>10+ subjects including English, Mathematics and Science</p>	<p>10+ subjects including English, Mathematics and Science</p>	<p>Cambridge IGCSE™: 70+ subjects Cambridge O Level: 40+ subjects Cambridge ICE</p>	<p>Cambridge International AS & A Level: 50+ subjects Cambridge AICE, Cambridge IPO</p>

According to information supplied by Cambridge International, at the Advanced level, exams cost \$121.15 each. If a student takes both the AS and A level exams in a single subject in the same series, those two exams cost \$195.95 together. At present, Cambridge International does not provide individual student fee waivers for those in need of financial assistance.

This bill would authorize school districts that offer Cambridge International programs to help pay the test fees for pupils in need of financial assistance in the same way they are authorized for AP and IB examinations.

- 3) **Advanced Placement.** The College Board manages the AP program, a non-profit organization that aims to connect students to higher education success and opportunities. The program enables high school teachers to teach introductory college-level courses to high school students. At the end of the year, students take a standardized test in one of the 35 subject areas offered by the program. If students score well, they may receive college credit from the university they later enroll in.

The AP program offers exams in various subjects, such as Arts, English, History and Social Sciences, Math and Computer Science, Sciences, and World Languages and Cultures. Each exam is scored on a 5-point scale that

determines how qualified a student is to receive college credit and placement. However, each college decides what scores to grant credit or placement. The AP program conducts studies in all subjects to compare AP student performance with college students in similar courses. These studies determine how AP students' scores are translated into an AP score of 1-5. More than 60 percent of all exams taken earn a score of 3 or higher. Students may receive extra points on their grade point average by participating in an AP course, depending on locally developed policies.

As of 2025, the AP Program charges a fee of \$99 per exam except for AP Seminar or AP Research Exams where the fee is \$147 per exam. College Board provides a \$37 fee reduction per AP Exam for eligible students with financial need.

- 4) ***International Baccalaureate.*** The IB is a non-profit organization based in Switzerland that serves students in multiple countries and reports more than 1,700 schools in the United States. Its three programs (Primary Years Program, Middle Years Program, and pre-university Diploma Program (DP)) aim to develop students who contribute to a more peaceful world by promoting intercultural understanding and respect. The curriculum is made up of the DP core (theory of knowledge, extended essay and creativity, activity, and service) and six subject groups (studies in language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, and the arts) for students 16-19 years of age. The IB program provides a curriculum framework teachers can teach and an end-of-course exam for students. Participation in an IB course or program may add extra points to a student's grade point average by locally developed policies. IB exams are scored on a scale of 1-7 with 7 being the highest score.

For the May and November 2025 examination sessions, the IB program charges an assessment fee \$79 per subject for the Middle Years Program and assessment fee of \$123 per subject for the DP. At present, it does not appear that IB has an independent policy of providing fee waivers or discounts for students in need of financial assistance.

- 5) ***Including, but not limited to.*** This bill seeks to explicitly add consideration of Cambridge International programs and examinations (1) for the purposes of measuring pupil academic growth for school principal evaluations and (2) to the scope of additional services that may be included within a school's educational counseling program. However, current statute already provides flexibility in the respective code sections to consider relevant programs and assessments beyond what is explicitly stated.

As discussed in Comment 6, this is the third effort in recent memory to explicitly add Cambridge International to Education Code in sections where similar programs such as AP and IB enjoy codification. According to the author's statement, "placing Cambridge International in law will benefit current and future Cambridge International students" but it cannot be overlooked that Cambridge International also stands to benefit as well.

In the original effort for codification, AB 1509 (Quirk-Silva, 2023), the bill ultimately moved away from explicit mentions of Cambridge International or other programs and instead tasked a separate entity—the State Board of Education (SBE)—with creating an approval process for any additional exam or course programs that sought to be included in statute or enjoy similar benefits. This sought to address the underlying conflict that may arise when private entities are explicitly named in statute while also appropriately empowering practitioners and experts to determine the rigor necessary for new programs to be used as benchmarks for student success, achievement, and beyond.

AP and IB programs were codified in California Education Code in 1992 and 1998, respectively. It is not immediately clear what level of scrutiny those programs underwent as they were codified, however, they are broadly recognized today and are almost inextricable from a California student's educational experience. Any additional programs that are codified in this manner would likely enjoy similar esteem.

As the author seeks to explicitly add a new entity in this space, they may wish to consider whether these explicit mentions in statute are necessary to achieve the substantive effect of consideration, which is already afforded under existing law. They may also wish to consider whether the Legislature is the best equipped to make the determination to add a new entity without first conducting a more rigorous evaluation of the return on investment that each of these programs may provide to our state and to our students.

6) **Prior legislation.**

SB 1171 (Newman, 2024) would have required the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to annually update information on the Cambridge Assessment International Education program available on the California Department of Education (CDE) website to include current information on the various programs available to school districts to offer or access Cambridge Assessment International Education AS and A level courses, including online courses. Would have required and authorized the use of the Cambridge Assessment International Education program throughout the Education Code where AP and IB are currently specified. SB 835 is substantively similar to SB 1171. SB 1171 was held in Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1509 (Quirk-Silva, 2023) would have added, in areas of the Education Code that provide certain authorizations to the AP and IB courses and exam programs, other course and exam programs, such as Cambridge Assessment International Education Cambridge International. The bill also would have required the SBE to develop criteria for evaluating other course and exam programs for inclusion in the areas of the Education Code that provide certain authorization to AP and IB. AB 1509 was nearly identical to SB 1171 (Newman). This bill was held in Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2216 (Escutia, Chapter 793, Statutes of 1998) established a 5-year pilot grant program, administered by the CDE, for the purpose of awarding grants to cover

the costs of AP examination fees. Authorized any school district to apply to the CDE for grant funding based on the number of economically disadvantaged pupils in the district who would take the next offered AP examinations. Authorized any economically disadvantaged pupil enrolled in an AP course to apply to designated school district staff for a grant.

SB 553 (Hart, Chapter 83, Statutes of 1992) authorized school districts receiving economic impact aid funds to expend those funds to pay for all or part of the costs of AP examinations that are charged to economically disadvantaged pupils. Required the SPI, no later than June 30, 1995, to submit a report to the Legislature describing the effectiveness of that funding in increasing the number of economically disadvantaged pupils enrolled in AP courses who take and pass AP examinations.

SUPPORT

Escondido Union High School District
Fullerton Joint Union High School District
Inglewood Unified School District
Madera County Superintendent of Schools
Madera Unified School District
Montebello Unified School District
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
Small School Districts Association

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 619	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Committee on Education		
Version:	April 1, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: Public postsecondary education

SUMMARY

This bill makes non-controversial, technical and conforming changes to various provisions of the Education Code.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Required, by May 31, 2023, the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community College (CCC) establish a singular lower division general education pathway that meets the academic requirements necessary for transfer admission to the CSU and UC.
- 2) Required the administrative bodies of the UC, CSU and CCC to establish a singular lower division general education pathway for transfer to CSU and the UC, by December 31, 2023, if the intersegmental committee is unable to come to agreement.
- 3) Requires, commencing with the fall term of the 2025-26 academic year, the singular pathway established pursuant to this bill, be the *only* lower division general education pathway used to determine academic eligibility and sufficient academic preparation for transfer admission to CSU and UC.
- 4) Prohibits the establishment of a pathway that lengthens time to degree and one that exceeds the number of units required under IGETC. (Education Code § 66749.8)
- 5) Requires funds appropriated to the Board of Governors of the CCC for the Foster Care Education Program to be used for foster parent and relative/kinship care provider education, as defined. (Education Code § 79420)

ANALYSIS

This bill makes non-controversial, technical and conforming changes to various provisions of the Education Code. Specifically, it:

- 1) Updates the Education Code to align with the new CalGETC singular general education transfer pathway from CCC to UC or CSU campus.

- 2) Updates Foster and Kinship references throughout the Education Code.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Non-controversial provisions.** This bill is the annual higher education omnibus clean-up bill and proposes technical, non-controversial amendments to existing law. By tradition, if any affected agency, stakeholder group, the Department of Finance, or any of the four legislative caucuses objects to a provision in the bill or one that is being considered, that particular provision cannot be included.
- 2) **Rationale for inclusion in the omnibus bill.** This omnibus measure makes several changes to the EC, below is the rationale for each change:
 - a) *CalGETC.* AB 928 required the CSU and UC to jointly establish a singular lower division general education pathway for admission into both segments.
 - b) *Foster and Kinship Care Education program.* Updates Foster and Kinship references in the Education Code to align with new terminology used in other statutes.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 845	Hearing Date:	April 9, 2025
Author:	Pérez		
Version:	April 1, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: Pupil instruction: career technical education, career education, and apprenticeships.

NOTE: This bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the Committee on *Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement*.

SUMMARY

This bill makes several changes to the state’s framework for career technical education (CTE) and work-based learning, including: (1) revising the process for updating model CTE curriculum standards by requiring consultation with CTE teachers and labor representatives; (2) expanding the authority of local educational agencies (LEAs), including state special schools, to offer and award credit for work-based learning activities beginning in grade 10; (3) establishing an interagency workgroup to develop occupational frameworks for youth apprenticeships; and (4) requiring the California Department of Education (CDE) to collect data on work-based learning participation, subject to an appropriation.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to coordinate the development of model curriculum standards for required courses of study for grades 7 to 12, including CTE courses, and to seek the advice of classroom teachers, school administrators, parents, postsecondary educators, and representatives of business and industry in developing these standards. (Education Code (EC) § 51226)
- 2) Requires the SPI, upon adoption of the model curriculum standards for grades 7 to 12, to develop a curriculum framework that offers a blueprint for implementing CTE and to work in consultation and coordination with an advisory group that includes CTE teachers, administrators, business and industry representatives, labor organizations, and others. (EC § 51226.1)
- 3) Authorizes the governing board of a school district maintaining a high school to establish work-based learning or work experience education programs to provide pupils with instruction in skills, attitudes, and understanding necessary for success in employment; and to approve and supervise such placements, arrange

- for appropriate credit, and provide or require liability insurance. (EC § 51760 et seq.)
- 4) Authorizes work-based learning opportunities to be delivered by partnership academies, regional occupational centers and programs (ROCPs), and LEAs, including work experience education, community classrooms, cooperative CTE programs, and job shadowing. (EC § 51760.3)
 - 5) Requires school district governing boards to grant credit to pupils in grade 11 or higher for completion of a work experience education program that meets certain criteria, including alignment with CTE model curriculum standards. (EC § 51760.3)
 - 6) Authorizes the governing board of a high school district, an ROCP established by joint powers agreement, or a county superintendent of schools operating an ROCP to establish cooperative CTE programs or community classrooms as part of a CTE course. (EC § 52372)
 - 7) Requires the SPI to adopt rules and regulations for cooperative CTE programs and community classrooms offered through ROCPs operated by joint powers agreements or county offices. (EC § 52372)
 - 8) Requires school districts that choose to expend supplemental CTE grant funds or accept other funds for CTE purposes to provide a series of programs offering sequences of courses that lead to specific competencies, and to develop articulation plans with community colleges to extend course sequences through grades 13 and 14. (EC § 52376)
 - 9) Establishes the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) within the Department of Industrial Relations to oversee apprenticeship programs, and requires the Chief of the Division to perform various functions to promote the welfare of apprentices. (Labor Code § 3070 et seq.)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Revises the process for developing and updating model curriculum standards and the curriculum framework for CTE by:
 - a) Requiring the SPI to consult with CTE teachers and representatives of labor, rather than classroom teachers generally;
 - b) Requiring consultation with CTE industry advisory groups consistent with the Carl D. Perkins State Plan;
 - c) Defining “cyclical basis” as a period not to exceed five years; and
 - d) Requiring CDE to convene an advisory group for each CTE subject area offered to pupils in grades 7 to 12.

- 2) Expands the authority of LEAs, including state special schools, to establish and operate work-based learning and work experience education programs, and to award academic credit for student participation in these programs.
- 3) Defines key terms related to work-based learning, including “work-based learning,” “work experience education,” “internship,” “mentorship,” “school-based apprenticeship,” “school-based enterprise,” and others, to provide clarity and consistency across program types.
- 4) Extends eligibility for receiving academic credit for work experience education to pupils beginning in grade 10, rather than only those in grades 11 and 12.
- 5) Authorizes LEAs that do not operate a ROCP to offer work experience education courses for the purpose of granting credit toward high school graduation.
- 6) Revises the SPI’s rulemaking authority by specifying that regulations related to cooperative CTE programs and community classrooms apply only to programs offered through ROCPs operated by joint powers agreements or county superintendents.
- 7) Updates requirements for LEAs that accept CTE funding to:
 - a) Offer a sequence of at least two courses within each series of CTE programs leading to specific competencies; and
 - b) Develop articulation plans with community colleges that establish opportunities for pupils to earn college credit, meet prerequisites for CTE certificates and degrees, and align instruction through grades 13 and 14.
- 8) Requires CDE, in collaboration with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, to convene an interagency workgroup to:
 - a) Develop guidance for youth apprenticeship programs registered with the DAS;
 - b) Establish priorities for occupational and industry skills frameworks; and
 - c) Present those frameworks to DAS for adoption, modification, or rejection.
- 9) Requires CDE, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish a statewide system for collecting and maintaining data on work-based learning, work experience education, school-based registered apprenticeships, and work permits issued by LEAs.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California’s education and workforce frameworks are leaving many students behind, especially low-income, Black, Latino and English Learner youth who enroll in college at lower rates and face

barriers to completing a four-year degree. While 62% of high school graduates enroll in college within a year, only 34% of Californians hold at least a bachelor's degree. At the same time, 30% of future jobs will require training beyond high school, but less than a four-year degree. Our career education system is not meeting the needs of students and workforce demands. California voters recognize this gap, as highlighted in a recent survey where “three-quarters of voters believe it is very or extremely important for K-12 schools to provide career-connected learning and develop partnerships with colleges and employers.”

“SB 845 expands access to career-connected learning across the state by strengthening hands-on learning opportunities, removing barriers to industry participation, and connecting students with high-demand careers – all efforts that are guided by the Career Education Master Plan and the recommendations of the California Youth Apprenticeship Committee. Doing so will provide a strong foundation for preparing students for career success, which is essential for building a more inclusive economy.”

- 2) ***The current state of CTE and work-based learning in California.*** California has significantly expanded support for CTE and work-based learning over the last decade, both through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and through nearly \$500 million in ongoing state categorical programs. The two largest are the CTE Incentive Grant (CTEIG) and the K–12 Strong Workforce Program, each distributing hundreds of millions of dollars annually to help schools expand CTE access, align instruction with workforce needs, and develop partnerships with industry and community colleges. These are layered on top of LCFF funding, which already includes a high school base rate adjustment to reflect the higher cost of CTE programs.

At the same time, the state has called for better alignment across the education and workforce systems. The Governor's 2023 executive order launched the development of a new Master Plan on Career Education to tackle fragmentation, and this bill appears to anticipate and support that effort. While CTE opportunities have expanded, access and outcomes remain uneven. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), only 18% of high school graduates complete a full CTE pathway, and the share of students deemed “prepared” on the College and Career Indicator (CCI) remains below 50%. Students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless youth are far less likely to be deemed college- or career-ready. This bill engages directly with some of those challenges—by clarifying roles, aligning standards, and building better data systems.

- 3) ***Laying groundwork for the state's evolving vision for career education and youth apprenticeship.*** In early 2024, two major statewide efforts began to reshape how California approaches career education. The Governor's Office released the core concepts for a forthcoming Master Plan on Career Education, outlining a long-term vision to better align education and workforce systems. The plan emphasizes expanding work-based learning, improving coordination across agencies, and making it easier for students—especially those from underserved backgrounds—to access pathways that lead to living-wage jobs. Around the same time, the California Youth Apprenticeship Committee (CYAC) released a

detailed set of recommendations to establish a statewide youth apprenticeship system. That report proposed a new “Career Apprenticeship Bridge” model that would begin in high school and continue through college, supported by clearer definitions, shared data, and intermediary partnerships.

This bill aligns with many of the priorities identified in both efforts. It clarifies definitions for work-based learning, directs regular updates to CTE standards, expands who can offer credit-bearing programs, and establishes an interagency workgroup to develop youth apprenticeship frameworks. While this bill does not fully implement either initiative, it reflects the direction the state is headed and could help lay the groundwork for future implementation.

- 4) ***What is the right age to begin work-based learning?*** This bill allows students in grade 10 to earn credit for work experience education, instead of waiting until grade 11. That could provide more time for career exploration and skill-building, especially if paired with classroom instruction. But younger students may need more structure, supervision, and support to benefit fully. Research from the National Center for College and Career Transitions emphasizes that high-quality work-based learning for underclassmen needs to be developmentally appropriate and meaningfully integrated into students’ academic programs. LEAs may need guidance on designing placements that meet these criteria.
- 5) ***Do curriculum standards keep pace with industry change?*** The bill requires model CTE standards and frameworks to be updated at least every five years. This is a clear improvement over the status quo, where updates have sometimes lagged. However, industry demands—especially in tech, clean energy, and health—are shifting quickly. The LAO notes that course offerings vary widely by region and that many programs are still locally determined. A five-year cycle might not be enough to reflect fast-moving labor trends. The state could consider ways to build in more frequent review for high-growth sectors or allow interim updates to be made more easily in response to employer input.
- 6) ***Data collection is improving—but still limited.*** The state currently collects CTE course and enrollment data through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), and LEAs report pathway completion data as required by federal law. But much of this data is not publicly reported or disaggregated, and there are no standard metrics for emerging priorities like career exploration. Although participation in CTE is high—roughly 70% of graduates take at least one CTE course—only a small fraction complete full pathways or receive meaningful postsecondary or labor market benefit. This bill’s call for a statewide data system is a timely step toward improving transparency and accountability, especially if it builds on existing efforts and is designed with student privacy in mind.
- 7) ***A useful step toward better coordination—but not a full fix.*** This bill’s proposal to establish an interagency workgroup involving CDE, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO), and the DAS aims to break down silos across education and workforce systems. This aligns with the goals of the forthcoming Master Plan on Career Education and echoes longstanding recommendations to simplify and align CTE governance. But coordination alone

isn't enough—these efforts will need clear leadership, timelines, and goals. Prior interagency efforts in this space have struggled without those elements.

- 8) **Clarifying what work-based learning means—and who delivers it.** This bill provides detailed definitions for terms like “internship,” “mentorship,” and “school-based enterprise,” which could help standardize programs across the state. However, staff notes that CTE programs are often designed locally to reflect workforce needs and student interest. Overly narrow definitions might constrain innovation or create confusion for programs that fall outside the listed categories. As implementation unfolds, there may be a need to revisit these definitions to ensure they support rather than limit good local programs.
- 9) **Opening up credit-bearing work experience to more LEAs—especially small or rural ones.** By allowing LEAs that do not operate a ROCP to offer credit for work-based learning, the bill could help expand access to students in smaller districts or rural communities. However, these districts may face barriers in staffing, employer outreach, or compliance with grant program rules. Implementation support and technical assistance could help ensure that students in under-resourced areas benefit from this expanded authority.
- 10) **The ongoing complexity of CTE funding may limit this bill's impact.** The state's approach to CTE funding relies heavily on categorical programs layered on top of the LCFF. While this helps ensure dedicated spending, it also creates complexity. Districts must apply separately for each program, track multiple match requirements, and navigate different reporting rules. This bill doesn't directly address that issue, but its emphasis on coordination and clarity could serve as a foundation for future conversations about streamlining or consolidating CTE funding streams.
- 11) **Author Amendments to Be Taken as Committee Amendments.** The author has submitted amendments that **staff recommends** processing as committee amendments due to timing constraints associated with the bill's double referral to the Committee on Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement.

The amendments make clarifying, conforming, and technical changes throughout the bill, many of which reflect internal cleanup and sponsor feedback. Key themes of the amendments include:

- a) **CTE Standards and Frameworks:** Clarify that California's model curriculum standards for CTE have not been updated in over a decade, and support efforts to implement and maintain updated standards on a regular five-year cycle. Ensure that instructional frameworks are updated in tandem with standards and that LEAs are supported in aligning programs with those updates.
- b) **Work-Based Learning Definitions and Structure:** Refine statutory definitions for terms like “work-based learning,” “work experience education,” “mentorship,” “school-based apprenticeship,” and “industry skills frameworks.” Improve consistency across code sections and ensure

clarity in implementation, including for students in adult education and alternative instructional models.

- c) *Expansion of LEA Authority:* Clarify and expand the authority of LEAs—including charter schools, Joint Power Authorities (JPAs), and county offices of education—to award credit for work-based learning activities and serve as employers of record when necessary. Standardize references to liability coverage and clarify conditions under which LEAs may provide insurance for off-campus work placements.
- d) *Streamlining Governance and Program Alignment:* Strike obsolete or duplicative references to ROCPs, and clarify that LEAs may develop programs independently where ROCPs no longer operate. Align the bill's language with statewide workforce initiatives like CA Jobs First by allowing programs to respond to both regional and statewide labor market needs.
- e) *Data Collection and Accountability:* Clarify that the bill does not require CDE to develop a new data system, but instead builds on CALPADS functionality already piloted to capture work-based learning data for the College and Career Indicator. Ensure consistency and avoid unnecessary costs.
- f) *Labor Code Conformity:* Add parallel sections to the Labor Code to support cross-agency coordination between CDE and DAS and to ensure definitional alignment between education and labor statutes—particularly for school-based youth apprenticeship programs.

Staff concurs with these amendments, which do not significantly alter the core policy of the bill and are intended to improve clarity, reduce redundancy, and support implementation across diverse school and program settings.

SUPPORT

California Workforce Association (co-sponsor)
 NextGen California (co-sponsor)
 Alameda County Office of Education
 Apprenticeships for America
 CareerWise
 DIAG USA
 Foothill Workforce Development Board
 Golden Sierra Job Training Agency
 Goodwill Southern California
 Imperial County Workforce Development Board
 Launch Apprenticeship Network
 Merced Workforce Development Board
 Mother Lode Job Training
 North Central Counties Consortium
 Oakland Workforce Development Board
 Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship
 Pleasanton Unified School District

Richmond Workforce Development Board
South Bay Workforce Investment Board
The Anaheim Workforce Development Board
Unite-LA

OPPOSITION

None received

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