
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 141
Author: Bonilla
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Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Teacher credentialing: beginning teacher induction programs

SUMMARY

This bill requires a local educational agency (LEA), including charter schools, to provide an induction program for newly hired teachers and also prohibits them from charging the teachers a fee to participate in the induction program.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires a teacher to complete one of the following beginning teacher induction programs in order to obtain a clear multiple or single subject teaching credential:
 - a) A program of beginning teacher support and assessment approved by the commission and the Superintendent, a provision of the Marian Bergeson Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment System.
 - b) An alternative program of beginning teacher induction that is provided by one or more local educational agencies and has been approved by the commission and the Superintendent on the basis of initial review and periodic evaluations of the program in relation to appropriate standards of credential program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the commission, the Superintendent, and the State Board.
 - c) An alternative program of beginning teacher induction that is sponsored by a regionally accredited college or university, in cooperation with one or more local school districts, that addresses the individual professional needs of beginning teachers and meets the commission's standards of induction.
- 2) Specifies that if a candidate satisfies the requirements, including completion of an accredited internship program of professional preparation, and if that internship program fulfills induction standards and is approved, the commission shall determine that the candidate has fulfilled the induction requirements.
- 3) Specifies that if an approved induction program is verified as unavailable to a beginning teacher, or if the beginning teacher is required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act to complete subject matter coursework to be qualified for a teaching assignment, the commission shall accept completion of an approved clear credential program after completion of a baccalaureate degree at a regionally accredited institution as fulfilling the induction requirements.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Makes various findings and declarations for the effectiveness of induction programs for beginning teachers and their access to these programs.
- 2) Provides that commencing with hiring for the 2016-17 school year, and each school year thereafter, a school district, county office of education, or charter school that hires a beginning teacher shall provide that beginning teacher with a program of beginning teacher induction, unless the beginning teacher meets specified requirements. Specifies that a beginning teacher includes a teacher with a preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential, or a preliminary education specialist credential.
- 3) Prohibits a local educational agency (LEA) or charter school from charging a fee to a beginning teacher to participate in the beginning teacher induction program or an alternative program of beginning teacher induction.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author's office, "nearly 12 percent of providers are charging teachers for induction. Local education agencies are charging teachers as much as \$2,500 per year for the two year program, placing heavy financial burdens on teachers just starting their careers. Further adding to the program, some districts are ending their induction programs, placing the burden of identifying, accessing, and completing a quality induction program solely on new teachers. A new teacher's inability to access an induction program compromises that teacher's professional growth and greatly reduces the chance that he or she will stay in the profession."
- 2) ***Teacher induction.*** According to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), induction for new teachers in California has evolved in significant ways over its 25 year history. The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program was established as a result of a pilot study conducted during 1988 to 1992 by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the California Department of Education. This pilot study, known as the California New Teacher Project demonstrated that the state could increase beginning teacher retention, success and effectiveness, by providing all new teachers with structured mentoring and support. The Governor and the Legislature established the BTSA Program as part of the 1992-93 Budget Act. At that time, the program was a grant program designed to support new teachers and was not a credential requirement for teachers.

From 1995 until 2009 BTSA Induction programs operated with dedicated Proposition 98 funding based on a per-participating teacher allocation (with a matching requirement by the LEA). However, in February 2009, the State Budget provided LEAs with categorical spending flexibility in exchange for program funding reductions. LEAs were able to use funds from about 40 categorical programs, including the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant for which the Beginning Teacher

Support and Assessment (BTSA) program was a part of, for any educational purpose. The program's matching requirement was also removed but funding continued to be provided to local educational agencies (LEAs) that sponsored an approved induction program.

Since the onset of the categorical funding flexibility provisions, a number of approved induction programs have become inactive or withdrawn. In terms of statewide program equity, access and parity has been an issue regarding the charging of beginning teachers to participate in an induction program. The induction programs sponsored by colleges or universities have always charged tuition. A few LEA-based induction programs were approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) after 2009 and never received state funding. These programs, sponsored by charter schools, have always charged candidates. Another issue that appears to be surfacing is that some programs are "capping" the number of new teachers they will serve, resulting in inequities within a district as some new teachers receive induction services and others are faced with having to search and pay for induction services outside of their district or teach, largely unsupported, in a classroom for a year or more until they reach the top of the program's waiting list.

- 3) **Induction fees.** The CTC conducted a survey of CTC-approved induction programs and received 126 responses out of 165 programs. Of the survey respondents, 11.5 percent of LEA sponsored induction programs reported that they charged fees to induction participants in 2014-15. This equates to 2,063 participants who paid fees out of 17,907 total participants at respondent LEAs. Respondents reported the per year fees range from \$390 to \$3,350.
- 4) **Related budget activity.** The 2015-16 Budget Act includes \$490 million in Proposition 98 General Fund for activities that promote educator quality and effectiveness. These funds may be used for a menu of options, including beginning teacher and administrator support and mentoring, and professional development for struggling teachers. The 2015-16 Budget Act also requires the CTC, by September 1, 2015, to evaluate any burdens of existing induction requirements. It also requires the CTC to provide funding recommendations, including state, school district, and teacher candidate responsibilities for induction, which could speak to the notion of prohibiting a district from charging fees.
- 5) **Induction options to obtain a Clear Teaching Credential.** Completion of an approved induction program is the primary route to attaining a clear teaching credential. If a teacher employed (employer is defined as a California public school, any school that is sponsored by a private California K-12 school, non-public, nonsectarian school or agency, charter school, or a school operated under the direction of a California state agency) does not have an induction program available to them, then the teacher may enroll in a Clear Credential Program. Currently, there are 22 CTC-approved Clear Credential programs operating in California (3 from California State University system, 3 from the University of California, and 16 private independent institutions).
- 6) **Fiscal impact.** According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, the bill would result in Proposition 98 General Fund state mandated costs, potentially in the tens of millions, for local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide induction to beginning

teachers. Currently, there are 165 induction programs that serve approximately 18,000 teachers. A recent survey of 126 programs showed 11.5 percent of program participants were charged fees ranging from \$390 to \$3,350. On average, these fees total \$5 million statewide. Actual costs will depend on the size and types of claims districts submit to the Commission on State Mandates. LEAs may file cost claims even if they are currently fully funding induction for beginning teachers.

The requirements of this bill also place pressure on the state to provide a new dedicated funding source for induction programs. In prior years, the state dedicated funding for induction that ranged from \$87 million to \$128 million.

SUPPORT

California Catholic Conference
California Communities United Institute
California Federation of Teachers
California State PTA
California STEM Learning Network
California Teachers Association
Common Sense Kids Action
Public Advocates
Santa Clara County Office of Education
Superintendent of Public Instruction

OPPOSITION

California School Boards Association

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