



PURPOSE

AB 1904 seeks to address the state’s ongoing credentialed educator shortage and increase the diversity of our educator workforce by reducing fiscal barriers through a compensated credentialed educator apprenticeship pathway.

BACKGROUND

California continues to face a critical and persistent teacher shortage, with thousands of classrooms understaffed or led by educators on emergency permits and waivers. According to data from the Learning Policy Institute, substandard credentials and permits tripled between 2013 and 2023, making up more than half of all new California teaching credentials issued in 2023.

Traditional credentialing pathways often require candidates to forgo full-time employment while completing costly coursework and unpaid or underpaid clinical practice, creating significant financial barriers. In recognition of these challenges, California has taken important steps in recent years to expand access to the profession, including the establishment of student teacher stipends (AB 121, 2025) to help offset the costs of preparation.

To build a robust and sustainable teacher workforce, California must continue to expand innovative pathways that reduce financial and structural barriers to entry while maintaining high standards for educator preparation. By blending paid, on-the-job training with aligned coursework, the apprenticeship model enables candidates to earn a living wage while completing their preparation, gain sustained classroom experience, and receive structured mentoring and support.

Credentialed educator apprenticeship programs have been successfully implemented in twenty-nine other states to address teacher shortages and expand access to the profession, particularly for candidates from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These programs demonstrate that high-quality preparation and paid training can coexist and reinforce one another.

EXISTING LAW

Existing law requires all teacher candidates to meet specified requirements before becoming a teacher of record including coursework, clinical practice, and passage of required assessments. Existing law provides stipends of up to \$10,000 for some teacher candidates, including apprentices, starting in 2026-2027. Existing law authorizes the Division of Apprenticeship Standards to approve apprenticeship programs designed in compliance with law and regulations. Existing law authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to accredit educator preparation programs and issue permits, credentials, and specialized credentials.

SOLUTION

This bill would create the credentialed educator apprenticeship pathway and will authorize the Division of Apprenticeship Standards and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to collaborate to ensure the pathway meets the established requirements of both agencies.

SUPPORT

Children Now (Sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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