
3B

Information

Educator Preparation Committee

Credentialed Educator Apprenticeships: Workforce Alignment, Program Design, and Implementation

Executive Summary: Teacher apprenticeship is a developing approach to educator preparation that creates employment-based pathways for prospective teachers within Commission-approved preparation and credentialing requirements. California’s early apprenticeship models illustrate different approaches to apprentice roles, preparation, employment, and progression while raising questions about program design, costs and financing, governance, state support, and the evolving policy and statutory framework for credentialed educator apprenticeship.

Recommended Action: For information only

Presenters: Adam Ebrahim, Chief Deputy Director; Jake Shuler, Consultant, Division of Standards, Accreditation and Workforce Investment; Sarah Begeman, Consultant, Education First; Adele Burnes, Chief, Division of Apprenticeship Standards; Jeanna Perry, Director, Statewide Residency Technical Assistance Center

Strategic Plan Goal

Educator Preparation and Advancement

- **Goal 2.** Prospective educators have multiple pathways to explore and access careers in education and advance in the profession.
 - D. Increase accessibility of the credentialing process by eliminating unnecessary barriers for prospective educators.
 - E. Provide clear information and guidance about how to enter and advance in the education profession.

Credentialed Educator Apprenticeships: Workforce Alignment, Program Design, and Implementation

Introduction

Registered apprenticeship is increasingly being applied to teacher preparation as an employment-based structure that combines paid work, supervised workplace learning, organized professional preparation, and progressive advancement. In teaching, that structure operates alongside, rather than in place of, Commission-approved preparation and credentialing requirements. Its application depends on alignment among the workforce need being addressed, the preparation pathway, the work an apprentice is authorized to perform, and the employment, preparation, supervision, and support responsibilities of participating partners. California's first registered teacher apprenticeships provide early examples of how that alignment can occur under different local conditions. Their development also raises practical questions about program design, financing, governance, state support, and the interaction between apprenticeship and Commission requirements.

Background

California's Teacher Workforce Context

California has made progress in rebuilding the teacher pipeline following an extended period of strain. The Commission's [Teacher Supply in California, 2024-25: A Report to the Legislature](#) documents a substantial rebound in the number of new teaching credentials issued following a recent low point in 2022. New teaching credentials issued to California-prepared candidates increased by more than 40 percent between 2022 and 2025. That rebound coincided with substantial state investments in educator recruitment, preparation, and candidate support. It has also occurred during a longer-term decline in statewide TK-12 student enrollment, adding another dimension to the teacher workforce picture.

But growth in statewide credential production does not necessarily mean that hiring demand has declined. [Getting Down to Facts III](#) (GDTF III) research shows that teacher attrition remains a major source of hiring demand. In 2023-24, attrition from the prior year accounted for an estimated 86 percent of new teacher hires. National evidence cited in the same research indicates that approximately three-quarters of annual teacher turnover occurs before retirement. California can therefore see substantial growth in the number of newly credentialed teachers even as ongoing turnover continues to generate significant hiring demand.

Turnover also does not account for the full workforce challenge. The available supply does not consistently align with the credentials, authorizations, subject-area expertise, and preparation needed for particular student populations and assignments. Continuing reliance on intern credentials, permits, waivers, and substitute staffing indicates that employers do not consistently have access to fully prepared and appropriately authorized candidates for all

assignments. These needs recur within particular credential areas and regional labor markets. [GDTF III research](#) further identifies limited access to teacher preparation programs, particularly in rural areas, as one factor contributing to the uneven distribution of teacher supply across the state.

[Teaching Assignment Monitoring Outcomes](#) data document how unevenly these workforce conditions are distributed across local educational agencies (LEAs) and among schools within the same LEA. The share of teaching assignments filled by fully credentialed teachers, interns, teachers serving out of field, or teachers serving on emergency permits can differ markedly across local settings. These differences show that statewide and regional measures of supply can mask variation in the staffing conditions experienced by individual employers, schools, subjects, and assignments.

Those patterns are not simply a function of how many educators are available. Educator retention in particular settings is shaped by compensation, workload, leadership, professional support, assignment conditions, school climate, and other local factors. When these conditions contribute to repeated turnover, recurring vacancies can increase reliance on intern credentials, permits, waivers, and substitute staffing. Educators entering through these routes leave at higher rates, contributing to further vacancies and reinforcing existing recruitment and retention challenges. Preparation access, candidate availability, and local labor-market conditions also shape these dynamics, producing meaningful differences in workforce conditions across communities.

These differences also carry an equity dimension. EdTrust-West's [Teaching Assignment Monitoring Outcomes Data Dashboard](#) visualizes how variation in local staffing conditions aggregates into a statewide pattern of unequal access to fully prepared and appropriately authorized educators. Viewed alongside student demographic characteristics, the data show that students in higher-need schools and districts have less consistent access to fully prepared and appropriately assigned educators. A related GDTF III study, [Who Stays, Who Leaves](#), finds that teachers entering through emergency permits and intern pathways are more likely to begin in schools characterized by elevated turnover and fewer supports for novice teachers. Some students and communities therefore experience workforce instability repeatedly rather than episodically, with less consistent access to appropriately prepared, experienced, and fully authorized educators.

These workforce conditions have direct instructional consequences for students. Persistent staffing difficulty can result in canceled or combined courses, reduced access to specialized instruction and services, repeated changes in teaching assignments, and instruction provided by educators who have not yet completed preparation for the work they are assigned to perform. The resulting conditions can affect students' access to consistent instruction, advanced coursework, specialized supports, and appropriately prepared educators. Because these conditions are concentrated in higher-need schools, the same students and communities may encounter them repeatedly, compounding existing differences in educational opportunity.

Apprenticeship as a Workforce Strategy

The challenge, then, is not simply to produce more credentialed educators statewide. It is also to develop approaches that connect preparation and support to the places and fields where workforce needs recur, while addressing the conditions that influence whether educators remain in those settings. Registered apprenticeship offers one structure for addressing that part of the workforce challenge. Employers, labor representatives, preparation providers, and other partners can organize a registered apprenticeship program around an identified local workforce need while connecting paid employment, preparation, and supervised learning. For teacher apprentices, that structure must be built around either a traditional or intern pathway and must align employment, apprenticeship requirements, Commission-approved preparation, credential requirements, and the duties an apprentice is authorized to perform at each stage.

The approved educator apprenticeships for the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) and Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) illustrate how this framework is beginning to operate in California. TCOE's program includes Single Subject and Special Education teaching occupations and combines paid classroom experience, coursework, coaching, and preparation connected to workforce needs identified in a rural setting. SCCOE's program also includes Special Education teaching occupations and a Special Education Teaching Assistant occupation within a sequence of paid employment, related instruction, mentoring, and preparation. Taken together, the two programs show how apprenticeship can be organized around different local workforce needs and occupational structures. They are early examples, not a prescribed statewide model, and their implementation costs and effects on recruitment, preparation, and retention remain questions for evaluation.

An Emerging State Framework

These local models have developed by aligning existing registered apprenticeship requirements with existing educator preparation and credentialing requirements, while the state policy and support structure for credentialed educator apprenticeship has continued to take shape. The education budget trailer bill [AB 121](#) (2025) authorized LEAs employing credentialed educator apprentices to use eligible Student Teacher Stipend Program (STSP) awards to offset wages during the initial phase of apprenticeship, before the apprentice becomes the educator of record. The education budget trailer bill [AB 126](#) (2026) expanded the responsibilities of the Statewide Residency Technical Assistance Center (SRTAC) to include support and guidance for teacher apprenticeship, grow-your-own preparation, and the National Board Certification subsidy and incentive program. These provisions provide emerging statewide financial and technical assistance for local apprenticeship development.

[Pending AB 1904](#) (Gipson and Muratsuchi) would address additional elements of the state framework. As proposed, the measure would establish responsibilities for the Commission and the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) in the dissemination, review, approval, monitoring, information sharing, and reporting associated with credentialed educator apprenticeship programs. It would also establish minimum program requirements and authorize the Commission to issue apprenticeship certificates or permits. Because the measure

remains pending, these provisions are proposed rather than current requirements and would require subsequent Commission consideration if enacted.

Credentialed educator apprenticeship has therefore moved from concept development into early implementation while the broader state framework remains in formation. A central policy question is how registered apprenticeship can be used to create stronger compensated entry points into teaching while preserving and improving the quality of preparation apprentices receive. The sections that follow examine how the registered apprenticeship model intersects with traditional and intern preparation pathways and with Commission-approved preparation and credentialing, how California's initial preparation programs are applying that model, and the financing, governance, sustainability, and policy questions that will shape its continued development.

Registered Apprenticeship in California

The following section provides an overview of California's registered apprenticeship system as administered by DAS within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), including its governing framework, core program requirements and terminology.

Table 1: Key Terms for Registered Apprenticeship

Additional information can be found on the [Division of Apprenticeship Standards website](#).

Apprenticeship Term	Definition
Apprenticeship Program Standards	The specific written rules for the program. They define standards for entry, training and supervision, pay, progression, and completion.
Work Processes	The specific skills an apprentice must learn through supervised work experience.
Program Sponsor*	The employer, committee, or other entity legally responsible for operating the apprenticeship program.
Joint Apprenticeship Committee	A labor-management committee that serves as the program sponsor and oversees the apprenticeship.
On-the-Job Training	Paid, supervised work through which apprentices learn the skills of the occupation. DAS describes OJT as a core part of apprenticeship training.
Related and Supplemental Instruction	Organized classroom or other instruction that teaches the technical and theoretical knowledge related to the occupation.

*This term is distinct from a Commission-approved educator preparation program which is also often called a "program sponsor."

The Registered Apprenticeship Model

California's registered apprenticeship system is rooted in the Shelley-Maloney Apprentice Labor Standards Act of 1939. Enacted near the end of the Great Depression, it reflected a broader expansion of public oversight of labor standards and skilled occupational training. Now codified

principally in [Chapter 4 of Division 3 of the Labor Code](#), it remains the statutory foundation for apprenticeship in California. Within that framework, the state establishes requirements for apprenticeship, approves programs, protects apprentices, and defines the roles of employers, labor organizations, and training providers.

Registered apprenticeship is an employment-based form of occupational preparation in which apprentices earn wages while developing competence through supervised workplace learning and organized instruction. Employment, training, evaluation, compensation, and advancement are brought together within a program approved by DAS. That integration is central to the model. Apprentices are not simply employed while they learn. Their work, instruction, progression, and compensation are deliberately structured as parts of a single program.

The term *registered* is important. It distinguishes these programs from ordinary employment, informal workplace training, and other forms of work-based learning. A registered apprenticeship operates under written Apprenticeship Program Standards that identify the occupation, define the work processes to be learned, and establish the conditions under which apprentices participate and advance. The standards also address related instruction, supervision, wages, administration, and requirements for completion. Once approved, they govern the operation of the registered apprenticeship program in California.

Program Governance and Approval

Responsibility for administering and operating a registered apprenticeship rests with the apprenticeship Program Sponsor. The sponsor supervises administration and operation of the program, approves apprentice agreements, addresses disputes, and carries out the other responsibilities established in the approved apprenticeship standards. California law allows a program to be administered by a joint apprenticeship committee, a unilateral labor or management apprenticeship committee, or an individual employer. Where a collective bargaining agreement exists, the program must be jointly sponsored by an employer and labor unless either party waives its right to representation in writing.

In a jointly sponsored program, governance is provided through a Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC). The JAC is composed of equal numbers of employer and employee representatives and serves as the labor-management body responsible for administering the program. Its responsibilities may include apprentice selection and advancement, employer participation, training quality, and dispute resolution. Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI) providers, DAS representatives, and other partners may participate in nonvoting advisory roles.

Development of a registered apprenticeship begins with the occupation and the work apprentices must learn. Prospective registered apprenticeship sponsors work with employers, labor representatives, training providers, and DAS to translate those requirements into a program design. The resulting apprenticeship standards address the work processes, instructional requirements, wage schedule, entry and advancement requirements, methods of evaluation, governance structure, and administrative responsibilities. The standards must also

demonstrate that the program can provide the employment, supervision, and instruction necessary for apprentices to develop competence in the occupation.

DAS reviews the proposed occupation, program structure, and standards against applicable apprenticeship requirements. DAS also provides technical assistance during program development, reviews draft program standards and identifies revisions needed before approval. Once an application is complete, DAS [posts the proposed standards](#) for public review for at least 30 days before DAS may approve or reject the program. The same public review requirement applies to amendments adding new occupations or work processes to existing apprenticeship programs. Once the requirements for registration have been met and the standards are approved, the sponsor may register apprentices with DAS and operate the program under those standards.

Training, Progression, and Completion

Within the program, occupational learning is organized principally through On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI). OJT consists of paid, supervised work through which the apprentice develops competence in the occupation's defined work processes. It is more specific than simply spending time in employment. The apprentice's assignments must provide the range of workplace learning experiences established in the standards.

Apprenticeship also connects learning to advancement and compensation. Programs may organize progression through time-based, competency-based, or hybrid requirements. Under each approach, the standards identify the work to be learned, the basis for evaluating progress, and the conditions for completion. Wage schedules are similarly progressive, with compensation increasing as apprentices gain experience, reach defined stages, or demonstrate greater competence. This is another defining feature of the model: learning, advancement, and compensation are connected rather than administered as separate systems.

Approval of the registered apprenticeship carries continuing responsibilities for the sponsor and DAS. The sponsor must administer the program in accordance with its standards, monitor apprentice progress in OJT and RSI, document participation and advancement, and maintain the records required for oversight. DAS consults with sponsors and monitors approved programs to support compliance with apprenticeship requirements. Each apprentice also enters into an apprentice agreement establishing participation in the specific registered program, which is then submitted to DAS for registration.

These requirements establish the registered apprenticeship structure that must be accounted for when the model is applied to teaching.

Applying Registered Apprenticeship to Teaching

Workforce Need and Preparation Pathways

California's approach to registered teacher apprenticeship began to take shape through a statewide cross-sector effort launched in 2023. The work brought together state education and workforce agencies, local educational agencies, labor organizations, educator preparation

providers, and other education and workforce partners to consider how registered apprenticeship could be applied to teaching. A central premise of that work was that apprenticeship would build on California's existing preparation pathways rather than create a separate route to a teaching credential. That work informed the development of Education First's [*Earning by Learning toolkit*](#), which provides a statewide framework and practical guidance for developing registered apprenticeship programs in teaching.

The design of a teacher apprenticeship begins with an identified workforce need, an understanding of the underlying conditions contributing to that need, and the identification of prospective apprentice pools that may be prepared to meet it. Those pools may include individuals already working in schools and connected to the communities they serve, as well as prospective educators entering from outside the system. The apprenticeship program is shaped by the credential areas and assignments in which demand recurs, the employers and communities experiencing that demand, the factors contributing to vacancies or turnover, and the educational and employment backgrounds of prospective apprentices. Programs can be designed to start well before the point of entry into formal educator preparation (for example, supporting a classified employee toward bachelor's degree completion) or closer to that entry point, for candidates who already meet the requirements to begin a preparation program. The choice of credential pathway, employment sequence, apprenticeship span, and support structure therefore reflects both the nature and causes of the workforce need in a given context and the characteristics of the apprentice pool.

Registered apprenticeship does not establish a third pathway to a teaching credential. California candidates complete preparation through either a traditional student teaching pathway or an intern pathway offered by a Commission-approved educator preparation program. Based on current authorizations, candidates in the traditional pathway complete preparation before becoming teachers of record, while candidates in the intern pathway complete preparation while serving as teachers of record.

Structuring the Apprenticeship Pathway

Those two credential pathways are already implemented through a range of preparation designs. Traditional preparation pathways include integrated undergraduate, post-baccalaureate degree, and residency designs. Intern programs include a preservice phase in which prospective educators complete entry requirements and gain relevant experience before serving as teachers of record. Registered apprenticeship does not replace those designs. It may be built from the ground up around either credential pathway or layered onto an existing preparation design.

The apprenticeship itself may extend across a broader developmental span than current educator preparation program designs. Depending on local need and the population the program is designed to serve, an apprenticeship could begin in high school, during pre-baccalaureate study at a community college or four-year institution, after completion of a bachelor's degree, or later as an individual approaches formal preparation or teacher-of-record service. From those different starting points, an apprenticeship may extend through

preparation into credentialed employment, induction, and attainment of the clear credential. This range is illustrative rather than a prescribed sequence for an individual apprentice.

That broader span means that the apprentice's role may change substantially over time. Employment responsibilities, authorized duties, preparation status, compensation, supervision, and support may differ from one stage to the next. The program must therefore define those stages within the apprenticeship, establish the requirements for progression between them, and identify the responsibilities of participating employers, preparation providers, sponsors, labor representatives, and other partners at each point. The credential pathway establishes whether preparation is completed before or during teacher-of-record service, while the Commission-approved preparation program determines how that preparation is structured.

Coordinating Employment, Preparation, and Support

Apprenticeship organizes employment, compensation, OJT, support, and progression around the credential pathway and preparation program. This coordination is particularly important because prospective teachers often move among coursework, employment, preparation, and credentialing requirements administered by different entities and operating on different timelines. Taken together, these requirements can be difficult to navigate, particularly when they span multiple institutions, employment roles, and stages of preparation. A well-designed apprenticeship organizes that complexity into a clear sequence of paid work, preparation, support, and advancement, with expectations and transitions made explicit at each stage.

Registered apprenticeship creates a formal structure through which employers, labor representatives, preparation providers, and other partners can align that sequence in advance. Employers bring knowledge of staffing needs, assignments, and workplace conditions; employee representatives bring practitioner expertise regarding the work of teaching, preparation quality, mentoring, workload, compensation, duties, and advancement; and preparation providers retain responsibility for candidate development, clinical practice, and credential requirements. This coordination does not merge apprenticeship and educator preparation into a single system. Commission-accredited preparation continues to govern the requirements of recommendation for a credential, while apprenticeship governs the requirements related to employment, progression, and other elements established in the registered program. Program partners must determine where activities can satisfy requirements in both systems and where responsibilities remain separate.

California's first registered teacher apprenticeships provide examples of how local partners have configured these elements differently in response to workforce need, preparation capacity, employment structures, and institutional context.

Early California Applications

California's first registered teacher apprenticeships provide an early view of how these requirements and design considerations are being applied in practice. Both programs build on existing teacher residency partnerships, layering registered apprenticeship onto residency-based preparation rather than creating a separate preparation model. The programs in Tulare and Santa Clara Counties are subject to the same California apprenticeship requirements and

Commission preparation and credentialing requirements, but reflect different prospective apprentice populations, employment contexts, preparation capacity, and approaches to addressing local workforce needs. In developing the programs, the local partnerships engaged their respective county offices of education, PK-12 school districts, labor partners, educator preparation programs, DAS, and Education First to translate their proposed occupations, work processes, instructional requirements, wage progression, and governance arrangements into registered apprenticeship standards.

Tulare County/Hanford Joint Union High School District Apprenticeship

The California Center on Teaching Careers at Tulare County Office of Education, in partnership with Hanford Joint Union High School District (HJUHS), has developed a registered apprenticeship program focused on preparing special education and STEM teachers, with a goal of strengthening the local workforce and improving outcomes for rural youth. HJUHS serves approximately 4,100 students across a predominantly rural, 254-square-mile area encompassing Hanford, Armona, and eastern Kings County. California School Dashboard and district Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) data indicate that approximately three quarters of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, about 11 percent are English learners, approximately 9 percent are students with disabilities, and more than 70 percent are Hispanic or Latino. The district employs approximately 400 certificated and classified staff across three comprehensive high schools and several alternative and adult education settings.

The apprenticeship brings together HJUHS, the Hanford Secondary Education Association, the Tulare County Office of Education, and two Commission-accredited preparation providers around demand for Special Education and Single Subject teachers. Tulare County Office of Education serves as an employer-side member of the JAC and provides program coordination through its California Center on Teaching Careers, while HJUHS serves as the participating employer. The approved standards establish two teaching occupations: Single Subject K-12 Teacher, with a program focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, and Special Education K-12 Teacher, with the latter encompassing Mild to Moderate and Extensive Support Needs. The program combines paid classroom experience, structured coaching, and coursework while drawing on preparation capacity outside the immediate district.

For apprentices, the design connects paid employment, structured workplace learning, and residency-based Commission-accredited preparation. Cal Poly Humboldt's accredited teacher preparation program serves the Single Subject occupation, while Fresno State's accredited teacher preparation program serves the Special Education occupation. Preparation coursework serves as the Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI) required by the apprenticeship standards, with 368 hours identified for the Single Subject occupation and 544 hours for Special Education. Both occupations anticipate approximately 2,000 hours of On-the-Job Training over roughly 36 months, and the apprenticeship extends into induction following initial preparation.

Advancement is competency based and tied to compensation. The standards establish three wage periods associated with attainment of 50 percent, 75 percent, and 100 percent of the

identified competencies. In the Special Education occupation, for example, wages progress from \$19.34 per hour in the first period to \$60.38 in the second and \$62.73 in the third. The Single Subject occupation uses a slightly different progression of \$19.34, \$58.13, and \$60.38 per hour. Employers are responsible for providing the supervised and sufficiently varied workplace experience needed to support development across the occupation.

The resulting model uses regional preparation capacity to address workforce needs identified by a rural employer. HJUHS, the Hanford Secondary Education Association, and Tulare County Office of Education share responsibility for apprenticeship governance, while the preparation providers contribute the accredited residency-based coursework and preparation required for credentialing. Rather than requiring a single institution to provide every component, the apprenticeship brings those resources together within a common employment and progression structure.

Santa Clara County Educator Apprenticeship

The Santa Clara County Office of Education has partnered with Morgan Hill Unified School District to develop an apprenticeship program that prepares apprentices to become credentialed Special Education teachers who deliver high-quality instruction to support every student. Morgan Hill Unified School District serves 7,829 students across a 300-square-mile area in southern Santa Clara County. California School Dashboard and district LCAP data indicate that approximately 41 percent of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, 16 percent are English learners, 13 percent are students with disabilities, and 54 percent are Hispanic or Latino. The district has identified persistent Special Education staffing needs.

The apprenticeship is jointly administered by the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Morgan Hill Unified School District, the Morgan Hill Classified Employee Association, and the Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers. The Santa Clara County Office of Education provides program coordination and is represented on the employer side of the JAC, while Morgan Hill Unified School District serves as the participating employer. The partnership also includes Gavilan College and Teachers College of San Joaquin. The approved standards establish three occupations: K-12 Special Education Teacher in Mild to Moderate Support Needs, K-12 Special Education Teacher in Extensive Support Needs, and Special Education Teaching Assistant.

The SCCOE design begins earlier in the apprentice's developmental sequence. The Special Education Teaching Assistant occupation allows an apprentice to work in a paid instructional-support role while completing postsecondary education leading to an associate degree. Gavilan College provides the related instruction for the Special Education Teaching Assistant occupation. Apprentices who go on to complete their bachelor's degree can progress into teacher preparation by entering the post-BA residency apprenticeship, which has separate RSI, OJT, preparation, and credential requirements. Teachers College of San Joaquin's accredited teacher preparation program serves both Special Education teaching occupations through an existing residency design onto which the apprenticeship has been layered.

The separate occupations allow compensation and advancement to occur at different points in that developmental sequence. The Special Education Teaching Assistant occupation has its own

competency-based wage progression, while the two teaching occupations establish wage periods associated with attainment of 50 percent, 75 percent, and 100 percent of their identified competencies. Representation from both classified and certificated employee organizations on the JAC also provides a governance structure that spans those different employment roles.

SCCOE therefore uses apprenticeship not only to organize residency-based teacher preparation, but also to establish an earlier point of entry for prospective educators who may still be completing the postsecondary education needed to enter preparation. Paid classified employment, postsecondary education, residency-based preparation, credentialed teaching, and induction can be connected within the broader apprenticeship structure while the requirements governing each stage remain intact.

Lessons from the Early Models

The two programs illustrate how a common registered apprenticeship structure can produce materially different local designs. Tulare County's model organizes regional preparation capacity around workforce needs in multiple teaching fields and partners with two accredited preparation providers within the apprenticeship. Santa Clara County addresses a similar underlying staffing challenge but extends apprenticeship earlier in the developmental sequence through a classified occupation that can serve as an entry point toward teacher preparation. In both cases, residency-based Commission-accredited preparation remains intact. What differs is how local partners organize employment, education, preparation, compensation, and progression around the workforce problem they are seeking to address.

The two models also show that registered apprenticeship can accommodate materially different local workforce needs and preparation arrangements. As additional teacher apprenticeships develop, the state's role is not to prescribe a single model, but to help local partnerships navigate apprenticeship, preparation, funding, and implementation requirements while preserving that flexibility. California's emerging support architecture for teacher apprenticeship is intended to support that work.

Current Support Architecture for Teacher Apprenticeship

"Through these programs, we're strengthening training opportunities for Californians to earn, learn, and build a future without taking on debt. Through apprenticeships and workforce training, California continues to reinforce our commitment to strengthening opportunity for all and a skilled workforce that will continue to drive California forward." Governor Gavin Newsom, [April 9, 2026](#)

Financial Support

This broader state emphasis on apprenticeship as a debt-free workforce strategy provides context for the development of teacher apprenticeship. To meet the debt-free objective, local partners designing teacher apprenticeships must account for several distinct costs, including apprentice wages, tuition and fees associated with Commission-approved preparation, mentor compensation, program administration, and other support needed for apprentices to progress through preparation and credentialing. Apprentice wages differ from preparation and

administrative costs because apprentices are employees performing paid work while developing occupational competence through supervised workplace learning. In California's early models, that work includes classroom and instructional responsibilities that vary with the apprentice's role and stage of preparation.

Several state resources may support different components of those costs. For an eligible apprentice, a \$10,000 STSP award may offset wages during the initial phase of apprenticeship, before the apprentice becomes the educator of record. Eligible RSI hours may also generate reimbursement at the state-established rate, which is [\\$10.61 per hour in 2026-27](#). Depending on program design and eligibility, Teacher Residency Grant Program funds, the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program, apprenticeship-specific funding identified by DAS, and other educator workforce resources may provide additional support. These resources address different costs and operate under different requirements rather than forming a single financing formula.

A simplified example illustrates how those resources may interact when preparation is spread across three semesters to accommodate continued employment. For 2026-27, full-time California State University (CSU) [credential-program tuition](#) is \$3,969 per semester, or \$7,938 for an academic year, before mandatory campus fees. Three semesters would therefore carry approximately \$11,900 in systemwide tuition, with mandatory campus fees bringing the total closer to \$15,000 at some campuses. An eligible [\\$10,000 STSP award](#) may offset a portion of apprentice compensation during qualifying clinical practice, while several hundred eligible RSI hours may generate several thousand dollars in reimbursement. In shorter CSU preparation designs, STSP, RSI reimbursement, and other available resources may be sufficient to cover most or all preparation-related costs.

Local partners must then consider those costs and resources in relation to the workforce need the apprenticeship is intended to address. LEAs experiencing recurring vacancies and turnover already incur expenditures associated with recruitment, substitute and temporary staffing, reassignment, onboarding, replacement, and vacancy management. Apprenticeship does not eliminate those expenditures by itself, and the extent to which a particular model affects recruitment or retention remains a question for evaluation. It does, however, allow local partners to compare the resources required to develop and support prospective educators with the continuing costs of repeatedly responding to the same staffing need.

The analysis must also include the effect on students. As discussed earlier in this item, persistent staffing difficulty can disrupt instruction, reduce access to specialized services, increase reliance on short-term staffing arrangements, and result in less stable teaching assignments. Those effects should inform local consideration of whether and how to pursue a teacher apprenticeship. In weighing the costs and resources required to establish and sustain the model, local partners should also consider the costs associated with existing staffing conditions and the potential for the proposed approach to improve students' access to consistent, appropriately prepared educators and opportunities for academic progress.

Technical Assistance

Local partnerships have access to technical assistance as they make those design and financing decisions. DAS provides technical assistance during apprenticeship development and reviews proposed occupations, program structures, and standards against apprenticeship requirements. The Commission provides guidance within its authority over preparation, accreditation, credentialing, and authorization, while the [Center for Educator Workforce Development](#) is building additional capacity to support local apprenticeship development and coordination.

Other state and partner efforts supplement that assistance. AB 126 expanded SRTAC responsibilities to include support and guidance for teacher apprenticeship and grow-your-own preparation. Education First has supported development of California's early registered teacher apprenticeships and related implementation resources. The [Educator Apprenticeship Resource Network](#) (EARN), associated with the Santa Clara County Office of Education and partners including Education First and the Tulare County Office of Education, provides another source of support for educator apprenticeship development. SRTAC itself operates through a statewide network of regional county office partners.

Together, these sources of assistance can help local partners move from an identified workforce need to an approved apprenticeship that aligns employment, financing, apprenticeship standards, Commission-approved preparation, and credential requirements. That assistance can support different local designs without establishing a single statewide model.

While this support structure is developing under existing authority, pending legislation would formalize additional statewide requirements and responsibilities for credentialed educator apprenticeship.

Looking Ahead: AB 1904

AB 1904 (Gipson and Muratsuchi) would establish the Credentialed Educator Apprenticeships Act and more explicitly define the respective responsibilities of the Commission and DAS. The measure would require proposed programs to proceed through DAS for apprenticeship approval while the Commission confirms specified preparation, accreditation, credentialing, and authorization requirements. It would also establish minimum requirements related to accredited program participation, paid OJT before educator-of-record service, degree attainment, and annual support, mentoring, and supervision.

The measure would also authorize the Commission to issue apprenticeship certificates or permits to eligible candidates participating in approved credentialed educator apprenticeship programs. If enacted, that authority would require subsequent Commission consideration of the purpose and scope of any new document, the services authorized, conditions for issuance, and its relationship to existing permits, intern credentials, and other authorizations.

AB 1904 would therefore move credentialed educator apprenticeship toward a more explicit statutory framework while leaving significant implementation questions for subsequent Commission consideration. Those questions include how apprentices are authorized to serve,

how apprenticeship requirements interact with preparation and induction, how the Commission and DAS coordinate review and oversight, and which elements should operate consistently statewide while preserving flexibility for locally designed programs.

Conclusion

California's early teacher apprenticeships show how registered apprenticeship can be incorporated into existing preparation and credentialing structures while responding to different local workforce needs. The resulting designs vary based on the prospective apprentice population, preparation capacity, employment structure, and resources available, while Commission-approved preparation and credential requirements remain intact.

Continued implementation will provide additional information about which designs are feasible, how apprentices progress through preparation and into credentialed service, and how programs affect recruitment, preparation, retention, and student access to appropriately prepared educators. Those developments will continue to unfold across the separate preparation, credentialing, and registered apprenticeship responsibilities of the Commission, DAS, and other state partners. These questions, together with the potential statutory changes proposed in AB 1904, provide the basis for continued Commission consideration as California's credentialed educator apprenticeship framework develops.

Staff request that the Commission review and discuss the item and provide direction to inform continued implementation and future policy development for credentialed educator apprenticeship.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to support emerging work on credentialed educator apprenticeship and return to the Commission as policy, statutory, and implementation questions are ready for consideration.