

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
AB 2401 (McCarty) – As Introduced February 17, 2022

SUBJECT: Teacher preparation programs: planning grants and implementation or expansion grants

SUMMARY: Expands and makes changes to a grant program, administered by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), for the development of integrated programs of teacher preparation, in which individuals may earn a teaching credential while completing their undergraduate degree. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Changes the definition of the credentials to be earned through an integrated program to “general education” instead of multiple or single subject credentials.
- 2) Requires the CTC to develop and implement a program to award, on a competitive basis, implementation or expansion grants of up to \$500,000 to regionally accredited institutions of higher education (IHEs) for any of the following purposes:
 - a) Developing a new integrated program of professional preparation;
 - b) Expanding, strengthening, or improving access to an existing integrated program of professional preparation; and
 - c) Establishing a new partnership with a California community college (CCC).
- 3) Requires the CTC to grant priority to proposals to establish new integrated programs of professional preparation, or expand, strengthen, or improve access to existing integrated programs that support any of the following:
 - a) Producing teachers in designated shortage fields, including special education, bilingual education, science, computer science, technology, engineering, mathematics, transitional kindergarten, or kindergarten, and any other fields identified by the CTC based on an annual analysis of hiring and vacancy data;
 - b) Local efforts to recruit, develop support systems for, provide outreach and communication strategies to, and retain a diverse teacher workforce that reflects a local educational agency (LEA) community’s diversity; and
 - c) Collaborating with a CCC to create a four-year integrated program of professional preparation.
- 4) Authorizes a grantee to use grant funds to create a new four-year integrated program of professional preparation or to adapt an existing integrated program of professional preparation to a four-year integrated program of professional preparation.
- 5) Expands the authorized uses of funding to include providing candidate support, including, but not limited to, funding for tuition, books, exam fees, or stipends.

- 6) States the intent of the Legislature to appropriate funds for this program and that 40% of the appropriation would be designated for planning grants and 60% of the appropriation would be designated for implementation or expansion grants.
- 7) Expands requirements for an integrated program of professional preparation to provide opportunities for candidates to complete intensive field experiences early in the undergraduate sequence, including student teaching, to experiences in prekindergarten settings.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes minimum requirements for teacher preparation programs leading to multiple and single subject teaching credentials, including a baccalaureate degree, passage of a basic skills test, completion of a teacher preparation program, study of methods of English language development and reading, completion of a subject matter program, demonstration of knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, and basic use of computers in education.
- 2) Authorizes integrated (also known as blended) programs of teacher preparation, in which credential candidates may earn a teaching credential while completing their undergraduate degree. Requires the CTC to encourage postsecondary institutions to offer integrated programs.
- 3) Requires the Chancellor of the California State University (CSU), in consultation with CSU faculty members, to develop a framework defining appropriate balance for an integrated program of general education, subject matter preparation, and professional education courses.
- 4) Requires the Chancellor of the CSU and the Chancellor of the CCC to ensure that coursework completed by a community college student transferring to an integrated program is articulated with the corresponding coursework of the CSU.
- 5) Limits the duration of teacher preparation programs to two years.
- 6) Requires the CTC to develop and implement a program to award grants of up to \$250,000 each to regionally accredited IHEs for the development of transition plans to guide the creation of four-year integrated programs of professional preparation, including student teaching.
- 7) Permits an IHE awarded a grant to use the transition plan to create a new four-year integrated program of professional preparation or to adapt an existing integrated program of professional preparation to a four-year integrated program of professional preparation.
- 8) Permits an IHE to use grant funds for any proper purpose in support of planning for a four-year integrated program of professional preparation, including:
 - a) To provide faculty release time to redesign existing courses;
 - b) To provide program coordinators to assist in collaboration with subject-matter professors and pedagogy professors;
 - c) To create summer courses for students in a four-year integrated program of professional preparation; and

- d) To recruit individuals for participation as students in four-year integrated programs of professional preparation.
- 9) In awarding grants pursuant to the program, requires the CTC to grant priority to proposals for the establishment of four-year integrated programs of professional preparation designed to do both of the following:
 - a) Produce teachers with either an education specialist instruction credential authorizing the holder to teach special education or a single subject teaching credential in the areas of mathematics or science, or teaching in the area of bilingual education.
 - b) Partner with a CCC to create a four-year integrated program of professional preparation.
 - 10) Requires an IHE to provide to the CTC program and outcome data for at least three years after receiving the grant, including but not limited to program design and features, the number of graduates, the number and type of credentials earned, the time taken to earn a degree and credential.
 - 11) Permits the CTC to use up to \$100,000 to administer the grants, pursuant to Department of Finance approval.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, “California is facing a significant teacher shortage that stands to hamper the educational future of our students. The process to become a credentialed teacher is simply too long and burdensome to obtain. Districts up and down the state are clamoring for qualified and well-trained teachers that will support student learning and well-being, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. As California prepares for the largest expansion of public education in recent years through the implementation of universal transitional kindergarten, AB 2401 provides colleges and universities with additional tools to address our overwhelming teacher shortage by establishing and implementing additional integrated teacher preparation programs – particularly in existing shortage fields and in the emerging early childhood education field.”

What are integrated/blended teacher preparation programs? For nearly 30 years, the Ryan Act of 1970 prohibited the completion of teacher preparation during the undergraduate experience, requiring instead a “fifth year” of preparation as the primary route to certification. The intent of this separation was to ensure that teachers had robust subject matter preparation. According to the CTC, some unintended consequences of this policy were:

- The “siloeing” of subject matter and pedagogy, reflected in students who learn subject matter in isolation from considerations about how it is taught, and in the absence of any “logical connection or incentive for collaboration between the two different faculties.”

- Increased pressure on teacher preparation programs to address subject-specific pedagogical knowledge at the expense of critical aspects of preparation such as student teaching.
- The absence of opportunities for credential candidates to develop cross-disciplinary understanding, a cornerstone of contemporary content standards, such as the Common Core State Standards (as well as, staff notes, the Next Generation Science Standards and integrated English Language Arts/English Language Development state standards).

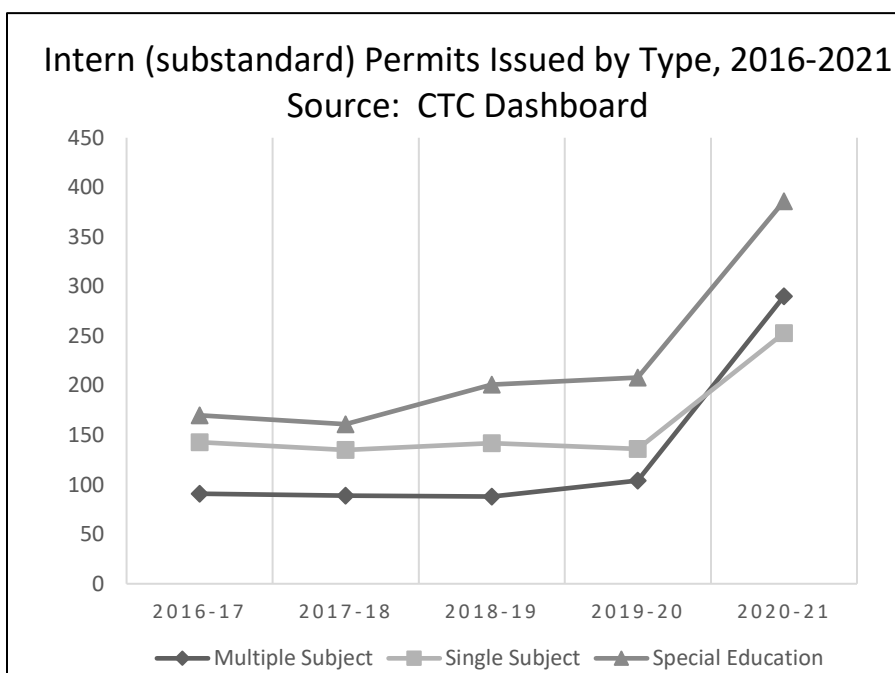
In 1998, SB 2042 (Alpert), Chapter 548, Statutes of 1998, authorized “integrated” programs of teacher preparation, which would allow students working toward their baccalaureate degree to also earn a teaching credential. These programs also became known as blended programs. In addition to offering an efficient route to certification at a time when state incentives to reduce class size in primary grades had created an acute teacher shortage, the authorization of integrated programs was intended to address some of the concerns noted above. At the time this policy was implemented, state funding of \$350,000 in the 1998-99 state budget, and some federal funding, was available to foster integrated programs.

Barriers to establishing integrated programs. In the years since SB 2042 was enacted a number of barriers to the development of integrated programs have been identified. According to the CTC, they include:

- Dual program approval process. The CTC requirement that institutions have a Commission-approved subject matter program in each content area along with a Commission approved teacher preparation program used to pose a barrier to establishing programs. According to the CTC, this issue has been resolved.
- Collaboration. Integrated programs require collaboration between Arts and Sciences faculty and Education faculty, and the CTC notes that this poses challenges and does not happen overnight. A 2004 CTC report noted concerns about program quality, in particular programs which appeared to simply “stack” subject matter and pedagogy on top of each other.
- Fitting in the required coursework. A frequently cited barrier to the expansion of integrated programs is the difficulty students have fitting both sets of requirements into their course schedules.
- Concerns about “crowding out” coursework and tight scheduling. The CTC notes that some Arts and Sciences faculty expressed concerns about teacher preparation courses leaving insufficient room for subject matter coursework.
- Issues outside of programs. The CTC notes that credential candidates perceived a disadvantage to integrated programs because “5th year” graduates start on the salary schedule with more postsecondary credits and are therefore in a higher paid column. Staff notes, however, that compared to integrated program graduates traditional program candidates 1) forgo a year’s salary during their preparation, 2) must pay additional tuition for this year of preparation, 3) may need to incur debt for living expenses during their fifth year, and 4) forgo the opportunity to earn a year of service credit in CalSTRS.

- Bachelor's +30 units requirement (repealed). A repealed requirement that teachers have 30 units after their bachelor's degree to obtain a clear credential was a barrier for some teachers.

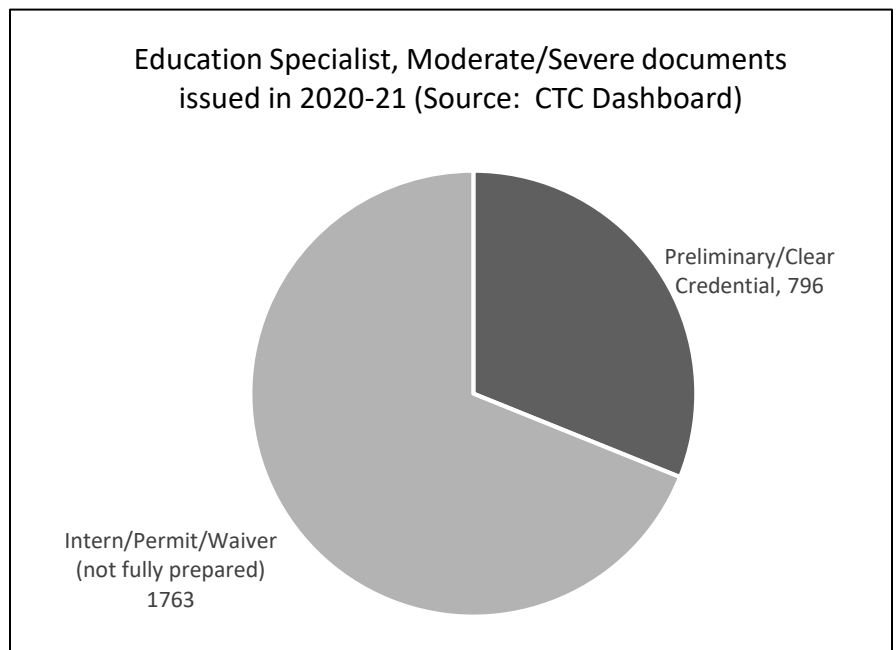
Teacher shortage worsened by COVID-19 pandemic. In the years following the Great Recession, California experienced a dramatic teacher shortage. According to the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), the number of substandard credentials and permits issued in California nearly tripled from 2012–13 to 2019–20, numbering more than 13,000 annually. Enrollment in teacher preparation programs had begun to increase modestly in the years immediately preceding the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, however, has exacerbated the shortage, due to several factors:



- Accelerated retirements. The California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) reported in February, 2021 that in the second half of 2020, the number of retirements had increased 26% over the same period in 2019. 62% of teachers surveyed by CalSTRS reported retiring earlier than planned, and the top three reasons for retiring were challenges of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, not wanting to continue to work remotely, and not wanting to risk exposure to COVID-19. At that time CalSTRS projected that this year would be the second highest recorded for retirements. A 2021 RAND Corporation report similarly found that stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic was a primary cause of earlier-than-planned retirement.
- The Great Resignation. In a 2022 report of survey data from large and small school districts serving a total of 20% of California students, the LPI found that the pandemic had caused an increase in teacher resignations. In one large district, resignations increased by about two-thirds, and leaves of absence increased by about 50%. This is consistent with a nationally representative survey of 3,600 teachers published by the National Education Association (NEA) in 2022, which found that, among school employees (including classified employees), 55% of educators were considering leaving the profession earlier than they had planned, an increase from 37% from 2021, with higher rates for African American and Latino employees. 86% of respondents said that they have seen more educators leaving the profession or retiring early since the start of the pandemic in 2020. Among the most commonly cited reasons for leaving the profession or retiring early were burnout and general stress from the pandemic.

- Difficulty preparing teachers during the pandemic. The pandemic caused disruptions in many areas of teacher preparation and certification, including test center closures which disrupted candidates’ ability to meet licensing examination requirements, challenges completing student teaching assignments when schools switched to distance learning, and the switch to virtual instruction at IHEs. Many of these issues were addressed by changes in statute, executive orders, actions of the CTC, and by IHEs, and it is unclear how big of an impact they had on the number of candidates who successfully completed their programs.
- New positions from federal and state funding. According to the LPI, a further contributing factor was the creation of additional positions enabled by federal recovery funds. These funds were appropriated to address needs associated with the pandemic, but they had to be used at least in part to support learning recovery, which in turn increased staffing needs. LPI cited as an example the Los Angeles Unified School District, which used these funds to offer 4x4 block schedules for the 2021–22 school year, a model which requires about 25% more teachers than the traditional 6-period schedule. Other districts used funds to create intervention positions which then needed to be filled by qualified staff. The expansion of transitional kindergarten in upcoming years will also increase the demand for credentialed teachers.
- Enrollment in teacher preparation. According to the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, in both fall 2020 and 2021, the majority of educator preparation programs reported the pandemic had either no impact or a minimal impact on enrollment (defined as a decline of less than 10%). However, for a sizable minority of institutions, COVID-19 had a significant effect on undergraduate enrollment in educator preparation programs. In both fall 2020 and fall 2021, 20% of institutions reported that the pandemic resulted in a decline in new undergraduate enrollment of 11% or more. The impact on graduate student enrollment is somewhat less dramatic, with 13% of respondents reporting significant declines in the number of new graduate students due to the pandemic.

- Staff shortages fueling more staff shortages? While it is unclear how widespread and temporary this factor may be, there is suggestion that in some areas with severe shortages, staff shortages are becoming a cause of staff shortages in and of themselves. As noted in the NEA survey of reasons for teacher resignations, 80% of respondents reported “unfilled job openings leading to more work for remaining staff” as a serious problem. The shortage of substitute teachers presents a particular workload challenge to current teachers.

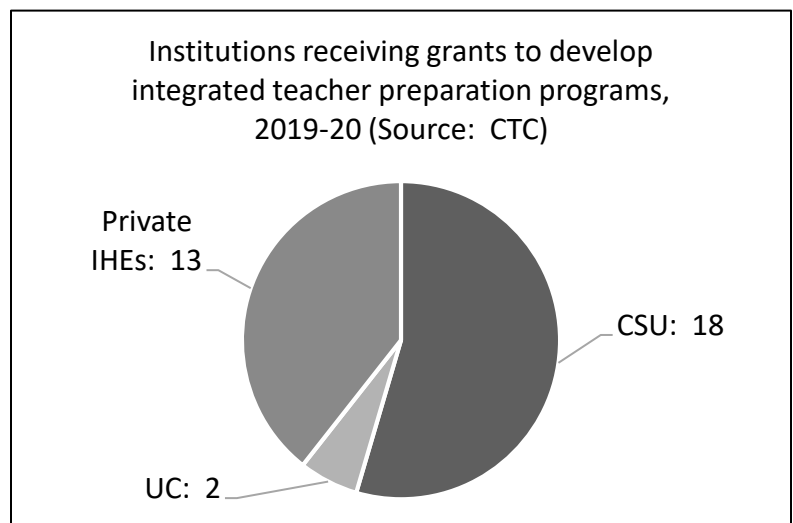


Special education and STEM fields experiencing dramatic shortages. The LPI reports that the greatest demand remains in the chronically hard-to-staff areas of mathematics, science, and special education.

According to the CTC, half of all documents issued during the last few years have been substandard permits, and for special education that figure is two-thirds. As illustrated by the chart on the preceding page, education specialist moderate/severe documents issued in 2020-21 were 70% substandard.

As shown in the table on page 5, intern permits, which are issued to individuals who have not met the requirements to become credentialed, have risen dramatically for special education teachers (education specialist credentials holders).

Prior integrated programs grant increased number of programs but was insufficiently targeted to shortage areas, lacked key data and reporting. When the Committee last heard legislation on the topic of integrated teacher preparation programs (AB 1756 of the 2015-16 Session) staff noted that a 2004 CTC report on integrated programs found that 98% of enrollment in integrated programs was in multiple subject (elementary) preparation programs, with only 1% of enrollment seeking single subject credentials (such as math and science), and less than 1% seeking special education credentials.



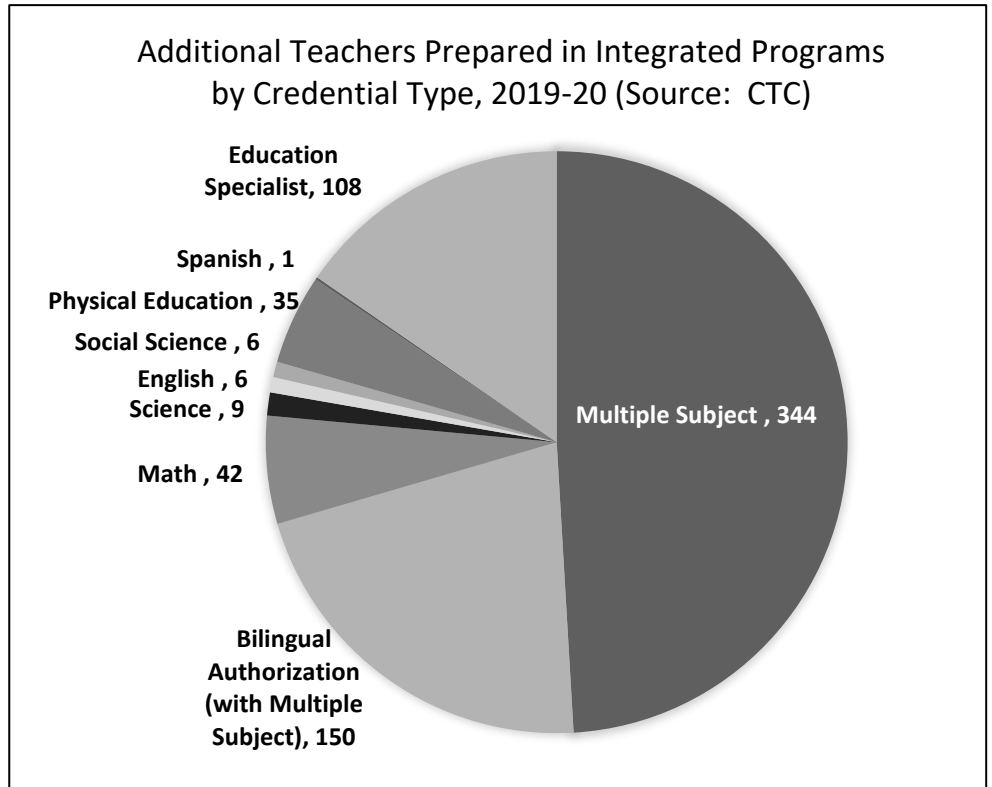
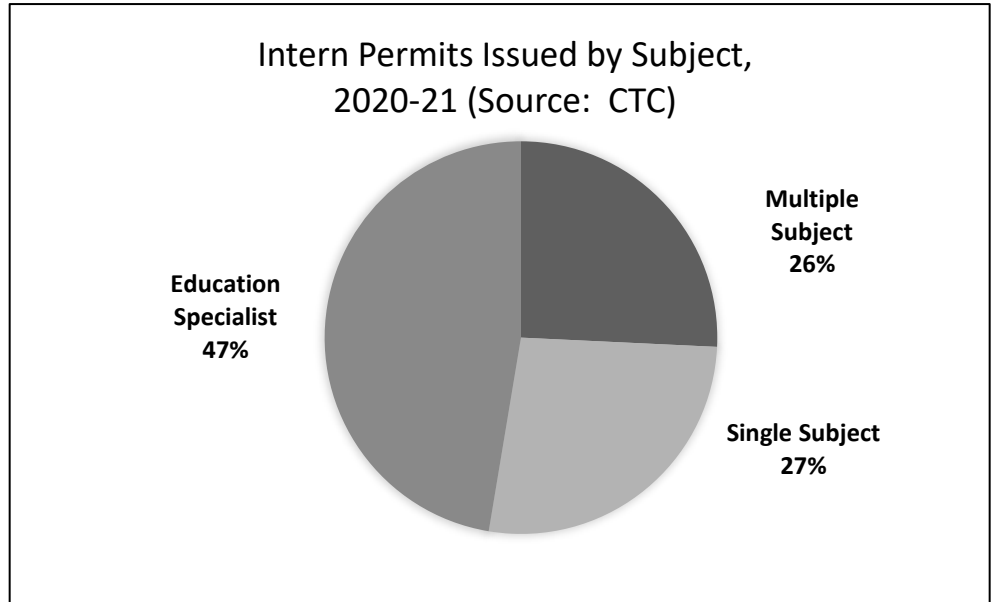
The Committee also noted that while the current teacher shortage is widespread, certain types of qualifications have historically been in short supply. Those included special education, math and science. In fact, the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) noted that “research over many years has found substantial evidence of specific market shortages. The CDE has identified shortages of special education, science, and math nearly every year since 1990-91,” and that special education is commonly viewed as the most acute shortage area.

Recognizing that state investments should be focused on areas of particular shortage, AB 1756 was amended to require the CTC to grant priority, in making grants through the program, to proposals for the establishment of programs designed to produce credentialed teachers in “special education and single subject areas with chronic shortages.” The bill was later amended to include bilingual authorizations. The language was then included in the trailer bill to the 2016-17 budget (SB 828, Committee on Budget, Chapter 29, Statutes of 2016).

The 2016-17 budget provided \$10 million for competitive Integrated Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program (IUTPP) grants. The CTC was required to give priority to proposals in the areas of special education, math, science, and/or bilingual education; and those that partner with a CCC. These programs are sometimes known as “2+2” integrated programs.

The CTC reports the following information about the IUTPP program authorized in the 2016-17 budget:

- The CTC awarded 41 institutions with grants of up to \$250,000, with an average grant amount of \$237,652.
- 87 teacher preparation programs were planned in 33 postsecondary institutions, 18 at CSU, two at UCs, and 13 at private colleges or universities.
- Overall, the 33 institutions proposed to collaborate with 54 CCCs. However the CTC did not collect information on how many partnerships were created as a result of this program.
- Statewide, there has been an increase in the number of programs and candidates enrolled in integrated programs. In the 2018-2019 academic year, grant recipients reported offering 41 programs with 392 candidates enrolled at the beginning of the school year and 371 remaining enrolled by the end of the school year. In 2019-20, grant recipients reported offering 57 programs with 701 candidates completing the year.



- When the number of candidates supported during academic years 2018-19 and 2019-20 are combined, the IUTPP grant has created program capacity for 1,072 candidates.
- In the 2019-20 academic year, 701 candidates worked toward earning their credential through an integrated teacher preparation program. Just under half (358) of the candidates enrolled in integrated programs were working on earning their Multiple Subject credential

with the next highest enrollments representing the 167 participants working toward their Multiple Subject credential with Bilingual Authorization and 63 working toward an Education Specialist Mild/Moderate credential.

- Candidates enrolled in integrated programs were diverse, with over two-thirds identifying as non-White, including with 46% identifying as Hispanic/Latinx of any race.
- The CTC reported several challenges in establishing integrated programs. Among them were internal curriculum review processes at institutions, changing coursework requirements in special education, candidates preferring the traditional 5 year program design, and administrative problems related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The CTC reports that as of 2020-21, 19% of all accredited programs are now integrated preparation programs, with 37 institutions offering 83 programs.

As shown above, many of the programs created through this program were in areas of non-chronic and acute shortage. Nearly half of candidates benefiting from this initiative are earning multiple subject (elementary) credentials, and some are earning credentials in areas which traditionally have had little to no shortage (physical education, English, and social science). Of the 701 candidates, only 51 are becoming credentialed in math or science, and only 12 earned education specialist credentials authorizing them to serve students with moderate/severe disabilities, an area of extreme shortage.

Types of Integrated Programs by Grant Recipients 2019-20 Program Type with Candidates Enrolled in 2019-2020 and those planned for 2020-21, combined (Source, CTC)		
Credential	Number of programs	Candidates enrolled
Multiple Subject	12	344
Multiple Subject with Bilingual Authorization	8	150
Single Subject: Math	9	42
Single Subject: Science	4	9
Single Subject: English	3	6
Single Subject: Social Science	2	6
Single Subject: Physical Education	4	35
Single Subject: Spanish	1	1
Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate (M/M)	11	60
Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe (M/S)	4	12
Education Specialist: Dual M/M & M/S	3	34
Education Specialist: Early Childhood Education	1	2
Added Bilingual Authorization for a Single Subject Credential	1	n/a
Total	63 programs	701 candidates

In addition, while a number of programs planned to create partnerships with CCCs, the CTC did not collect information on the number that did. The CTC reported to the Commissioners on the results of the program, but no Legislative report was required.

Governor's Budget proposes an additional \$10 million for this program. The Governor's Budget proposal for the 2022-23 fiscal year proposes an additional \$10 million for the IUTPP.

Recommended Committee amendments. Staff recommends that the bill be amended as follows:

- 1) Require that IHEs applying for this program provide assurances of the following, in addition to those currently required under current law:
 - a) Commitment to implement a planned integrated program;
 - b) A plan for recruitment and retention of candidates for educator shortage areas in teacher preparation programs, including integrated preparation programs; and
 - c) Demonstrated commitment to expand enrollment in, and access to, teacher preparation programs, including enrollment in integrated preparation programs (replace language on expanding, strengthening, improving access to).
- 2) Replace proposed amendments to the priority shortage areas with a requirement that any applicant provide plans for integrated teacher preparation programs in the areas of special education, STEM, bilingual, and credentials and coursework authorizing teaching of transitional kindergarten.
- 3) Remove priority for LEA efforts to recruit teachers, as specified.
- 4) Require that the CTC conduct outreach to institutions to encourage applications to develop programs in the above shortage areas, and to support institutions which need assistance in developing programs that meet the CTC's criteria.
- 5) Authorize IHEs which previously received grants to apply for a new grant, provided that they propose expansion of integrated programs capacity, new integrated programs in other credentialing fields or community college partnerships and that they report on the implementation timeline and status of the program established with the IUTPP funding.
- 6) Replace candidate support as an allowable use of the funds with a requirement that applicant IHEs describe how they will coordinate with existing sources of candidate support, such as the Golden State Teacher Scholarship and other forms of financial aid.
- 7) Require that the CTC annually report on this program to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature until funds are fully expended. Require that in addition to the data required to be collected under current law, the report include data on community college programs and on IHE progress relative to the assurances described above.

Related legislation. SB 828 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 29, Statutes of 2016, required the CTC to develop and implement a grant program for institutions of higher education to create or expand a four-year integrated teaching credential program, including student teaching.

AB 1756 (Bonilla) of the 2015-2016 Session would have established a grant program at the CTC to provide funding to postsecondary institutions to establish or expand integrated credentialing

programs, which allow candidates to earn teaching credentials while completing their undergraduate degrees. This bill was held in the Senate Education Committee.

SB 2042 (Alpert), Chapter 548, Statutes of 1998, authorized integrated programs of teacher preparation, which allow students working toward their baccalaureate degree to also earn a teaching credential.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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