

Date of Hearing: March 22, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Al Muratsuchi, Chair

AB 383 (Zbur) – As Introduced February 2, 2023

SUBJECT: California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program: leave of absence for student teaching

SUMMARY: Requires, as part of the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program, classified employees to be granted a leave of absence to complete their required student teaching hours and receive wages and benefits during the leave of absence in exchange for a commitment to teach for 5 years; and authorizes out-of-state teacher preparation programs to participate in this program. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires applicants for the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program to demonstrate the capacity and willingness to accommodate the participation of classified employees by providing wage replacement for a classified school employee who reduces their hours in order to meet the requirements of their teacher training program.
- 2) Requires that participants be entitled to a leave of absence of up to 600 hours for the purpose of completing a student teaching requirement as required by a teacher training program, and requires an applicant to provide a participant, upon the participant's request, with a stipend that is equal to the participant's regular wages and shall continue to pay for any benefits during the leave.
- 3) Requires that a participant complete one school year of classroom instruction in the school district, charter school, or county office of education (COE) for each year that the participant receives assistance for books, fees, tuition, or living expenses while attending an institution of higher education under the program.
- 4) Requires a participant to sign an agreement acknowledging that if the participant requests and receives a stipend, paid benefits, or both, they agree to all of the following terms:
 - a) The participant shall reimburse the state or the applicant in full for the stipend, paid benefits, or both, with interest at the legal rate if the participant accepts a teaching position during the regular school year at a school that is not in the state within three years of obtaining their teaching certificate.
 - b) Unless the participant serves a total of at least five years as a teacher for local educational agencies (LEAs) within the state, the participant shall reimburse the state or the applicant one-half the stipend, paid benefits, or both, that were received if the participant is offered a teaching position by the same applicant that paid their stipend or benefits, or both, and the participant either declines the position or accepts the position and resigns within the first three years and subsequently works as a teacher for a different LEA within the state.
 - c) Reimbursement shall be excused for either of the following reasons:
 - i) There are no available in-state teaching positions within a 60-mile radius of the participant's residence.

- ii) The participant suffers from a disability that precludes the participant from continuing to work as a teacher.
 - d) Reimbursement may be pursued by the applicant, the state, or either of their designees starting five years after the participant has completed their teaching program. States that in addition to reimbursement of the principal sum, the participant shall be liable for prejudgment interest and all expenses of collection, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees. States that if an employer learns that a participant who received a stipend, paid benefits, or both, from an applicant is now subject to reimbursement and is still due to receive pay from this employer, then the employer shall deduct the sum owed by the participant, not to exceed the legal minimum wage, and shall remit those funds to the state. States that pay may be withheld until the entire sum owed by the participant has been satisfied.
- 5) Defines "CAEP" as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.
 - 6) Defines "Institutions of higher education" as the California Community Colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other public and private not-for-profit institutions of higher education that offer either a CTC-approved teacher preparation program or a program that is accredited both regionally and by CAEP.
 - 7) Defines "Teacher training program" as an out-of-state teacher licensure program that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a) Has both regional accreditation and accreditation by CAEP.
 - b) Offers an applicant a teaching license that can then be used to receive a valid California teaching credential from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).
 - c) Includes a developmentally sequenced career ladder to provide instruction, coursework, and clearly defined tasks for each level of the ladder and that is designed to qualify students enrolled in the program for a teaching credential authorizing instruction in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program for recruiting classified school employees to participate in a program designed to encourage them to enroll in teacher training programs and to provide instructional service as teachers in the public schools. (Education Code 44393)
- 2) Requires the CTC to issue a request for proposals to all school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education in the state in order to solicit applications for funding. Requires the criteria adopted by the CTC for the selection of school districts, charter schools, or county offices of education to participate in the program to include all of the following:
 - a) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the capacity and willingness to accommodate the participation of classified school employees in teacher training programs conducted at institutions of higher education or a local educational agency;

- b) The extent to which the applicant's plan for the implementation of its recruitment program involves the active participation of one or more local campuses of the participating institutions of higher education (IHE) in the development of coursework and teaching programs for participating classified school employees. Each selected applicant shall be required to enter into a written articulation agreement with the participating campuses of the IHE;
 - c) The extent to which the applicant's plan for recruitment attempts to meet the demand for bilingual cross-cultural teachers and teachers in shortage areas in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 12, inclusive;
 - d) The extent to which a developmentally sequenced series of job descriptions leads from an entry-level classified school employee position to an entry-level teaching position in that school district, charter school, or COE; and
 - e) The extent to which the applicant's plan for recruitment attempts to meet its own specific teacher needs. (EC 44393)
- 3) Requires an applicant that is selected to participate to provide information about the program to all eligible classified school employees in the school district, charter school, or COE and assistance to each classified school employee it recruits under the program regarding admission to a teacher training program. (EC 44393)
- 4) Requires applicants to require participants to satisfy both of the following requirements before participating in the program:
- a) Pass a criminal background check; and
 - b) Provide verification of one of the following:
 - i) Has earned an associate or higher level degree; or
 - ii) Has successfully completed at least two years of study at a postsecondary educational institution. (EC 44393)
- 5) Requires an applicant to certify that it has received a commitment from each participant that he or she will accomplish all of the following:
- a) Graduate from an institution of higher education under the program with a bachelor's degree;
 - b) Complete all of the requirements for, and obtain, a multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential; and
 - c) Complete one school year of classroom instruction in the school district, charter school, or COE for each year that he or she receives assistance for books, fees, and tuition while attending an institution of higher education under the program. (EC 44393)

- 6) Requires the CTC, on or before January 1 of each year, to report to the Legislature regarding the status of the program, including, but not limited to, the number of classified school employees recruited, the academic progress of the classified school employees recruited, the number of classified school employees recruited who are subsequently employed as teachers in the public schools, the degree to which the applicant meets the teacher shortage needs of the school district, charter school, or COE, and the ethnic and racial composition of the participants in the program. (EC 44393)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, “AB 383 will help improve California schools and address the ongoing teacher shortage by strengthening the pipeline for our valued classified school staff who wish to enter the teaching profession. The bill will ensure that participants in specified teacher training programs are given the time, funding, and coverage for living expenses that they need to complete the program and obtain a teaching credential.”

Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program background. According to the CTC, the Legislature approved a combined total of \$45 million for two separate rounds of funding for the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program (CSETC)—\$20 million in 2016 and an additional \$25 million in 2017. This grant program provides up to \$4,000 per participant, per year, for up to five years. The LEAs that successfully applied to this competitive grant program use these funds to support tuition, fees, books, and related services for participating classified staff; they may also use some of this funding for program administrative purposes. This state grant funding has provided for 2,250 annual participant slots (1,010 slots for Round One, and 1,250 slots for Round Two). The program is designed to address the state’s teacher shortages in math, science, special education, and bilingual education, and provide those classified school employees who are familiar with and already working in school settings an opportunity and incentive to complete their undergraduate education and teacher preparation to become a credentialed California teacher.

2022 CSETC program report. The CTC completed their evaluation and report to the Legislature on the CSETC program in December 2022. The report identifies several successes including the diversity of the teacher candidates in the program and the large number of teacher candidates earning an education specialist credential. The report also identifies several challenges for the program participants, including the difficulty of maintaining a full time job, sometimes multiple jobs, and completing the teacher preparation program. Below are excerpts from the report:

“The table below provides the numbers of earned credential areas across Rounds One and Two per fiscal year spanning the last six years. Reviewing the data from the past six years, participants have earned a total of 1625 credentials. The Education Specialist credential is the most earned credential area, with a total of 765 from both rounds over the last six years. Subsequently, the Multiple Subject credential is the second most earned credential area, with a total of 518.” As a result of this program, 1,145 former classified employees are now serving as teachers.

Credential Areas	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
Multiple Subject	0	25	107	148	161	77	518
Multiple Subject: Bilingual Education	0	2	6	17	41	8	74
Single Subject	0	8	39	37	50	16	150
Single Subject: STEM	0	3	11	26	22	5	67
Single Subject: Bilingual Education	0	2	3	14	11	0	30
Education Specialist	4	29	127	245	229	131	765
Education Specialist: Bilingual Education	0	1	3	17	0	0	21
Total Credentials Earned	4	70	296	504	514	237	1625

(Source: CTC)

Combined R1 and R2: Gender/Sexual Orientation/Ethnicity/Race	Total	Percent (%)
Female	3853	38.19%
Male	870	8.62%
Non-binary/other	25	0.25%
Gender not reported	2200	21.81%
Heterosexual/straight	2164	21.45%
Gay/Lesbian	62	0.61%
Bisexual	21	0.21%
Other	5	0.05%
Decline to state	4695	46.54%
American Indian or Alaska Native	132	1.31%
Asian	643	6.37%
Black or African American	575	5.70%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	4286	42.49%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	38	0.38%
White	3058	30.31%
Two or more races	394	3.91%
Race/Ethnicity not reported	962	9.54%

Since the program’s inception in 2016-17, the largest racial/ethnic group of classified employees recruited are Hispanic or Latinx (42%), followed by White participants (30%). Of the total 10,088 participants enrolled in program to date, 5.7% percent identified as Black or African American, and 6.37% identified as Asian.

(Source: CTC)

One participating school district reported, “The Classified Program is helping our district address the acute shortage of teachers in special education. Last year, a participant earned a Multiple Subject credential and was offered a full-time teaching position. This program also addresses our district’s goals of increased hiring and retaining teachers representing historically underrepresented communities. The participant who earned the credential is African American. We are proud that 50% of our program participants identify as African American and 33% are Hispanic/Latino.”

Repayment provision. The repayment provisions in this bill are different than other state teacher recruitment programs such as the Teacher Residency Grant Program. This bill requires teacher

candidates to commit to work in the district for 5 years, whereas the teacher residency program requires a 4 year commitment. Further, this bill requires the candidate to repay 50% of the program costs and pay collections fees and legal fees if they don't fulfill their 5 year teaching commitment. The teacher residency program gives more flexibility with regard to reasons for failing to complete the commitment and authorizes the district to seek repayment from the candidate, but does not require them to pay collections fees or legal fees. *The Committee should consider* whether the repayment requirements for the CSETC program should be different or the same as the teacher residency program.

Out of state teacher preparation programs. This bill allows out of state teacher preparation programs to participate in the CSETC program. This means that California classified school employees participating in this program would be authorized to enroll in out of state teacher preparation programs and the tuition for those programs would be paid with state dollars. With the large number of teacher preparation programs accredited within California, it is unclear why it is necessary for program funds to be spent out of state. Further, completing a teacher preparation program out of state creates more hurdles for the candidate to become credentialed in California. *The Committee should consider* whether it is appropriate for state funds to be used for teacher preparation programs that are out of state.

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

- 1) Delete the authorization for out of state teacher preparation programs to participate in this program.
- 2) Delete the requirement for candidates to teach in California schools for 5 years, and amend the repayment provisions to mirror those in existing law for teacher residency candidates.
- 3) Clarify that the changes this bill makes to the program shall apply to candidates participating in the program at the time the bill goes into effect, and that the CTC shall increase the per-candidate award amounts to cover the additional costs associated with the requirements of this bill.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees
California Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Chelsea Kelley / ED. / (916) 319-2087