
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1224
Author: Valencia (D), et al.
Amended: 9/4/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 7/2/25

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Laird

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/29/25

AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 5/5/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Teacher credentialing: substitute teachers: days of service

SOURCE: Association of California School Administrators
California Association of School Business Officials
California County Superintendents
California School Boards Association

DIGEST: This bill allows local educational agencies (LEAs) to assign a permitted or credentialed substitute teacher to the same classroom for up to 60 cumulative days, rather than the current 30-day limit, under specific conditions. It establishes basic requirements for board notice and reporting when substitutes serve beyond 30 days (or 20 days in special education), and sunsets on January 1, 2029.

Senate Floor amendments of 9/4/25 require LEAs to provide additional support to substitute teachers who do not hold a preliminary or clear credential. Specifically, within 30 days of assignment, the LEA must provide access to professional development, an orientation training covering classroom management, instructional strategies, and safety protocols, and mentoring opportunities such as a partnership with an experienced teacher or administrator.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Emergency 30-Day Substitute Teaching Permit, allowing holders to substitute for no more than 30 days per assignment (20 days for special education).
- 2) Allows holders of Emergency Career Substitute Permits to serve for up to 60 days per assignment.
- 3) Temporarily authorized (until July 1, 2024) any credentialed substitute to serve up to 60 cumulative days in one assignment due to pandemic-related teacher shortages.
- 4) Allows districts to request waivers from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for credentialing requirements in special circumstances.
- 5) Establishes the Teaching Permit for Statutory Leave (TPSL), allowing temporary assignments covering statutory leaves (medical, parental, military) with required training and support.

This bill:

- 1) Makes legislative findings and declarations acknowledging the state's ongoing teacher shortages, particularly in high-need subjects and underserved student populations; affirms that California has a longstanding policy of linking teacher flexibility to instructional safeguards; and states that this bill is intended as a time-limited stopgap measure while the CTC considers updates to the substitute permit system.
- 2) Authorizes any credentialed or permitted substitute teacher whose document allows service in general, special, or career technical education to serve up to 60 cumulative days in a single assignment, provided the assignment is aligned with their authorization.
- 3) Requires LEAs without a collective bargaining agreement addressing substitute teacher assignments to do one or both of the following before exercising the above flexibility: first, use all available and suitable holders of a TPSL for leave-based assignments; and second, for vacant positions or where TPSL is not allowed, make reasonable efforts to recruit a qualified individual pursuant to existing law.
- 4) Requires school districts and charter schools to obtain governing board approval in a public meeting before assigning a substitute for more than 30

cumulative days in any one assignment, or more than 20 cumulative days in a special education assignment, unless urgent unforeseeable circumstances arise, in which case the assignment information must be presented as an informational item at the next board meeting.

- 5) Requires county superintendents of schools to report quarterly to the county board of education the number of substitute teachers who served more than 20 days in a special education assignment or more than 30 days in any one assignment.
- 6) Requires LEAs, if they assign a substitute teacher who does not have a preliminary or professional clear credential, to concurrently within 30 days of the assignment, provide all of the following to the substitute teacher access to professional development opportunities, an orientation training, and mentoring opportunities, as specified.
- 7) Requires LEAs to annually report to the CTC, beginning with data from the 2026–27 school year, the number of assignments in which a substitute served beyond the 20- and 30-day thresholds, including whether the substitute filled a vacancy or covered a teacher on leave.
- 8) Clarifies that this bill does not alter existing requirements for assignment monitoring, does not exempt LEAs from compliance with Section 44258.9, and does not amend the requirements of existing substitute-related permits such as the TPSL, short-term staff permit, or provisional internship permit.
- 9) Sunsets its provisions on January 1, 2029.

Comments

- 1) *Need for this bill.* According to the author, “AB 1224 seeks to provide better continuity for students by allowing substitute teachers to remain in the classroom for up to 60 days. The increased flexibility will reduce classroom instability and learning disruptions that affect students with disabilities the most. With greater stability in the classroom, students are able to establish rapport with their substitute teacher, leading to better educational outcomes. While in recent years the Legislature has made efforts to strengthen the teacher workforce, the persistent shortages exacerbate the demand for substitute teachers. In the face of an unprecedented educational workforce shortage, every tool should be utilized to help provide the best educational outcomes for California’s students.”

- 2) *Shortage Conditions Are Real—but the Root Problems Persist.* California’s educator shortage is not hypothetical. The state has seen steep declines in teacher preparation program enrollment and an overreliance on emergency or alternative credentialing. According to the Learning Policy Institute, credentialed teacher preparation completions in California have dropped by more than 50% since 2004, and substandard credentials now comprise over half of all new teaching authorizations.

However, data from the CTC suggests this is not simply a supply problem. Over 150,000 individuals currently hold valid substitute teaching permits but are not working in classrooms, and another 10,000 permits were issued in the past year alone. While some of these permit holders may have retired, left the workforce, or opted out for personal reasons, the data suggest that recruitment, support, and compensation—not raw numbers—may be the driving factors behind classroom shortages.

This bill may alleviate symptoms, but without broader structural action, it risks becoming a policy crutch. The danger is that it relieves pressure to fix the systemic conditions that make teaching and substitute teaching unattractive—even to those already credentialed.

- 3) *Instructional Quality and Equity Are at the Core.* Research consistently shows that teacher quality—not just presence—is the most significant school-based factor affecting student achievement. As Linda Darling-Hammond and others have found, teacher preparation and pedagogical skills are especially critical for supporting the learning of students with disabilities, English learners, and low-income students.

Substitute teachers holding only emergency permits typically lack this preparation. Without safeguards like training, mentoring, or structured instructional support, extending their placements may offer superficial continuity while undermining deeper learning. As Public Advocates and CTA have pointed out, this creates particular concern for students who most need expert, consistent instruction.

- 4) *The State Invests Hundreds of Millions on Teacher Recruitment and Retention.* To be evaluated fairly, this bill should be viewed within the broader context of the state’s sustained and substantial investments in addressing California’s teacher shortage. This bill offers stopgap flexibility—but it does so alongside a range of programs that reflect the state’s long-term commitment to strengthening the educator pipeline.

Major state-funded initiatives include:

- *Golden State Teacher Grant Program* (\$101 million ongoing): Provides up to \$20,000 in scholarships to teacher preparation candidates who commit to teaching in priority schools for four years. This program is designed to attract and retain teachers in high-need subject areas and communities.
- *Paid Student Teaching Stipends* (\$25 million one-time in 2023–24): Offers financial support to student teachers completing required clinical practice, a known barrier to credential completion for many candidates, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds.
- *Teacher Residency Grants* (\$250 million one-time since 2021): Funds intensive, year-long residencies that pair candidates with mentor teachers in high-need districts. These programs have been linked to stronger preparation and retention outcomes.
- *National Board Certification Incentives* (\$10 million ongoing): Supports experienced teachers pursuing advanced certification, with incentives shown to improve instructional quality and promote teacher retention.
- *“Grow Your Own” Teacher Pipeline Programs* (approximately \$20 million to date): Help LEAs build sustainable local pipelines by supporting paraeducators, classified staff, and students as they move into credential programs—often returning to serve the same communities.

These investments reflect a long-term commitment to raising instructional quality and equity. This bill must be understood as a limited tool—one that relieves short-term pressure without undermining long-term goals.

- 5) *This Bill Adds a Tool—But What About the Tools They Already Have?* If this bill is intended to give districts one more option to address staffing shortages, it’s worth asking: how does it relate to the tools districts already have? And if those existing tools are underutilized or perceived as burdensome, should the policy response be to lower standards—or to streamline and support high-quality options?

Today, LEAs already have multiple structured pathways for staffing classrooms when fully credentialed teachers are not available:

- *Short-Term Staff Permits (STSPs) and Provisional Intern Permits (PIPs)*, for candidates who are nearly credentialed and committed to completing requirements.
- *Variable Term Waivers*, which require governing board approval and documented evidence of unsuccessful recruitment.
- *Teaching Permits for Statutory Leave (TPSLs)*, which authorize longer-term substitute placements when the teacher of record is on statutory leave—and require that the substitute receive support, mentoring, and basic training in pedagogy, special education, and classroom management.
- *Emergency Career Substitute Permits*, which authorize extended substitute assignments for individuals with prior substitute experience and district sponsorship.
- *Internship programs*, often supported by state grants, that place teacher candidates in classrooms under supervision while they complete credentialing coursework.

These pathways involve documentation, recruitment, and training—requirements grounded in the principle that flexibility should not come at the expense of instructional quality.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$129,000 in the first year and \$127,000 each year thereafter until January 1, 2029. These costs would be used to support one position to update the California Statewide Assignment Accountability System to allow for the reporting of specified substitute teacher assignments, provide technical support to reporting local educational agencies (LEAs), and assist in the creation and maintenance of reporting data.
- There could be minor costs for school districts to verify that alternative substitute teacher options do not exist, make “reasonable efforts” to recruit a fully prepared teacher for the assignment, and comply with the bill’s reporting requirements. However, the bill’s authorization is permissive and does not appear to create a reimbursable state mandate.

SUPPORT: (Verified 9/4/25)

Association of California School Administrators (co-source)
California Association of School Business Officials (co-source)
California County Superintendents (co-source)
California School Boards Association (co-source)
Alameda County Office of Education
Alameda Unified School District
Berkeley Unified School District
California Association of Suburban School Districts
California Charter Schools Association
California State PTA
Castro Valley Unified School District
Central Valley Education Coalition
Clovis Unified School District
Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education
Contra Costa County Office of Education
Corona-Norco Unified School District
Dublin Unified School District
Eden Area Regional Occupational Program
Eden Area ROP
Fremont Unified School District
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District
New Haven Unified School District
Oakland Unified School District
Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
Orange County Board of Education
Orange County Department of Education
Orange County District Superintendents Organization
Pleasanton Unified School District
Riverside County Public K-12 School District Superintendents
San Bernardino County District Advocates for Better Schools
San Diego Unified School District
San Francisco Unified School District
San Joaquin County Office of Education
Santa Clara County Office of Education
School Employers Association of California
SELPA Administrators of California
Small School Districts Association
Sunol Glen Unified School District

United Administrators of Southern California
Vallejo City Unified School District

OPPOSITION: (Verified 9/4/25)

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
California Teachers Association
Disability Rights California
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Public Advocates

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 5/5/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Bains, Ellis

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