
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2466	Hearing Date:	June 10, 2026
Author:	Fong		
Version:	April 23, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: Strong Workforce Program: work-based learning opportunities: regional consortia.

SUMMARY

This bill expands the authorized uses of Strong Workforce Program (SWP) funds apportioned directly to regional consortia by allowing those funds to be used to provide direct support to students, employers, or both, for paid work-based learning opportunities intended to increase employability and employment. The bill also extends by one year the deadline for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to revise policies, regulations, and guidance related to paid work-based learning opportunities under the SWP.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Community Colleges (CCC), under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in California. (Education Code (EC) § 70900)
- 2) Establishes community college districts (CCD) and authorizes district governing boards to establish, maintain, operate, and govern community colleges and programs consistent with state law. (EC § 70902)
- 3) Establishes the SWP as a statewide career technical education (CTE) and workforce development initiative intended to expand the availability of high-quality, industry-valued CTE and workforce training programs. (EC § 88820 et seq.)
- 4) Requires SWP funding for community colleges to be apportioned partly to CCDs and partly to regional consortia to support regional workforce priorities and coordination. (EC § 88824)
- 5) Authorizes CCDs to use SWP funds apportioned directly to districts to provide direct support to students, employers, or both, for paid work-based learning opportunities intended to increase employability and employment, including apprenticeships, internships, externships, and student-run enterprises. (EC § 88827)

- 6) Requires the CCCCCO, no later than June 30, 2026, to revise policies, regulations, and guidance necessary to provide students, employers, or both, with paid work-based learning opportunities under the SWP. (EC § 88827)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Extends from June 30, 2026, to June 30, 2027, the deadline by which the CCCCCO must revise policies, regulations, and guidance necessary to provide students, employers, or both, with paid work-based learning opportunities under the SWP.
- 2) Authorizes SWP funds apportioned directly to regional consortia, in addition to funds apportioned directly to CCDs, to be used to provide direct support to students, employers, or both, for paid work-based learning opportunities intended to increase employability and employment.
- 3) Specifies that allowable paid work-based learning opportunities include, but are not limited to, apprenticeships, internships, externships, and student-run enterprises.
- 4) Makes conforming changes to align regional consortia authority with existing authority already granted to CCDs regarding paid work-based learning expenditures.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Access to higher paying jobs is increasingly tied to practical experience and technical skills. Integrating paid work experience alongside academic coursework allows students to cultivate their skill set and work experience early on while also earning income to offset their education costs. AB 2466 gives the Strong Workforce Program greater flexibility to increase the number of paid work-based learning experiences available to students, increasing their job opportunities and employment earnings following their education.”
- 2) ***Expands regional flexibility within an existing workforce development structure.*** This bill builds upon legislation enacted last year that authorized CCDs to use SWP funds for direct paid work-based learning supports. This bill extends similar authority to the regional consortia that administer approximately 40% of community college SWP funding, thereby aligning the permissible uses of regional funds with those already available to individual districts.

The SWP was intentionally designed as a regional workforce development model, recognizing that labor markets and industry needs often extend beyond the boundaries of individual CCDs. Regional consortia are responsible for coordinating workforce priorities across multiple districts, employers, K-12 partners, workforce boards, and industry sectors. Allowing consortia to directly support paid work-based learning opportunities may provide regions with greater

flexibility to respond to employer demand and coordinate internships, apprenticeships, and other experiential learning opportunities at a larger scale.

- 3) ***Paid work-based learning may improve equity and student participation in CTE pathways.*** A longstanding challenge in work-based learning programs is that unpaid internships and similar opportunities can be financially inaccessible for many low-income students, particularly students balancing coursework with employment or family responsibilities. Paid work-based learning opportunities may help reduce those barriers while also strengthening connections between students and employers in high-demand sectors.

This issue may be particularly relevant within the community college system, where many students are older, financially independent, or working while attending school. In those circumstances, the availability of paid internships, apprenticeships, and other compensated work-based learning opportunities may meaningfully affect whether students are able to participate in career preparation experiences that are increasingly valued by employers.

- 4) ***Continued evolution of the SWP from program development toward direct student workforce participation.*** When initially established in 2016, the SWP largely focused on expanding regional CTE capacity, improving alignment with labor market needs, strengthening employer engagement, and supporting program development. Over time, the Legislature has increasingly authorized the use of SWP funds for more direct student supports, including certification fees, career readiness activities, and paid work-based learning opportunities.

This bill continues that broader policy trend by allowing regional consortia to directly fund student-facing workforce experiences, rather than limiting those expenditures to individual districts. The measure therefore raises broader questions regarding the future role of the SWP, including the extent to which the program should function primarily as a regional planning and coordination mechanism versus a direct workforce participation and student support program.

- 5) ***One-year extension appears intended to accommodate expanded implementation responsibilities.*** The bill extends by one year the deadline for the CCCCO to revise policies, regulations, and guidance related to paid work-based learning opportunities. Given that the prior legislation authorizing district-level expenditures for paid work-based learning was only enacted last year, and this bill further expands allowable uses to regional consortia, the additional implementation time appears intended to allow the CCCCO to update statewide guidance consistent with the broader authority contemplated by this bill.

SUPPORT

Cerritos College (co-sponsor)
 Los Angeles Community College District (co-sponsor)
 Association of California Goodwills
 Association of Regional Center Agencies
 California Chamber of Commerce
 California EDGE Coalition

Southwestern Community College District
Student Senate for California Community Colleges

OPPOSITION

None received

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