
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2490
Author: Valencia (D), et al.
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/24/26

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

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 74-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Teacher credentialing: emergency career substitute teaching permit:
alternative qualifications

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

DIGEST: This bill expands eligibility for the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit by establishing an alternative pathway based on training, professional development, and mentoring rather than prior substitute teaching experience, and authorizes permit holders who qualify through that pathway to serve up to 70 cumulative days in a single classroom assignment, including special education classrooms.

Senate floor amendments of 8/21/26 expand eligibility for the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit by establishing an alternative pathway based on training, professional development, and mentoring rather than prior substitute teaching experience, and authorizes permit holders who qualify through that pathway to serve up to 70 cumulative days in a single classroom assignment, including special education classrooms.

The amendments require orientation training for both general and special education permitholders to include opportunities for participant engagement and require mentoring support to continue for the duration of the assignment. The amendments also recommend that mentoring occur, on average, for two hours per week, or as otherwise appropriate to provide meaningful support.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Emergency 30-Day Substitute Teaching Permit, which generally authorizes service as a substitute teacher for no more than 30 days for any one teacher during a school year, or 20 days in a special education classroom. (Education Code (EC) §§ 44300; 56061)
- 2) Establishes the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit, which authorizes eligible substitute teachers to serve up to 60 days for any one teacher during a school year. (California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 5 § 80025.1)
- 3) Requires applicants for an Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit to verify, among other requirements, at least 90 days per year of substitute teaching service during each of the three years immediately preceding the application. (CCR, Title 5 § 80025.1)
- 4) Authorizes school districts to request assignment approvals when they have made reasonable efforts to recruit a fully prepared teacher but are unable to do so. (EC § 44225.7)
- 5) Authorizes the issuance of a Teaching Permit for Statutory Leave (TPSL) to serve in positions where the teacher of record is absent due to statutory leave and establishes training and support requirements for TPSL holders.

This bill:

- 1) Establishes alternative pathways for obtaining an Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit based on specified professional development, orientation, and mentoring requirements for individuals serving in general or special education classrooms, rather than the existing substitute teaching experience requirement.
- 2) Requires permit applicants using the alternative pathway to complete at least five hours of professional development and specified orientation training,

including opportunities for participant engagement, and to receive ongoing mentoring for the duration of the assignment from a qualified mentor.

Recommends that mentoring occur, on average, two hours per week, or as otherwise appropriate to provide meaningful support, and establishes additional qualifications for mentors supporting special education assignments.

- 3) Requires, upon the first renewal of a permit issued through the alternative pathway, verification of 30 hours of additional professional development, and authorizes a local educational agency (LEA) to use existing training and documented mentorship to satisfy specified requirements.
- 4) Authorizes a permit holder qualifying through the alternative pathway to serve for up to 70 cumulative days in a single classroom assignment, including a special education classroom, notwithstanding existing limitations on substitute service in special education.
- 5) Requires an LEA, before making such an assignment, to use available and suitable holders of a Teaching Permit for Statutory Leave when applicable, and to make reasonable efforts to recruit a qualified individual for vacant positions or other assignments for which that permit is unavailable.
- 6) Requires an LEA to notify parents or guardians within 10 schooldays when pupils are assigned to a permit holder qualifying through the alternative pathway.
- 7) Requires LEAs to annually report specified information regarding extended substitute assignments to their governing boards or governing bodies and to report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) the number of assignments filled by permit holders qualifying through the alternative pathway.
- 8) Clarifies that this bill does not change existing law regarding improperly assigned substitute teachers or existing definitions of teacher vacancies, and defines an LEA for these purposes as a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

Comments

Need for the bill. According to the author, “AB 2490 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 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. AB 2490 includes mandatory training requirements for substitute teachers and requires administrators to make every attempt to fill a position with a fully credentialed teacher. 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."

California's Substitute Teacher Staffing Framework. California law currently provides multiple mechanisms to address teacher absences and staffing shortages, including the Emergency 30-Day Substitute Teaching Permit, the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit, the TPSL, internship credentials, short-term staff permits, provisional internship permits, and various waiver authorities. Each pathway reflects an effort to balance staffing flexibility with instructional quality by establishing differing eligibility requirements, preparation expectations, assignment limitations, and oversight mechanisms.

The Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit occupies a unique position within this framework. Unlike a standard substitute permit, which generally limits service to 30 days in a single assignment, the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit authorizes service for extended periods but currently requires substantial prior substitute teaching experience. This bill establishes an alternative pathway based on professional development, orientation training, and mentoring. In doing so, this bill reflects a broader discussion occurring throughout California's educator workforce system regarding how best to prepare substitute teachers for longer-term assignments when staffing shortages make classroom continuity difficult to maintain.

AB 1224, the Governor's Veto, and the Evolution of this Proposal. This bill builds upon efforts undertaken in the previous legislative session through AB 1224 (Valencia, 2025). That measure sought to restore and make permanent a temporary pandemic-era flexibility that allowed substitute teachers to serve in a single assignment for up to 60 cumulative days. While Governor Newsom acknowledged the challenges associated with staffing classrooms and maintaining instructional continuity, he vetoed the bill, expressing concern that the proposal would allow individuals to serve students for extended periods without required training, mentoring, or other supports.

In his veto message, the Governor encouraged the CTC to utilize its existing authority to engage stakeholders, reexamine California's substitute staffing pathways, and address the minimum levels of preparation and support required for long-term substitute assignments. This bill can largely be viewed as a response to

that directive. Rather than simply extending assignment limits, this bill establishes professional development requirements, orientation requirements, mentoring requirements, recruitment expectations, parent notification provisions, and reporting requirements intended to support substitute teachers serving in longer-term assignments.

The CTC Regulatory Process Provides Important Context. Following the Governor's veto of AB 1224, the CTC undertook an extensive stakeholder process to evaluate potential changes to California's substitute teacher permitting structure. Earlier this year, the CTC approved proposed regulatory amendments establishing an alternative pathway to the Emergency Career Substitute Teaching Permit for individuals who are unable to satisfy the existing experience requirements. The proposal would require employer verification of pre-service preparation, ongoing support, mentoring, and additional professional learning as conditions of permit issuance and renewal.

The CTC's proposal reflects many of the same underlying policy concepts found in this bill. In both cases, the goal is to create a pathway that allows greater continuity of instruction while pairing extended substitute assignments with preparation and support requirements that exceed those traditionally required for day-to-day substitute teaching. The CTC has stated that California's existing substitute staffing pathways do not always provide a clear solution for assignments that extend beyond traditional substitute limits but remain temporary in nature, such as prolonged teacher absences or lengthy recruitment efforts for fully credentialed teachers.

The CTC is currently seeking amendments to this bill. While expressing appreciation for the author's efforts to address concerns raised during the Assembly process, the CTC continues to seek greater specificity regarding the minimum amount of orientation and mentoring support required for permit holders serving in extended assignments.

Alignment with Other Workforce Policies. Recent amendments to this bill increase the maximum 0-t length authorized under the alternative pathway from 60 days to 70 days. The amendment appears intended to align the substitute teaching authorization with the anticipated implementation of paid pregnancy disability leave policies currently under consideration through the state budget process. If enacted, such policies could increase the frequency of teacher absences lasting approximately 14 weeks, creating situations in which schools may seek to maintain continuity of instruction through a single substitute teacher rather than rotating multiple substitutes through the same classroom assignment.

The recent author amendment highlights that this bill is not solely a response to teacher shortages. It also reflects broader workforce policy discussions regarding how schools maintain instructional continuity when employees take extended protected leaves while preserving the state's longstanding preference for fully credentialed teachers whenever possible. As policymakers continue to consider educator recruitment, retention, leave policies, and staffing flexibility, this bill raises questions regarding the extent to which California's substitute teacher framework should adapt to accommodate longer-term absences while continuing to support instructional quality and stability for students.

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

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$136,000 in the first year and \$134,000 each year thereafter until January 1, 2029. These costs would be used to support one position to address increased applications and inquiries from educators and employers, update resources and training materials, and assist in updating the California Statewide Assignment Accountability System to allow for the reporting of specified substitute teacher assignments.
- There could be additional Proposition 98 General Fund costs for school districts to comply with the various requirements necessary to place these permit holders. However, the bill's authorization is permissive and does not appear to create a reimbursable state mandate.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

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
 Association of California School Administrators
 Association of California County Boards of Education
 California Alliance of Child and Family Services
 California Association of Suburban School Districts
 California State PTA
 Central Valley Education Coalition
 Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education
 Fresno Unified School District
 Glenn County Office of Education

Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
Orange County Department of Education
San Diego Unified School District
San Francisco Unified School District
Torrance Unified School District

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

California Teachers Association
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Public Advocates
The Arc
United Cerebral Palsy California Collaboration

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 74-0, 5/26/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO VOTE RECORDED: Bonta, Mark González, Kalra, Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez, Schiavo

Prepared by: Ian Johnson / ED. / (916) 651-4105
8/24/26 13:11:03

**** **END** ****