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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 291 (Gipson) - Teachers: credentialed educator apprenticeship programs

**Version:** June 24, 2025

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** August 18, 2025

**Policy Vote:** ED. 7 - 0, L., P.E. & R. 5 - 0

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Lenin Del Castillo

**Bill Summary:** This bill requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) to jointly disseminate, approve, and monitor credentialed educator apprenticeship programs in California.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

- The CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$419,000 in the first year and ongoing costs of \$413,000 to support 3.0 positions to establish and oversee educator apprenticeship pathways that lead to a credential. Additionally, these positions would be responsible for reviewing and confirming the alignment of apprenticeship program applications with educator preparation standards, issuing apprenticeship permits, maintaining public guidance and informational resources, and supporting preparation programs and local educational agencies (LEAs) seeking to sponsor apprentices.
- The Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) estimates General Fund costs of approximately \$431,000 in the first year and \$407,000 ongoing for the DAS to oversee the approval and monitoring of credentialed educator apprenticeship programs.

**Background:** Existing law establishes the Teacher Residency Grant Program, funded until June 30, 2026, to provide funding to programs that partner with one or more teacher preparation programs accredited by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). It requires prospective teachers, as part of the Teacher Residency Grant Program, to teach at least one-half time alongside a teacher of record, who is designated as the experienced mentor teacher, for at least one full school year while engaging in initial preparation coursework. The program requires the grants to be up to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per teacher candidate in the residency program of the jurisdiction of the grant recipient, matched by that grant recipient on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The grants shall be used for, but is not limited to, any of the following: teacher preparation costs, stipends for mentor teachers, stipends for teacher candidates, and mentoring and beginning teacher induction costs following initial preparation.

Existing law requires grant recipients, among other things, to ensure that candidates are prepared to earn a preliminary teaching credential that will authorize the candidate to teach special education, bilingual education, science, technology, engineering, or mathematics upon completion of the program.

**Proposed Law:** This bill establishes the Credentialed Educator Apprenticeships Act and requires the CTC to partner with DAS to disseminate, approve, and monitor credentialed educator apprenticeship programs. Specifically, this bill requires the CTC to confirm that apprenticeship programs:

1. Partner with accredited educator preparation and, if applicable, induction programs.
2. Include at least 300 hours of paid on-the-job training prior to serving as an educator of record.
3. Require a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution before serving as an educator of record.
4. Provide at least 200 hours of mentoring and support annually.

This bill authorizes the CTC to issue apprenticeship certificates or permits to educator candidates who have cleared background checks but have not yet earned a credential. It requires apprenticeship program applicants to submit documentation to DAS confirming partnership with a CTC-accredited program and compliance with program requirements, including a labor-management agreement.

This bill prohibits DAS from approving an apprenticeship program unless CTC confirms program requirements have been met. The bill permits apprentices to concurrently hold classified positions, but prohibits performance of duties from other classified roles during apprenticeship hours.

This bill requires DAS to initiate deregistration if an associated preparation or induction program loses CTC accreditation. It also authorizes DAS and CTC to enter into a memorandum of understanding to establish application review, data sharing, and oversight procedures. The bill clarifies that this act does not apply to non-credential apprenticeship programs. Further, the bill requires DAS, in consultation with CTC, to adopt regulations consistent with Education Code requirements governing program approval, monitoring, and standards.

**Related Legislation:** AB 694 (Gipson, 2024) proposed to establish a Teacher Residency Apprenticeship Program to address shortages in the educator workforce, expand the pipeline into the teaching profession, and grow a diverse, local pathway into teaching. The bill was held on the Suspense File in this Committee.

**Staff Comments:** Registered apprenticeship programs (RAPs) are approved through the U.S. Department of Labor and the California DAS. Teacher apprenticeship programs must meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Labor, DAS and teacher preparation program requirements established by the CTC. The two largest sources of funding for RAPs are the US Apprenticeship Building America Grants and the State Apprenticeship Innovation Funding. While apprenticeships provide paid, on the job training to workers in various fields and are typically sponsored by businesses or labor unions, student teaching positions typically are unpaid. This bill proposes a framework to integrate paid, on-the-job experience into the credentialing pathway through formal apprenticeship models. According to the author, "One of the many

barriers to attaining a teacher credential is the costs related to obtaining a degree while trying to sustain oneself without an income during student teaching. With this bill, I believe that creating teacher residency apprenticeship programs can help alleviate one of the many barriers to becoming a credentialed teacher and help districts develop high qualified and experienced educators from their own community. We also need to provide as many tools as possible to help districts fill their vacancies. AB 291 is intended to assist with the aforementioned hurdles.”

**-- END --**