

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 606 (Quirk-Silva)

As Amended September 04, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to issue a preliminary professional services credential with a specialization in pupil personnel services (PPS) to an out-of-state prepared applicant who meets specified requirements.

Senate Amendments

Add a requirement that, for a services credential with a specialization in PPS in any area other than the area of child welfare and attendance, a program of professional preparation be in partnership with a regionally accredited institution of higher education (IHE).

COMMENTS

What does this bill do? For most credential subjects, California has a two-tier credential structure. A preliminary credential is the first document issued after an individual meets basic credential requirements. The preliminary credential is issued for a maximum of five years. A clear credential is issued when all credential requirements have been completed. If requirements for the clear credential are not completed before the expiration of the preliminary, the holder will be unable to provide services in California's public schools with that credential until those requirements are met and the document is renewed. Currently, California does not have a preliminary credential for PPS credential applicants. This bill would create a preliminary PPS credential so that out-of-state applicants with an out-of-state credential based on a preparation program could be hired in California schools while they complete any remaining requirements for a clear credential.

What is currently required for out-of-state prepared service credential holders? According to the CTC, out-of-state prepared educators who are authorized by another state or U.S. Territory to perform services such as School Counseling, School Psychology, or School Social Work may apply for California's PPS Credential. Out-of-state prepared educators who are authorized by another state or U.S. Territory to perform Speech Services may apply for California's Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential.

To qualify for either of these service credentials based on out-of-state preparation, a candidate must submit the following minimum requirements:

- 1) Application Form and processing fee;
- 2) Official transcripts verifying your Bachelor's degree (and any additional higher degrees);
- 3) Evidence of fingerprint processing; and
- 4) Supporting documentation for the specific credential, including evidence of completion of an accredited professional preparation program with specified subject and unit requirements, and field experience.

Out-of-state prepared teachers in other subject areas are issued a preliminary credential. This bill creates parity for PPS credentialholders.

California lags in providing critical mental health support to students. Recent research on access to comprehensive school-based mental health services in California (Romer, 2022) includes the following key findings:

- 1) Students in California had significant mental health and related support needs prior to the pandemic that has only further increased;
- 2) Despite growing student mental health needs, critical school and community behavioral and mental health staffing shortages persist;
- 3) School-based mental health referral pathways are not always aligned and coherent, and approaches to service delivery vary greatly across the state;
- 4) Limited funding flexibility and varied understanding of how to navigate, maximize, and plan for sustainability of available funding sources constitute a key barrier to expanding access to mental health services for students; and
- 5) A limited understanding of complex privacy laws and regulations by educational leaders and community partners can be a barrier to providing school-based mental health services.

Schools offering mental health services may provide services with credentialed school staff trained to address student mental health needs, and/or may rely on partnerships with community systems, such as county behavioral health agencies, community mental health providers or centers, hospitals, and universities. Credentialed school counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses provide critical health and mental health services to students. The distribution of support personnel in schools differs significantly from one school district to another throughout the state, but it is clear from the CDE data below that, as a state, California lacks sufficient numbers of trained personnel in our schools to meet the mental health needs of over six million students. The recommended ratios are those of the relevant national organizations.

School health professional	Number of professionals in California schools in 2018/19*	2018/19 ratio of students/professional	Recommended ratios by relevant professional associations
School counselors	10,416	576:1	250:1
School psychologists	6,329	948:1	500-700:1
School social workers	865	6,936:1	250:1
School nurses	2,720	2,205:1	750:1

Health professional workforce shortage. A 2022 report by the California Future Health Workforce Commission notes that California has a severe workforce shortage, with too few of the right types of health workers in the right places to meet the needs of the population. Millions

of Californians struggle to access the care they need, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that under-resourced communities and communities of color are hit hardest by an inadequate workforce. The aging of a generation of baby boomers will exacerbate the shortages in primary care, behavioral health care, and among workers who care for older adults.

This shortage holds true for the public education system in California as well. Schools are facing a severe workforce shortage across multiple job classifications, including the Pupil Personnel Service (PPS) credentialed professionals identified in the table above.

According to the Author

"As a teacher for over 30 years, I know how important our support staff specialists are in helping students thrive. Every student deserves access to the mental health and academic support they need to succeed. California's outdated credentialing process should not stand in the way of getting trained professionals into our schools. AB 606 breaks down unnecessary barriers, streamlines hiring, and ensures students, especially in rural and underserved communities, receive the support they deserve."

Arguments in Support

The California Association of School Psychologists states, "Currently, individuals who possess an equivalent, out-of-state PPS credential including school psychologists, school counselors, school social workers, and child welfare and attendance specialists must prove they have completed the requisite field experience through documentation on official letterhead, eligibility for the equivalent credential authorization, and education via an eligibility letter from their institution. If the out-of-state preparation program does not meet the criteria, the applicant must engage with a California college or university with a Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)-approved program for an evaluation and formal recommendation.

These requirements often result in roadblocks to efficiently hiring qualified individuals into the profession in California. AB 606 provides essential support and clarity by establishing much needed standards for the issuance and renewal of credentials and permits for out-of-state applicants. With the passage of AB 606, California can attract and retain well-qualified professionals, alleviating staffing shortages and enhancing critical student support services. California has seen a significant increase in the number of students needing assessments and special education services. School psychologists are critical to these services. AB 606 aligns with existing state investments, such as the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative fee schedule and strengthens our commitment to student well-being."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$439,000 in the first year and ongoing costs of \$433,000 and 3.0 positions for the creation of a new preliminary credential. This work includes the development of new standards and performance expectations, integrating the new credential into the Commission's existing accreditation and credential systems, providing technical support for applicants and local educational agencies (LEAs), and the processing of additional applications.

VOTES:**ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0**

YES: Muratsuchi, Hoover, Addis, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Patel

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Sanchez, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Solache, Ta, Alanis

ABS, ABST OR NV: Pellerin

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 69-0-10

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

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Boerner, Carrillo, Flora, Gallagher, Jeff Gonzalez, Irwin, Celeste Rodriguez, Sanchez, Wallis

UPDATED

VERSION: September 04, 2025

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FN: 0001937