

Date of Hearing: January 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Liz Ortega, Chair

AB 805 (Fong) – As Amended January 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program

SUMMARY: Establishes the Career Apprenticeship Bridge (CAB) Program to be administered by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) for specific purposes, including to create pathways for preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for individuals beginning in high school and connecting with college-level apprenticeships. Specifically, **this bill**:

- 1) Establishes the CAB Program to be administered by the DAS, for purposes of all of the following:
 - a. To coordinate and establish apprenticeships for in-school and out-of-school individuals from 16 to 24 years of age, inclusive.
 - b. To identify a process for approving industry pathways for preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for individuals beginning in high school and connecting with college-level apprenticeships.
 - c. To identify a process for approving industry pathways for apprenticeship programs for individuals who are in adult education programs.
 - d. To provide paid training opportunities through preapprenticeships and supportive services to out-of-school youth.
 - e. To establish a streamlined youth apprenticeship data system to promote data-driven decisionmaking.
 - f. To identify resources to support youth apprenticeships.
 - g. To identify appropriate partnerships between local educational agencies, the State Department of Education (CDE), the DAS, and other state agencies and employers to guide and implement the program.
- 2) Requires the DAS to do all of the following:
 - a. Work with the CDE and the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges (Chancellor's Office) to develop parameters and guidelines for the program consistent with the purposes specified in (1) above and the recommendations contained in the California Youth Apprenticeship Committee (CYAC) Report.
 - b. Identify county and regional intermediaries, including county offices of education, community organizations, industry sector partners, or other entities to coordinate and provide support to local educational entities, employers, and youth to implement the program.

- c. In consultation with the CDE and the Chancellor's Office, adopt regulations to develop a fast-track approval process for the pathways described in (1)(b) and (1)(c) above that are aligned with the goals of the program.
- d. On or before January 1, 2028, submit a report to the Legislature identifying barriers to employer participation and engagement in the program.
- e. On or before January 1, 2030, develop and maintain on the DAS' internet website a dashboard to track outcomes of the individuals participating in the program.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the DAS within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and requires the division, among other things, to evaluate apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs to ensure that the program evaluated is complying with its standards, as specified. Labor Code § 3073.1.
- 2) Establishes youth apprenticeship as a key priority for the DAS and requires that youth apprenticeship complement the state's existing registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs. Labor Code § 3120.
- 3) Establishes the CYAC to develop recommendations to the DAS on the expansion of youth apprenticeships in California and requires the CYAC to compile a report with those recommendations. Labor Code § 3121.
- 4) Establishes the Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program, to be administered by the DAS, for the purposes of awarding grant funds to eligible applicants to provide funding for existing apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs or to develop new apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs that serve individuals from 16 to 24 years of age who are at risk of disconnection or are disconnected from the education system or employment, unhoused, in the child welfare, juvenile justice, or criminal legal systems, living in concentrated poverty, or are facing barriers to labor market participation ("opportunity youth"). Labor Code § 3122.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: The Legislature in 2022 passed SB 191 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), which established youth apprenticeship as a key priority for the DAS and required that youth apprenticeship complement the state's existing registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs. SB 191 also required the DAS to convene the CYAC to develop recommendations for the expansion of youth apprenticeship in California and to memorialize those recommendations in a report, which was released in November 2025.

The CYAC report includes 18 recommendations for statewide system and resource alignments to make work-based learning and youth apprenticeship opportunities more broadly available for in-school and out-of-school youth, and to connect apprenticeship with economic and workforce development initiatives.

The Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program

One of the CYAC recommendations is for the state to create a new CAB Program that initiates the youth apprenticeship journey starting in high school and integrates Career Technical Education (CTE)¹ into the apprenticeship system.

As explained in the CYAC report, “The CAB program would be the first phase of an apprenticeship, and offer students a way to gain paid work experience with aligned classroom instruction, which when possible, would confer early college credit while still in high school. It provides learners with an enhanced educational experience that embeds the apprenticeship model and allows them to start and complete a phase of their professional journey prior to high school graduation.”

The report defines a CAB Program as “an apprenticeship-connected CTE program, registered with the Division of Apprenticeship Standards, that:

- 1) Has been approved through the CAB approval process;
- 2) Offers a minimum of 300 hours paid on-the-job training (OJT) hours through a Work Experience Education program or equivalent;
- 3) Offers at least 144 hours of occupation-specific apprenticeship related and supplemental instruction (RSI) as part of a CTE pathway or equivalent;
- 4) When possible, offers a minimum of one college enrollment course (or equivalent) so students can earn early college credits;
- 5) Establishes an agreement with, and/or is incorporated into, a new or existing regional or statewide Registered Apprenticeship Program that allows program completers to receive advance standing for the 300 hours of paid OJT and/or 144 hours of RSI accrued during the CAB.”

A CAB graduate would earn an official recognition from the CDE and the DAS and have more options upon high school graduation, including:

- Continuing their apprenticeship pathway with their existing program sponsor and/or;
- Working with their existing program sponsor to transfer to an adjacent apprenticeship program if the CAB completer leaves the region and wants to complete their apprenticeship and/or;
- Continuing onto college full time and being better suited to select a major based on the work experience gained through the CAB Program.

Need for the CAB Program

¹ According to the CDE, CTE is defined as “a program of study that involves a multiyear sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers.” <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/>

The DAS requires that apprenticeship programs provide at least 1,000 hours of OJT, and most programs include at least 2,000 hours or more. This creates a significant challenge in implementing high school-connected youth apprenticeship under current regulations, given that it is impractical for students to complete these hour requirements while also attending school. Currently an apprenticeship program that started in high school would likely require at least an additional year after high school graduation for the apprentice to complete the full apprenticeship. CAB programs offer a solution in that they would be three- to four-years long, starting during the final two years of high school along with one to two years post-high school.

CAB versus pre-apprenticeship:

As stated in the CYAC report, “By comparison, a CTE connected pre-apprenticeship program is... primarily a classroom-based training program and typically does not include paid on the job training. Pre-apprenticeships provide hands-on training to individuals in a simulated lab experience or through volunteer opportunities that accurately simulate industry and occupational conditions while observing proper supervision and safety protocols. While pre-apprenticeship programs often link to paid internships or educational stipends, Labor Code 3100 states that experience cannot supplant or reduce the compensable work of paid employees. Therefore, many pre-apprenticeships cannot offer paid OJT in the same way as CAB programs. For this reason, the CYAC found it necessary to establish a new model for school-based implementation.”

According to the Author

“Over the last several years, the Legislature has elevated attention on a population of youth who are frequently forgotten. Commonly referred to as Opportunity Youth, this population of young Californians ages 16 through 24 are not in school or employed. Some may live in disadvantaged communities, are involved in the juvenile justice system, or are in the child welfare system. The Legislature has also elevated apprenticeship programs that have a proven track record of helping individuals land good paying jobs and careers. In 2022, the Legislature provided funding for a grant program to develop youth apprenticeship programs, and required the Division of Apprenticeship Standards to convene a committee of diverse individuals to develop recommendations to expand apprenticeship opportunities through a coordinated system beginning in high school and linked to college level programs. This bill sets up a structure to implement some of the recommendations from the report. All youth are important and should have opportunities to succeed, including Opportunity Youth.”

With regards to how the bill promotes equity solutions (HR 39, Gipson, 2021), the author adds that “this bill helps facilitate more equitable access for youth and young adults to apprenticeship programs, developing new opportunities to develop financially sustainable career pathways. It also helps support youth who are disenfranchised or at risk. According to a recent PPIC report, males make up a majority of those who are not in school or working between the ages of 16 and 20, and black and Latinos had higher rates at ages 20 and 24 than their white and Asian peers.”

Committee Comments:

The objectives and directives in this bill lack sufficient clarity for implementation. Should this Committee approve the bill, Committee staff recommend that, in the future, the author add more detailed language mirroring the recommendations in the CYAC report, including specificity around program offerings, and requirements for applications and approvals.

Additionally, this bill seems to incorporate into the CAB Program some aspects of the CYAC Report that are not part of the CAB Program recommendations. Committee staff recommend that the enumerated purposes of the CAB Program reflect those in the report. If the author wishes to include other pieces, he could do so outside the parameters of the CAB Program in a separate section. For example, the CAB Program is specifically for in-school youth, not out-of-school youth as described in this bill's purposes. Additionally, the stated purpose of establishing "a streamlined youth apprenticeship data system to promote data-driven decisionmaking" is not part of the CAB Program but is a separate recommendation in the CYAC Report.

Moreover, to fully implement the CAB Program, this bill would likely also require changes to the Education Code, which is outside of the purview of this Committee.

Arguments in Support

The Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) states in support that "California employers continue to struggle to fill open roles. SHRM's 2025 Talent Trends Survey finds that 69% of organizations report ongoing hiring difficulty, while job requirements are shifting quickly—28% of employers now require new skills for full-time roles, and nearly half have updated existing positions to reflect changing business demands. Employer competitiveness increasingly depends on access to workers with relevant, job-ready skills."

AB 805 responds directly to these realities by establishing the Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program, which would connect Career Technical Education, adult education, and registered apprenticeships into clear, structured "earn-and-learn" pathways. This approach allows employers to develop talent earlier, reduce skills mismatches, and strengthen long-term workforce planning while providing young people with paid experience, mentorship, and portable credentials."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

Prior and Related Legislation

SB 845 (Pérez) of 2025 would make several changes to the state's framework for CTE and work-based learning, including: (1) revising the process for updating model CTE curriculum standards by requiring consultation with CTE teachers and labor representatives; (2) expanding the authority of local educational agencies, including state special schools, to offer and award credit for work-based learning activities beginning in grade 10; (3) establishing an interagency workgroup to develop occupational frameworks for youth apprenticeships; and (4) requiring the CDE to collect data on work-based learning participation, subject to an appropriation. Pending in the Assembly Education Committee.

ACR 16 (M Fong), Resolution Chapter 130, Statutes of 2023 declared the importance of creating pathways to success for California's opportunity youth and the need to develop a statewide comprehensive plan that will reduce persistent economic inequities.

SB 191 (Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 67, Statutes of 2022, among other things, established youth apprenticeship as a key priority for the DAS, required the DAS to convene the CYAC, and established the Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Alliance for Boys & Men of Color (Co-Sponsor)
California Opportunity Youth Network (Co-Sponsor)
UNITE-LA (Co-Sponsor)
California Community Foundation
Kincade Productions
New Ways to Work
NextGen California
Reaching At Promise Students Association (RAPSA)
Society of Human Resources Management
Union Roofing Contractors Association
Wonder Wood Ranch

Opposition

None on file

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