
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT
Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 805 **Hearing Date:** June 17, 2026
Author: Fong
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Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Jazmin Marroquin

SUBJECT: Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program

KEY ISSUE

This bill establishes the Career Apprenticeship Bridge (CAB) program, administered by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), to among other things, identify resources to support youth apprenticeships. The bill additionally requires (1) a CAB program applicant to submit documentation to the chief of DAS, as specified, and (2) the chief, before approving a CAB program, to present the application, as described, to the State Department of Education (CDE) to review whether specified requirements are met.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (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 DAS and requires that youth apprenticeship complement the state's existing registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs, as specified. (Labor Code §3120)
- 3) Requires the Chief of DAS to convene a committee to develop recommendations to the Division on the expansion of youth apprenticeships in California and provide a report to the Division with a set of recommendations no later than July 1, 2024. (Labor Code § 3121)
 - a) Requires the committee, in developing these recommendations, to specifically address the following topics:
 - i) Clear definitions of youth apprenticeship and high school apprenticeships.
 - ii) Guiding principles in the Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program administered by the division, as specified.
 - iii) Insights on the structure of the state's work to expand youth apprenticeship.
 - b) Requires the committee to include representatives from youth, youth serving organizations, labor, employers of youth, K-12 schools, community colleges, and the public workforce system.

- 4) Establishes the Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program, administered by 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”), as specified. (Labor Code §3122)

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the Career Apprenticeship Bridge (CAB) program, administered by DAS, for the purpose of both the following:
 - a) To identify resources to support youth apprenticeships.
 - b) To identify appropriate partnerships between local educational agencies, CDE, DAS, and other state agencies and employers to guide and implement the program.
- 2) Defines the following:
 - a) “Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program” means a program within a state-approved apprenticeship program for students in grades 10 to 12, inclusive, to gain paid work experience while receiving related and supplemental instruction through a career technical education (CTE) pathway.
 - i) The program provides learners with an enhanced educational experience that embeds the apprenticeship model and allows them to start and complete a phase of their apprenticeship journey prior to high school graduation.
 - b) “Student apprentice” means a registered apprentice who meets all of the following criteria:
 - i) Is at least 16 years of age.
 - ii) Is enrolled full time in school in grade 10, 11, or 12.
 - iii) Is participating in a youth apprenticeship program.
 - c) “Work experience education” means a course of study that combines an on-the-job component with classroom instruction.
 - i) “Work experience education” may be established by the governing board or body of a local educational agency, as specified.
 - d) “Youth apprenticeship program” means an apprenticeship program approved by the chief and registered with DAS that does all of the following:
 - i) Fulfills all registered apprenticeship requirements.
 - ii) Serves youth between 16 to 24 years of age, inclusive, at the time of enrollment.
 - iii) Offers related and supplemental instruction (RSI) through school-based CTE or academic courses, including dual enrollment courses, or the equivalent, whenever possible.
 - iv) Complies with labor laws for minors.
 - v) Offers flexible work hours to allow for pupils to participate in on-the-job training (OJT) while they are enrolled in high school.

- vi) Allows for part-time employment and extended completion time to accommodate student apprentices.
- 3) Requires a program applicant for a CAB program to submit documentation to the chief of DAS showing all of the following:
 - a) The proposed program offers a minimum of 300 hours paid OJT hours through a work experience education program or equivalent.
 - b) The proposed program offers a minimum of 144 hours of occupation-specific, apprenticeship-RSI as part of a CTE pathway or equivalent.
 - c) The proposed program provides participants who complete the CAB program with guaranteed entry and advanced standing in a state-approved apprenticeship program for the hours of paid OJT and RSI that the participant has accrued.
 - i) The requirement in this paragraph may be satisfied by either of the following:
 - (1) An agreement between the CAB program and the state-approved apprenticeship program.
 - (2) Evidence that the CAB program is incorporated into the state-approved apprenticeship program.
 - 4) Requires, to the greatest extent possible, the CAB program to offer a minimum of one college enrollment course, or equivalent, to enable participants to earn early college credits.
 - 5) Requires the chief of DAS, before approving a CAB program, to present the application to the CDE to review whether the requirements, in 3) and 4) are met.
 - a) If CDE confirms that the requirements in 3) and 4) are met, it must provide written notice of that fact to the chief of DAS.
 - b) If CDE does not provide written notice, the chief shall not approve the CAB program.
 - 6) Authorizes the chief of DAS to do all of the following:
 - a) Require other documentation to be submitted by the applicant.
 - b) Impose other requirements for approval of CAB programs in consultation with the CDE.
 - c) Suspend, or revoke approval of, a CAB program by providing written notice of the reasons for the suspension or revocation.
 - 7) Authorizes the chief of DAS, in consultation with CDE, to issue rules and regulations that govern CAB programs, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations governing the approval, denial, suspension, and revocation of programs, program administration and procedures, evaluations, working conditions, and minimum standards.
 - a) Requires all rules and regulations adopted, as specified, to be consistent with the rules and regulations adopted by CDE.
 - b) Permits a regulation to be adopted to prioritize outreach, recruitment, retention, and support for youth and young adults facing barriers to educational attainment and employment, including foster youth and former foster youth, justice-impacted youth, youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability, youth from low-income households, and youth residing in communities disproportionately impacted by poverty.

- 8) Authorizes DAS to 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 CAB program.

COMMENTS

1. Background:

Apprenticeships

DAS administers the state’s apprenticeship laws and enforces apprenticeship standards for wages, hours, working conditions and the specific skills required for state certification as a journey person in an apprenticeable occupation. In general, apprenticeship programs provide instruction that combines a formal course of in-class instruction with practical “on-the-job” training.

Under DAS, the California Apprenticeship Council (CAC) establishes standards for minimum wages, maximum hours, and working conditions for apprenticeship agreements in the building and construction trades and for firefighter occupations. The Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA) establishes similar standards apprentice agreements in all industries *other* than the building and construction trades and firefighter occupations, such as in healthcare, technology, advanced manufacturing, education, etc.

Youth apprentices

The California Youth Apprenticeship Committee (CYAC) was established in SB 191 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 67, Statutes of 2022), with the goal to advance youth apprenticeship in California. The committee was tasked with creating clear definitions for youth apprenticeship and high school apprenticeship, developing guiding principles for the Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program, and offering insight on the structure of the state’s work to expand youth apprenticeship.¹

As required by SB 191, the CYAC published their report, *The California Youth Apprenticeship Model*² in 2024, which made several recommendations to create an interconnected youth apprenticeship system that serves both in-school and out-of-school youth. In the final report, CYAC recommends defining youth apprenticeships as:

An apprenticeship program that combines paid work experience with classroom learning to prepare young people aged 16-24 for successful careers. A California Youth Apprenticeship Program is registered with DAS and:

- Fulfills all existing registered apprenticeship requirements,
- Serves youth ages 16-24 at the time of enrollment,
- Offers related and supplemental instruction (RSI) throughout advanced Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, dual enrollment, or the equivalent, and
- Complies with labor laws for minors and offers flexible work hours.

¹ <https://www.dir.ca.gov/das/Youth-Apprenticeship.html>

² California Youth Apprenticeship Committee, “*The California Youth Apprenticeship Model*,” 2024, https://www.dir.ca.gov/DAS/CYAC_Committee-Report.pdf

According to DAS, on average, between 2021 and 2025, 31% of registered apprentices are aged 16-24. As of 2025, there are 11,580 registered youth apprentices (age 16-24). Of these, 8,577 youth apprentices are CAC apprentices (in the building and fire trades), and 3,003 are IACA apprentices (in other occupational apprenticeships).

Additionally, the California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) grant, administered by DAS, was established in SB 191 (2022) to award grant funds to eligible applicants to provide funding for existing apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs or to develop new apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs to serve opportunity youth and to demonstrate the impact of apprenticeship on employment and earnings outcomes for opportunity youth.

The objective of COYA is to expand relationships with community-based organizations and labor market stakeholders that serve opportunity youth who face barriers to labor market participation. Through these partnerships, DAS aims to uplift opportunity youth with the resources necessary to enter and thrive in high-paying careers.

In July 2024, COYA awarded \$31 million in grants through its first round, for 2024-2026. Through its second round, COYA awarded \$15.4 million in grants for 2025-2027. Most recently, COYA awarded \$13.2 million in continuation grants through its third round for 2026-2028.³

CYAC report recommendations – creating a Career Apprenticeship Bridge program

As mentioned previously, CYAC’s report, *The California Youth Apprenticeship Model*, made several recommendations to create an interconnected youth apprenticeship system that serves both in-school and out-of-school youth. These recommendations were aimed at addressing California's critical skills gap, while providing alternate pathways to economic mobility for young people.

One of the report’s recommendations is to create a new career apprenticeship bridge (CAB) program that initiates the youth apprenticeship journey starting in high school and integrates career technical education (CTE) into the apprenticeship system. According to the 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. The CAB program would provide 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 goal is to allow more young people to begin apprenticeships while still in high school and gain paid work experience. Currently, most apprenticeships begin after high school.

Specifically, the CAB program is defined as an apprenticeship-connected CTE program, registered with DAS, 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 (WEE) 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,

³ <https://www.dir.ca.gov/DAS/Grants/California-Youth-Apprenticeship-Grant.html>

- 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 program.

The report further continues and recommends that “the youth apprentices in CAB programs should receive the same rights as any active registered apprentice in their ability to advance through the apprenticeship after high school and CAB completion. For example, if an adult apprentice was in good-standing and completed 300 hours of OJT and 144 of RSI, the registered apprenticeship program sponsor would be obligated to keep them active and supported for the remaining OJT requirement, to complete the full apprenticeship. Therefore, a CAB completer should have that same ability to continue on in the apprenticeship that the CAB is connected to.”

CYAC also states in the report that “a CAB graduate will earn a recognition from CDE and DAS for their accomplishment and have more options upon high school graduation. Through the experiential learning that happens in OJT environments, CAB graduates will have the opportunity to 1) continue with their apprenticeship pathway with their existing program sponsor, 2) work with their existing program sponsor to transfer to an adjacent apprenticeship program in cases where a CAB completer leaves the region perhaps for college and wants to complete their apprenticeship, and/or 3) continue onto college on a full time basis and be better suited to select a college major based on the work experience gained through the CAB Program.”

As explained in the CYAC report, “a CTE connected pre-apprenticeship program is linked to a registered apprenticeship program through a memorandum of understanding and DAS linkage agreement, but 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.”

The CAB program would allow high school students to complete the first phase of apprenticeship (300 hours OJT + 144 hours instruction) while still in school. As the CYAC report points out, “DAS requires that programs provide at least 1000 hours of OJT, and most programs include at least 2,000 hours or more. For in school youth, it is impractical to complete these hour requirements in the confines of high school and therefore the program must be 3-4 years long, spanning the final 2 years of high school along with 1 to 2 years post high school.”

2. Author's Amendments taken in Committee:

The author's office planned on making additional changes to add legislative intent language and clarify a cross-reference code in the work experience education definition. Due to timing, we will take the author's amendments as committee amendments. A mock-up is below.

Adds the following legislative intent to AB 805 and amends LC 3140, 3141, and 3142:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) **California has a strong interest in expanding access to youth apprenticeship opportunities that connect high school, postsecondary education, workforce training, and pathways to good jobs.**
- (b) **Apprenticeships and other "earn and learn" opportunities provide students with valuable paid work experience, career-connected learning, and opportunities for economic mobility.**
- (c) **It is the intent of the Legislature that Career Apprenticeship Bridge Programs be implemented in a manner that promotes awareness of, access to, participation in, and successful completion of youth apprenticeship opportunities for all eligible participants.**
- (d) **It is further the intent of the Legislature that outreach, recruitment, retention, and support efforts be conducted, to the extent feasible, for youth and young adults who face barriers to educational attainment or employment, including foster youth and former foster youth, justice-impacted youth, youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability, youth from low-income households, and youth residing in communities disproportionately impacted by poverty.**
- (e) **It is further the intent of the Legislature that the Division of Apprenticeship Standards work with county and regional intermediaries, including local educational agencies, county offices of education, community-based organizations, industry sector partners, workforce development entities, employers, and other stakeholders to support the implementation and expansion of Career Apprenticeship Bridge Programs.**

[...]

LC 3140. (c) (1) "Work experience education" has the same meaning as defined in Section 51760-51769.5 of the Education Code. means a course of study that combines an on-the-job component with classroom instruction.

(2) "Work experience education" may be established by the governing board or body of a local educational agency pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 10070) of Subchapter 1 of Chapter 10 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

LC 3141. The Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program is hereby established, to be administered by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards. The division may work with the State Department of Education and the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges in order: , for purposes of both of the following:

- (a) To identify resources to support youth apprenticeships.
- (b) To identify appropriate partnerships between local educational agencies, ~~the State Department of Education, the Division of Apprenticeship Standards,~~ and other state agencies and employers to guide and implement the program.

LC 3142. (e) (1) The chief, in consultation with the State Department of Education, may issue rules and regulations that govern Career Apprenticeship Bridge Programs, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations governing the approval, denial, suspension, and revocation of programs, program administration and procedures, evaluations, working conditions, and minimum standards.

(2) All rules and regulations adopted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be consistent with the rules and regulations adopted by the State Department of Education.

~~(3) A regulation may be adopted to prioritize outreach, recruitment, retention, and support for youth and young adults facing barriers to educational attainment and employment, including foster youth and former foster youth, justice-impacted youth, youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability, youth from low income households, and youth residing in communities disproportionately impacted by poverty.~~

~~(f) The Division of Apprenticeship Standards may 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 Career Apprenticeship Bridge Program.~~

3. Need for this bill?

According to the author, “According to the recently released California Youth Apprenticeship Model report, less than one half of one percent of the workforce in the state is in registered apprenticeships, with California serving fewer than 100,000 apprentices per year despite the success apprenticeships have demonstrated in growing employee wages, saving costs for employers, and expanding the economy. Challenges accessing apprenticeships programs are most acutely experienced by youth and young adults, with the average age of an apprentice in California being over 30 years old. By advancing key recommendations from the California Youth Apprenticeship Model report, AB 805 will help advance Governor Newsom’s stated goal of expanding apprenticeship opportunities including through establishing connections with existing career and technical education (CTE) and adult education programs and fast tracking approval of these new pathways.”

4. Proponent Arguments:

According to the co-sponsors, the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (ABMOC), California Opportunity Youth Network (COYN), and UNITE-LA:

“AB 805 advances several of [CYAC’s report] recommendations, including establishing a Career Apprenticeship Bridge (CAB) program to link career and technical education (CTE) and adult education programs with apprenticeship programs; establishing a process to expedite approval of CAB-aligned programs; directing the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) to identify local, county or regional intermediaries to support the coordination and establishment of apprenticeship programs; requiring DAS to submit a report to the Legislature identifying barriers to employer participation; and requiring reporting on outcomes on youth and young adults participating in the CAB program. Collectively, these policies will more seamlessly link existing CTE programs across systems, facilitate new

apprenticeship opportunities for youth and young adults, and promote ongoing program quality and performance. For these reasons we are proud to co-sponsor AB 805, and thank you for your leadership in advancing this important bill.”

5. Opponent Arguments:

None received.

6. Prior Legislation:

SB 845 (Perez, 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. *This bill is pending in the Assembly Education Committee.*

ACR 16 (Fong, 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 endured by California’s opportunity youth.

SB 191 (Committee on 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.

SUPPORT

Alliance for Boys & Men of Color (Co-sponsor)
California Opportunity Youth Network (Co-sponsor)
UNITE-LA (Co-sponsor)
Alameda County Office of Education
Bay Area Council
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Chamber of Commerce
California Community Foundation
CAROCP- the Association of Career and College Readiness Organizations
Educational Results Partnership
Kincade Productions, LLC
Los Angeles LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce
New Ways to Work
NextGen California
PowerCA Action
Rancho Santiago Community College District
Reaching At Promise Students Association (RAPSA)
Redefine Alliance (REDF)
Society of Human Resources Management

Union Roofing Contractors Association
Western Electrical Contractors Association
Wonder Wood Ranch
Youth Will

OPPOSITION

None received

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