
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 959
Author: Hadwick (R)
Amended: 9/5/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/25/25

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

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/29/25

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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Teacher credentialing: administrative services credential: internship program

SOURCE: Placer County Office of Education

DIGEST: This bill authorizes a school district, county office of education (COE), or regionally accredited institution of higher education (IHE) to offer a one-year internship program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to meet requirements for the preliminary administrative services credential.

Senate Floor Amendments of 9/5/25 incorporate chaptering-out language to avoid conflicts with AB 1009 (Blanca Rubio, 2025). Specifically, the amendments provide that the changes made by this bill will only become operative if both this bill and AB 1009 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes minimum requirements for the preliminary services credential with a specialization in administrative services, including:

- a) Possession of a valid credential as a teacher, designated subjects instructor, pupil personnel services provider, health, librarian, or rehabilitative services provider. (Education Code (EDC) § 44270)
 - b) Completion of three years of qualifying professional experience in teaching or pupil services. (EDC § 44270)
 - c) Completion of an approved program of professional preparation in administrative services or a one-year supervised internship program. (EDC § 44270)
 - d) Employment in an administrative position following completion of preparation. (EDC § 44270)
- 2) Requires CTC approval of preparation programs, but does not specify which entities may offer the one-year internship option. (EDC § 44270)
 - 3) Provides that the preliminary credential is valid for five years and is non-renewable. (EDC § 44270)
 - 4) Establishes requirements for earning a clear (professional) administrative services credential. (EDC § 44270.1)

This bill:

- 1) Clarifies that a school district, COE, or regionally accredited IHE may offer a one-year internship program for candidates seeking a preliminary administrative services credential.
- 2) Requires such programs to be approved by the CTC as meeting credentialing standards.
- 3) Requires the CTC to examine its preservice, professional development, and supervision requirements when it next considers administrative services credential pathways.
- 4) Makes various changes to avoid conflicts with AB 1009 (Blanca Rubio, 2025). Specifically, the amendments provide that the changes made by this bill will only become operative if both this bill and AB 1009 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

Comments

- 1) *Need for the bill.* According to the author, “California’s students deserve strong, well-prepared school leaders who can foster positive learning environments and drive student success. Assembly Bill 959 ensures aspiring administrators can pursue high-quality, localized training by requiring allowing county offices of education and school districts to offer administrative credentialing internships. By including school districts in this amendment, we expand access to well-supervised, high-quality training opportunities while maintaining the rigorous standards necessary for effective leadership preparation.

This bill strengthens the pipeline of qualified administrators, particularly in underserved and rural communities, by ensuring that school districts and county offices of education along with accredited higher education institutions—can offer structured, hands-on training programs. By doing so, we help reduce administrator turnover, support equity in leadership preparation, and create a more accessible, effective pathway for aspiring school leaders. Rather than restricting opportunities, AB 959 ensures that all candidates receive the comprehensive preparation needed to succeed in today’s educational landscape and improve outcomes for California’s students.

- 2) *Clarifying Statutory Authority for a Growing Pathway.* Current law allows candidates to meet the professional preparation requirement for a preliminary administrative credential through either a CTC-approved program or a one-year internship. However, because statute does not explicitly authorize local educational agencies (LEAs) to offer such internships—unlike the parallel authorization for teacher internship programs—the CTC has historically limited approval to programs operated by IHEs. This bill would clarify CTC’s authority to approve internship programs run by school districts and COEs, aligning administrative credentialing pathways more closely with those available to aspiring teachers.
- 3) *Expanding Local Access to Leadership Pipelines.* Allowing districts and COEs to offer credentialing internships could expand access to administrative preparation, especially in rural or underserved communities where travel to an IHE-based program may be impractical. For candidates already working in schools, internship models offer the chance to “learn while leading”—gaining supervised experience in real-world contexts while completing credential requirements. This flexibility may help districts develop internal pipelines and

retain promising teacher leaders who might otherwise leave the area to pursue credentialing elsewhere.

- 4) *Workforce Pressures Extend Beyond the Classroom.* While much recent policy attention has focused on teacher shortages—including expanded support for residencies, local preparation partnerships, and substitute flexibility—school leadership shortages are also a growing concern. As with teaching, the preparation pipeline for site and district administrators must evolve to meet demand. According to the CTC, issuance of intern credentials for administrators grew from 67 in 2010–11 to 191 in 2022–23. While still a minority of the total, the increase suggests growing interest in alternative pathways.
- 5) *Quality Safeguards Remain in Place.* This bill does not reduce standards for credentialing; it simply broadens who may operate internship programs. All programs would still require CTC approval and be held to the same preparation standards, including supervision, individualized learning plans, and alignment with leadership competencies. This mirrors the structure used for district-based teacher internship programs, which have been a feature of California credentialing since 1983.
- 6) *Balancing Access and Retention.* Internship pathways can help address immediate access issues, but may not be optimal for long-term retention. As noted in other educator workforce discussions, candidates who enter the field through internship programs may be more likely to leave the profession early compared to peers in traditional or residency-based programs. That tradeoff may be acceptable in the current context, where flexible, locally tailored options are urgently needed to stabilize the educator pipeline—but it warrants continued monitoring by both the CTC and policymakers.
- 7) *An Incremental but Potentially Meaningful Fix.* This bill is narrow in scope but could be impactful in practice. By resolving an ambiguity in statute, it enables more localized and responsive training pathways for future school leaders. In doing so, it aligns with broader efforts to diversify, expand, and modernize California’s educator preparation systems to meet the evolving needs of schools and students.

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

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The CTC estimates unknown, but potentially significant General Fund costs to review and approve an increased number of new one-year internship

programs with approximately 1,000 school districts and COEs that would be authorized to provide them as a result of this measure.

- This bill could result in additional, unknown Proposition 98 General Fund costs for school districts and COEs that elect to develop and provide the internship programs.

SUPPORT: (Verified 9/5/25)

Placer County Office of Education (source)
 Association of California School Administrators
 California County Superintendents
 Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
 Santa Clara County Office of Education
 School Employers Association of California
 Small School Districts Association

OPPOSITION: (Verified 9/5/25)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 6/2/25

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

NO VOTE RECORDED: Lee

Prepared by: Ian Johnson / ED. / (916) 651-4105
 9/8/25 21:29:46

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