

California adding apprenticeships to teacher recruitment toolbox

Apprenticeships are being added to the long list of initiatives California has undertaken in recent years to address its enduring teacher shortage. State leaders hope that the free or reduced-priced tuition and steady salary that generally accompany apprenticeships will encourage more people to become teachers.

Apprentices complete their bachelor's degree and a teacher preparation program while working as a member of the support staff at a school. They gain clinical experience at work while taking courses to earn their teaching credentials.

"It opens up the pipeline to teaching for folks who are hired into the school district," said Joe Ross, president of Reach University, a nonprofit that operates a teacher apprenticeship program. "We have people at Reach who are in positions such as janitors, working in the lunchroom, working in the office. The majority are teacher's aides, but you have this entirely larger, until now, really overlooked pool."

California has joined 30 other states that have committed to launching registered teacher apprenticeship programs at the encouragement of the federal government. Last July, the Labor Department developed new national guidelines and standards for registered apprenticeship programs for K-12 teachers and provided funding to develop and expand programs. Twenty states have already started registered teacher apprenticeship programs.

Registered apprenticeship programs must be approved by either the Labor Department or a state apprenticeship agency. They offer a high-quality, rigorous pathway into a profession through an "earn-and-learn" model, according to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The salaries of apprentices in these programs increase as they complete coursework and take on more responsibility.

Apprenticeships attract and retain candidates of color

Research shows that "grow your own" programs, such as apprenticeships, help to diversify the educator workforce because school staff recruited from the community more closely match the demographics of the student body than traditionally trained and recruited teachers. Apprenticeship programs also increase recruitment and have a 90% retention rate, according to the Labor Department.

"We know, for our candidates of color, that affordability is one of the key considerations," said Shireen Pavri assistant vice chancellor of the Educator and Leadership Program at California State University.

Clinically rich preparation programs with mentorship, like apprenticeships and residencies, attract and retain more candidates of color, Pavri said. The candidates in these programs usually remain in the preparation program and with the school district they trained in, and stay in the field longer, she said.

Residencies, unlike apprenticeships, focus on teacher candidates who have already earned a bachelor's degree and are new to the classroom.

"Apprenticeships are relatively new nationwide but really rapidly growing as a way to address teacher shortages," Pavri said. "The Department of Labor has supported apprenticeships for quite a while, but not in teaching."

Longtime school employee works toward dream job

On a recent Thursday, apprentice Ja'net Williams, 48, worked with small groups of first grade students as they rotated through a series of stations during a math lesson at Delta Elementary Charter School. She has worked as a paraeducator at the rural school in the tiny Delta town of Clarksburg, near Sacramento, for 14 years.

Williams has always wanted to be a credentialed elementary school teacher, but she couldn't afford to enter a conventional preparation program. This year she joined the teaching apprenticeship program at Reach University.

Although it is not yet a registered apprenticeship program, which would allow it to access federal funding and resources, Reach University is currently one of the few programs in the state with an apprenticeship program preparing K-12 teachers.

As an apprentice, Williams continues to draw her salary as a paraeducator, and also earns, annually, a \$2,300 stipend and is reimbursed up to \$1,000 of her expenses from the school district. Reach University charges \$75 a month for tuition.

"I was looking at different options," she said. "It came down to, it's affordable. I'm a mom. I have a daughter in Sac State and one that will be starting at Sac City (College) next year. So I want to help them financially as much as possible, and take off the burden for them. So I couldn't take on, you know, \$40,000 of debt for myself when I would want to put that toward my children."

Williams works in the classroom during the day and takes classes on Zoom two evenings a week to complete her bachelor's degree and teacher preparation courses. She and her classmates discuss their day's experiences and incorporate them into their coursework, Williams said.

After completing her teaching credential, Williams plans to continue to work at Delta Elementary Charter as a teacher. "I want to stay here," she said. "This is where my heart and soul is."

Experts plan state teacher apprenticeship program

There are 17 registered teaching apprenticeship programs in California, but they are mostly limited to early childhood education. There are no registered apprenticeships for K-12 credentialed teachers, said Erin Hickey, a spokesperson for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

They may be more common soon. Pavri is part of a group of educators, researchers, state and county officials, and labor and policy representatives who have been working with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency and the Division of Apprenticeship Standards for nearly a year to develop a Roadmap for Teacher Apprenticeships for California. Their work is being funded with philanthropic support.

The road map will help school districts, teacher preparation programs and other partners navigate the process and find funding to launch, scale and sustain registered teacher apprenticeship programs, Hickey said. The road map is expected to be released later this year.

The road map will take into consideration multiple on-ramps and pathways for different teacher candidates, including high school students, post-secondary students, current classified staff and other career changers, Hickey said.

Preparing the road map hasn't been easy, Pavri said. The work group has had to clarify and streamline regulations from both the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The agencies are working together to develop a joint approval process that will be informed by the work group and by pilot programs expected to begin next school year.

Article continues at link below

Region	January 2023	December 2023	January 2024	Percentage Point Change	
				1 month	12 months
San José–Sunnyvale MSA	3.1%	4.0%	4.4%	+ 0.4	+ 1.3
San Francisco MD	2.8%	3.5%	3.9%	+ 0.4	+ 1.1
California	4.7%	5.1%	5.7%	+ 0.6	+ 1.0
United States	3.9%	3.5%	4.1%	+ 0.6	+ 0.2

Sector — January 2024	San Jose MSA	San Francisco MD	Combined Region	Percentage Change (Combined Region)	
				1 month	12 months
Total Nonfarm	1,149,100	1,158,100	2,307,200	- 1.5%	- 0.4%
Construction	51,500	40,000	91,500	- 2.8%	+ 1.7%
Manufacturing	176,800	35,100	211,900	- 1.2%	- 1.9%
Retail Trade	73,800	65,300	139,100	- 3.1%	- 0.2%
Information	94,600	110,900	205,500	- 1.2%	- 9.6%
Professional & Business Services	243,400	292,100	535,500	- 1.4%	- 3.3%
Educational Services	94,000	84,200	178,200	- 2.4%	+ 1.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	150,900	133,100	284,000	0.0%	+ 7.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	98,800	124,800	223,600	- 2.3%	+ 4.6%
Government	99,200	141,000	240,200	- 0.5%	+ 2.3%

Note: San José MSA (San José–Sunnyvale–Santa Clara Metropolitan Statistical Area) = Santa Clara and San Benito Counties
 San Francisco MD (San Francisco–Redwood City–South San Francisco Metropolitan Division) = San Mateo and San Francisco Counties

Source: California Employment Development Department, LMID

9-County San Francisco Bay Area	Labor Force			Employed			Unemployment		
	January 2023	January 2024	Change	January 2023	January 2024	Change	January 2023	January 2024	Change
California	19,161,400	19,344,200	+ 1.0%	18,262,500	18,239,000	- 0.1%	4.7%	5.7%	+ 1.0
Alameda County	819,100	825,700	+ 0.8%	789,200	784,500	- 0.6%	3.7%	5.0%	+ 1.3
Contra Costa County	547,100	550,700	+ 0.7%	525,900	523,000	- 0.6%	3.9%	5.0%	+ 1.1
Marin County	130,800	132,300	+ 1.1%	126,800	126,900	+ 0.5%	3.0%	4.1%	+ 1.1
Napa County	68,800	71,800	+ 4.4%	66,100	68,400	+ 3.5%	4.0%	4.6%	+ 0.6
San Francisco County	566,700	561,000	- 1.0%	550,600	538,700	- 2.2%	2.8%	4.0%	+ 1.2
San Mateo County	448,400	443,400	- 1.1%	436,400	427,000	- 2.2%	2.7%	3.7%	+ 1.0
Santa Clara County	1,036,200	1,034,000	- 0.2%	1,005,500	989,200	- 1.6%	3.0%	4.3%	+ 1.3
Solano County	199,500	205,000	+ 2.8%	190,000	193,400	+ 1.8%	4.8%	5.7%	+ 0.9
Sonoma County	243,200	249,400	+ 2.5%	234,300	238,200	+ 1.7%	3.7%	4.5%	+ 0.8
SF Bay Area (sum)	4,059,800	4,073,300	+ 0.3%	3,924,800	3,889,300	- 0.9%	3.3%	4.5%	+ 1.2

Note: Totals may not add correctly due to rounding

Source: California Employment Development Department, LMID

Company	Location	# Affected	WARN SUMMARY	
			Events YTD †	Individuals Affected YTD †
Agilent Technologies	Santa Clara	32	16	2,004
Allakos	San Carlos	59		
Broadcom	Palo Alto	1,267	3,337	
Exabeam	San Mateo	94		
Flex LTD	Milpitas	31		
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals	South San Francisco	1		
Lendlease Americas	Sunnyvale	56		
Marvell Semiconductor	Santa Clara	58		
Plenty Unlimited	Multiple cities	141		
Sangamo Therapeutics	Brisbane	102		
Talis Biomedical Corporation	Redwood City	103		
Western Digital	Milpitas	103		
Total		2,004		

WARN SUMMARY

Events YTD †: 16
 Individuals Affected YTD †: 2,004
 Individuals Previous YTD ‡: 3,337

* **WARN: Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification**
 (notice of mass layoff or closure)

† **YTD: Year to Date**
 (Calendar year: January 1–Present)

‡ **Previous YTD:**
 (Same date range as YTD, one year prior)

Note: Layoff data are preliminary and should be considered an estimate of monthly regional activity

Source: California EDD, CalJOBS: WARN data