

Assembly Bill No. 1304

CHAPTER 259

An act to add Section 44257.3 to the Education Code, relating to linked learning.

[Approved by Governor September 6, 2011. Filed with Secretary of State September 6, 2011.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1304, Block. Linked learning.

Existing law authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to issue various types of teaching credentials and authorizations. Existing law establishes multiple pathway programs, which are multiyear comprehensive high school programs of integrated academic and technical study that are organized around a broad theme, interest area, or industry sector. Multiple pathway programs are comprised, among other things, of an integrated core curriculum that meets the eligibility requirements for admission to the University of California and the California State University and is delivered through project-based learning and other engaging instructional strategies that intentionally bring real-world context and relevance to the curriculum where broad themes, interest areas, and career technical education are emphasized.

This bill would define "linked learning programs," and would authorize the commission to convene a workgroup consisting of specified members to develop program standards for the issuance of a recognition of study in linked learning, as defined, for linked learning competence for holders of a single subject teaching credential who will be teaching pupils enrolled in linked learning programs, as specified. The bill would authorize the commission to work with the Superintendent of Public Instruction to gather and post, on an appropriate Internet Web site, best practices from school districts and schools on curriculum development and professional development relating to implementing and sustaining multiple pathway programs. The bill would also provide that a recognition of study in linked learning is not considered a type of authorization, cannot be used as a condition of employment, does not replace subject matter competence requirements, and cannot be used in making certain employment decisions relating to reductions in employee positions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

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

(a) California's economy relies upon a continually growing, skilled, and educated workforce.

(b) California must increase pupils' mastery of academic subject matters, and to improve its high school graduation and postsecondary education attainment rates.

(c) Secondary education must engage pupils while simultaneously preparing them for academic and career choices after high school.

(d) There is inherent educational value in both academic and career technical coursework, and both should be promoted. When linked and delivered in ways that mutually reinforce one another, both academic and career technical courses are strengthened.

(e) All pupils should have equal access to schools and programs that offer linked coursework. Pupils need a range of educational experiences to prepare them for success beyond high school.

(f) A foundation of academic knowledge, general workplace competencies, and occupationally specific knowledge and skills enable pupils to better access all postsecondary options.

(g) Learning is enhanced when pupils are enrolled in courses that use hands-on experiential learning to exemplify how academic knowledge is used to solve real-world problems.

(h) It is the intent of the Legislature that all of the following occur:

(1) High school courses provide pupils with linked learning experiences that will prepare them for the full range of postsecondary success.

(2) Academic teachers and career technical education teachers collaborate to provide linked learning educational programs to pupils.

(3) Teacher credential candidates have opportunities to learn pedagogical strategies to ensure pupil success in linked learning programs.

SEC. 2. Section 44257.3 is added to the Education Code, to read:

44257.3. (a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Recognition of study in linked learning" is a statement added to a single subject teaching credential that the credential holder has completed a commission-approved program in linked learning teaching methods that can be applied to the academic instruction authorized by his or her credential. A recognition of study in a linked learning teacher preparation program may be offered as part of an initial teacher preparation program or as a separate program for previously credentialed teachers.

(2) "Linked learning programs" are programs and pathways described in Section 52372.5 and may include, but are not limited to, California partnership academies.

(b) The commission may convene a workgroup to develop program standards for the issuance of a recognition of study for linked learning competence for holders of a single subject teaching credential who will be teaching pupils enrolled in linked learning programs pursuant to Section 52372.5.

(c) Members of the workgroup shall include, but are not limited to, representatives from:

- (1) The department.
 - (2) Approved teacher preparation programs, including at least one representative from the California State University, the University of California, and independent institutions of higher education. To the extent practicable, representatives should have an academic interest or prior experience in preparing teachers to teach in linked learning programs.
 - (3) The business community, including representatives from local chambers of commerce.
 - (4) School districts, county offices of education, and charter schools that have implemented linked learning programs, California partnership academies, or other similar programs that integrate core academic subject and industry applications.
 - (5) Regional occupational centers and programs.
 - (6) Practicing career technical education teachers.
 - (7) Other organizations deemed appropriate by the commission.
- (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that a successful candidate for a recognition of study developed in linked learning pursuant to subdivision (b) demonstrate appropriate knowledge, as determined by the commission based upon the recommendations of the workgroup convened pursuant to subdivision (b). Within the context of the academic content standards in kindergarten and any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, this knowledge may include, but is not limited to, an understanding of the following:
- (1) How to develop and maintain industry and postsecondary educational partnerships.
 - (2) Ongoing professional learning.
 - (3) Work-based learning strategies.
 - (4) Career exposure and development.
 - (5) Interdisciplinary collaboration and project-based teaching methods.
 - (6) California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards adopted by the state board.
- (e) With respect to any recognition of study in linked learning issued pursuant to subdivision (b), the California State University and other teacher preparation institutions are encouraged to establish goals for increasing the number of teachers prepared through linked learning programs.
- (f) Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment programs are encouraged to provide appropriate support, mentoring, and assistance to beginning teachers who are teaching in linked learning programs, including candidates who are in externships.
- (g) The commission may work with the Superintendent to gather and post, on an appropriate Internet Web site, best practices from school districts and schools on curriculum development and professional development relating to implementing and sustaining multiple pathway programs.
- (h) The holder of a single subject teaching credential receiving a recognition of study in linked learning pursuant to subdivision (b) is not authorized to teach subject matter content or English learners unless he or she holds an appropriate authorization or is employed on the basis of a local assignment option.

(i) Any recognition of study in linked learning issued pursuant to subdivision (b) shall not be considered a type of authorization, shall not be used as a condition of employment, shall not replace a subject matter competence requirement, and shall not be used in making employment decisions pursuant to Section 44955.