

Date of Hearing: March 12, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 1927 (Alanis) – As Introduced January 25, 2024

SUBJECT: Golden State Teacher Grant Program: career technical education instructors.

SUMMARY: Expands eligibility for the Golden State Teacher Grant (GSTG) Program to prospective students who commit to working for four years as a credentialed career technical education (CTE) instructor, and makes technical and conforming changes to existing law.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) for the purpose of administering specified student financial aid programs (Education Code (EC) Section 69510, et seq.).
- 2) Creates the GSTG Program and requires CSAC, subject to moneys appropriated by the Legislature, to administer the GSTG Program. Authorizes CSAC to provide one-time grant funds of up to \$20,000 to each student enrolled, or who has applied for enrollment, on or after January 1, 2020, in a professional preparation program leading to a preliminary teaching credential or a pupil personnel services credential, at either a qualifying institution, as defined, or a professional preparation program approved by the Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CTC) that has a main campus location or administrative entity that resides in California, including professional preparation programs operated by local educational agencies in California, if the student commits to working at a priority school or a California preschool program for four years within the eight years following the date the student completes the professional preparation program;

Expands GSTG Program eligibility to institutions of higher education that offer services online to students and are either accredited by the Senior Colleges and Universities Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or regionally accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. Caps the percentage of GSTG appropriated funds that can be allocated to support the \$10,000 award level for students taking teacher preparation coursework at these eligible institutions to 8% of the total appropriations provided to support the program;

Funds appropriated for the GSTG Program in the Budget Act of 2020 and the Budget Act of 2021 shall be available for encumbrance or expenditure by CSAC until June 30, 2026;

Stipulates that grant funds must be used to supplement and not supplant other sources of grant financial aid, and may be disbursed in more than one academic year, provided that the total amount of funds granted to an applicant does not exceed \$20,000;

Stipulates that the one-time grant funds issued cannot exceed the amount appropriated for the GSTG Program in the Budget Act of 2020 and the Budget Act of 2021;

Requires a grant recipient to agree to serve at a priority school or a California preschool program for four years and shall have eight years, upon completion of the recipient's professional preparation program, to meet that obligation. A grant recipient must agree to

repay the state 25% of the total received grant funds annually, up to full repayment of the received grant funds, for each year the recipient fails to do one or more of the following:

- a) Be enrolled in or have successfully completed a professional preparation program approved by the CTC;
- b) While enrolled in the professional preparation program, maintain good academic standing;
- c) Before or upon completion of the professional preparation program, satisfy the state basic skills requirement, as specified;
- d) Complete the required teaching service or clinical practice following completion of the recipient's professional preparation program; and,
- e) Complete their teacher preparation program and earn a preliminary credential within six years after the first distribution of grant funds.

Stipulates that CSAC can use up to 1.5% of funding appropriated for purposes of this section for outreach and administration;

Requires CSAC to develop a process by which students interested in a professional preparation program leading to a preliminary teaching credential or a pupil personnel services credential may submit a request for a preenrollment conditional award notice from the CSAC. The notice shall provide information regarding the GSTG Program award amount the student may be eligible to receive upon enrollment in the professional preparation program and formal application to CSAC to participate in the GSTG Program;

Authorizes a grant recipient, for purposes of satisfying the service requirement, to use service at a school listed on the most recent list of priority schools published by the CSAC that is available when the grant recipient seeks employment at a priority school. Further service at that school shall continue to satisfy the four-year service requirement, even if the school is no longer included on future priority school lists;

Authorizes the CSAC to adopt regulations, including any amendments to regulations, necessary for the implementation of the GSTG Program. The CSAC may adopt emergency regulations it deems necessary for the implementation of the GSTG Program, as specified;

Requires CSAC to conduct, in partnership with the CTC, an evaluation of the GSTG Program to determine the effectiveness of the program in recruiting credential candidates and employing credentialholders at priority schools and California preschool programs;

Requires CSAC to provide, with respect to the evaluation, a report to the Department of Finance and the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature on or before December 31, 2025, and every two years thereafter;

Requires CSAC to accept applications for the GSTG Program beginning on September 1 for the following academic year and to establish a process and timeline that allows institutions of

higher education to provide applicants with grant eligibility determinations before the deadline for enrolling in their professional preparation program; and,

Stipulates that CSAC permit grant recipients to receive funds in more than one academic year, provided the total amount of funds granted to any applicant does not \$20,000 (EC 69617, et seq.).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: *Golden State Teacher Grant Program.* The 2019-20 Budget Act established the GSTG Program, which awards up to \$20,000 to students who meet eligibility requirements and commit to a four year Service Agreement. The program was first available to students who were enrolled during the 2020-21 academic year (AY) in a CTC-approved teacher preparation program to earn their Special Education preliminary teaching credential.

The 2021-22 Budget Act then authorized the expansion of the GSTG Program to students enrolled during the 2021-22 AY who committed to working in an eligible high-need field. Subsequently, the 2022-23 Budget Act authorized an additional expansion of the program to include those working towards their preliminary teaching credential in non-high-need fields and those working towards their pupil personnel services (PPS) credential. Additionally, all GSTG recipients (including past grantees) were required to complete their program and obtain their credential within three years from the date their first GSTG payment was mailed to their institution and to complete their four year service at a California priority school within eight years from the date they complete their program.

Further, commencing with the 2022-23 AY, students may receive up to the maximum \$20,000 GSTG award paid out across multiple academic years as long as they continue to meet eligibility requirements each year. The 2023-24 Budget Act expanded the program once again by awarding up to \$10,000 (also payable over multiple academic years) to California residents enrolled in an online credential program at an approved institution that meets specified requirements. The timeframe for students to complete their program and obtain their credential was also lengthened from three to six years. Lastly, the service obligation was expanded to be fulfilled at a California preschool program in addition to eligible priority schools.

According to CSAC, it is anticipated that CSAC will exhaust the \$500 million fund allocated for the GSTG Program sooner than anticipated. The CSAC expenditure and projection rates suggest that CSAC will deplete GSTG funds sometime during the 2024-25 budget and/or academic year, which is well ahead of the June 30, 2026, end of the GSTG Program five-year period.

Need for the measure. According to the U.S. Department of Education, California is among 28 states that have a reported shortages of CTE instructors in the 2023-24 academic year. Further, according to information provided by the author, nearly one-third of public schools across the United States have experienced difficulty filling CTE teacher vacancies; and, the CTC reported the number of preliminary CTE credentials issued by CTC has declined by 14% from 2016 through 2021.

The author contends that, “under existing law, there are very few grant programs for students earning their CTE teaching credential. The California Department of Education’s 2023 California State Plan for CTE identified the need to address CTE teacher and faculty shortages

from the state level. It is crucial to prioritize opportunities for prospective CTE instructors to address the industry shortage and encourage more diversity within the workforce.”

The author notes that, “while California has invested in the development and expansion of CTE pathways for students, the requirements to become a CTE instructor have expanded, subsequently leading to a statewide shortage of instructors. AB 1927 would increase accessibility for prospective instructors to earn their CTE teaching credential, which directly benefits students interested in pursuing CTE, especially in underserved communities, by creating an incentive to become a certified CTE instructor, thereby increasing access for students to pursue diverse career paths.”

Career Technical Education. The California Community Colleges (CCC) Office of the Chancellor, jointly with the California Department of Education (CDE), in October 2023 released a report, *California State Plan for Career Technical Education (CTE): A Vision for Equity and Excellence in CTE*. The report created the California CTE Plan, providing cohesion and direction to current state, regional, and local level investments through visionary and innovative approaches to social and economic mobility for the almost 2 million CCC students.

The CTE Plan, lays out the State’s future vision for CTE, both in the short-term (the next five years) and long-term (ten years), using strategies to advance the CCC Vision for Success goals and outcomes. The State Plan for CTE was organized into four key areas with equity and access established as core tenants of the framework design. The four areas include:

- 1) Targeting in-demand, high-road occupations by engaging and collaborating with industry;
- 2) Creating and expanding competency-based education, online instruction, experiential/work-based learning, apprenticeships, and adult education for displaced workers;
- 3) Utilizing data to inform regional investments, such as economic forecasts and aligning workforce training data systems that capture cradle to career readiness; and,
- 4) Strengthening K-12 and community college systems alignment to promote dual enrollment, teacher and faculty preparation, and teacher credentialing.

The Plan was designed as a call to action with the goal of ensuring that the K-14 systems jointly implement this work. Key elements of the regional implementation strategy include:

- 1) Creating resources and tools to support implementation;
- 2) Facilitating a series of town halls across the state;
- 3) Development of state and regional implementation plans; and,
- 4) Coordinating a statewide virtual convening.

Throughout Fall 2023, 10 statewide convenings were held to support regional implementation by sharing innovative program designs and creating a catalyst for a long-term community of practice that will seeks to create a peer to peer collaborative information network.

Further, the Plan, includes a framework with myriad of key priorities and themes. One of the major themes that support the priorities includes “CTE Teacher and Faculty Preparation and Pipeline.” Under this priority, the Plan finds that teachers and faculty members are key to helping build the future of CTE. The pipeline and preparation of CTE teachers and faculty, as well as support and resources, should reflect the needs of CTE and demands of the labor market now and in the future. Additionally, one of the Plan’s stated goals is to understand and plan to address the CTE teacher and faculty shortages.

This measure appears to align to some of the priorities and goals of the aforementioned Plan, by incentivizing students who choose to become CTE instructors and earn their teaching credential in CTE.

Governor’s Master Plan for Career Education. The Governor issued *Executive Order N-11-23* on August 31, 2023; this order, in part, on or before October 1, 2024, requires the President of the State Board of Education, Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, and Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, and Director of the Department of Rehabilitation must, and the Chancellor of the CCC, President of the California State University, President of the University of California, and Superintendent of Public Instruction are requested to, develop and submit to the Governor's Office a proposed new Master Plan on Career Education to integrate and align the programs funded by the State's historic investments in this space.

The Executive Order stipulates that the Master Plan on Career Education must be developed in collaboration with the agencies, departments, boards, and offices responsible for implementing the initiatives described in the Order, whose participation is directed or requested, as applicable, and with input from Legislative partners and stakeholders representing students, parents and families, education professionals, labor, business, and community groups.

It is currently unknown how the Master Plan will evolve and if the *California State Plan for Career Technical Education (CTE): A Vision for Equity and Excellence in CTE* (as discussed above) will be incorporated into tenets of the Master Plan. However, it is clear that CTE is a policy issue that requires modernization, involving a plethora of stakeholders.

Committee comments. As referenced in the *GSTG Program* section of this analysis, due to a high demand of eligible applicants to earn grants, it appears that CSAC will exhaust the moneys in the Program, ahead of schedule. Presently, by expanding the criteria of eligible students to benefit from the GSTG Program, it unknown how many more students will become eligible and apply.

Committee Staff understands that augmenting the funds in the GSTG Program is a priority of the author who plans to work with the appropriate Budget Committees in order to secure more funding for the Program.

Related legislation. AB 2768 (Berman), which will be heard in this Committee in April of 2024, in part, will expand the definition of a “priority school,” as defined, for eligibility purposes of where GSTG recipients can teach.

Prior legislation. SB 114 (Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 48, Statutes of 2023, which, in part, modifies the GSTG Program allowing participants to serve at preschools, and expands the GSTG Program eligibility to institutions that offer services online to students,

are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and offer a professional preparation program approved by the CTC as of January 1, 2023.

AB 377 (Muratsuchi and McCarty) of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, which was held on the Suspense File in the Senate Committee on Appropriations, in part, increases funding for the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program.

AB 638 (McCarty) of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, which was held on the Suspense File in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, in part, requires, commencing on or after January 1, 2024, student candidates of the GSTG Program to commit to working for four years in a shortage area, as designated by the CTC, at any California public or nonpublic school, as defined.

AB 1623 (Robert Rivas and O'Donnell) of the 2019-20 Legislative Session, which, per request of the authors, was not heard in the Senate Committee on Education, and subsequently died, sought to establish, subject to appropriation, the GSTG Program under administration of the CSAC. The Program would provide one-time grant funds of \$20,000 to each student enrolled on or after January 1, 2020, in a professional preparation program leading to a preliminary teaching credential, if the student committed to working in a high-need subject area field for four years after they received a teaching credential. To this end, the bill required the CTC to certify if the recipient had not earned a credential and required the CDE to certify if the recipient had not taught for four years in a high-need subject area field.

AB 169 (O'Donnell) of 2017-18 Legislative Session, which, per the author's request, was not heard in the Senate Committee on Education, and subsequently died, was very similar in nature to AB 1623 (as described above).

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

EdVoice

The Education Trust – West

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