



The Education Trust–West
Fierce advocates for educational
justice, pre-k through college.

August 8, 2023

The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento CA

RE: Support for AB 694 (Gipson)

Dear Senator Portantino:

As an organization working to expose and eradicate the injustices and inequities in California schools and colleges, from early learning through higher education, The Education Trust–West (ETW) is pleased to support AB 694. This bill would require the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to submit standards for the Teacher Residency Grant Program to be approved as an apprenticeship program for the purposes of qualifying for federal funds from the US Department of Labor. AB 694 would leverage federal funds to address the teacher shortage.

California’s Teacher Residency Grant Program was created in the 2018-2019 state budget. Authorizing legislation defined a teacher residency program as a local educational agency-based partnership between a local educational agency and an Institution of Higher Education with a Commission-approved preliminary teacher preparation program, and in which a prospective teacher teaches at least one-half time alongside a teacher of record, who is designated as the experienced mentor teacher, for at least one full school year while engaging in initial preparation coursework (California Education Code Section 44415).

In 2023, the Learning Policy Institute recommended California consider launching high-quality apprenticeships into teaching. This model is similar to a teacher residency and affords participants the opportunity to earn while they learn and complete credentialing requirements. Other states have successfully drawn down federal funds to expand these programs by accessing funds available to apprenticeship programs.

AB 694 would be a significant step towards expanding the pipeline into the teaching profession and addressing shortages in the educator workforce. By facilitating teacher residency apprenticeships supported by federal funds, this bill offers an effective approach to develop highly skilled educators and retain them in our schools. For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 694 and urge your “aye” vote.

Thank you for considering our views.



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Sincerely,

Brian M. Rivas
Senior Director, Policy and Government Relations
The Education Trust—West

cc: Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Lenin Del Castillo, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee