

April 16, 2026

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review
Committee
1021 N street, Room 502
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Sasha Renée Pérez
Chair, Senate Subcommittee No. 1 on
Education
1021 N street, Room 502
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable David A. Alvarez
Chair, Assembly Subcommittee No. 3 on
Education Finance
1020 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Dual Enrollment Expansion (\$100M one-time) with suggested trailer bill language amendments

Dear Chairs Laird, Pérez, Gabriel, and Alvarez,

As an organization committed to advancing policies and practices that dismantle the racial and economic barriers embedded in California's education system, EdTrust-West asks that you and your colleagues on the budget subcommittees support the proposed \$100 million dual enrollment investment for 2026–27 fiscal year and consider additional policy changes to maximize the impact of funding.

[Dual enrollment](#) allows high school students to take college courses, earn both high school and college credit simultaneously, saving students time and money while accelerating their progress to a degree or credential. Our 2025 [Jumpstarting CA Towards Universal Dual Enrollment](#) report found despite meaningful growth across the state, access to dual enrollment remains highly uneven—particularly for Black, Latinx, and Native American students—underscoring the need to prioritize proven program models that expand access for students historically underrepresented in higher education. The College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) program is one such model. CCAP partnerships between a local education agency (LEA) and community college districts (CCD) remove common barriers to participation by aligning course scheduling, waiving fees, and embedding college courses into the high school day. [Research](#) from the Public Policy Institute (PPIC) of California shows that CCAP students earn higher grades, enroll in college, complete transfer-level Math and English courses, and attain a degree or certificate at higher rates. Importantly, this research finds that participation in CCAP is more equitable for Latinx and Black students compared to other forms of dual enrollment.

Recent state investments demonstrate both the demand for and impact of high-quality dual enrollment programs, including CCAP. In 2022, the State invested \$700 million to expand access to college and career pathways, including \$500 million for Golden State Pathways and \$200 million for dual enrollment programs (Early and Middle Colleges and CCAP). The College and Career Access Pathways Grant enabled [over 500 schools](#) statewide to establish or expand CCAP partnerships with their local community colleges. A recent [report](#) from PPIC shows that CCAP participation more than doubled in the last four years (from 33,890 students in 2021-22 to over 73,000 students in Fall of 2024).

Continued investment is essential to meeting the state's broader postsecondary attainment and workforce goals. California's 70 percent postsecondary attainment target, and the Governor's [Master Plan for Career Education](#) calls for the universal availability and implementation of pathway programs that connect students to college and career opportunities early. Without additional funding and policy alignment, the progress made through recent investments risks stalling, particularly for LEAs and colleges serving students with the greatest need.

To ensure these investments advance equity and deliver on the state's postsecondary attainment goals, EdTrust-West supports targeted policy changes to strengthen both existing and proposed dual enrollment investments included in the [TK-12 omnibus](#). Specifically, we recommend prioritizing funding for local education agencies (LEAs) with large concentrations of students from low-income families, English Learners, and youth in foster care, increasing funding for programs supporting justice-involved youth, and ensuring dual credit for students taking part in dual enrollment programs.

In addition, we urge policymakers to consider the following amendments:

- **Require schools to award dual credit** for all courses identified in a CCAP partnership agreement and ensure the high school credit is in the relevant subject matter area.
- **Provide dedicated technical assistance** – as proposed by Superintendent Tony Thurmond at a Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 1 oversight hearing on [Thursday, March 12, 2026](#) (19:30) – to ensure coordinated, equitable, and high-quality implementation of dual enrollment programs, strengthening collaboration between local education agencies and community colleges.

Please find attached proposed trailer bill amendment language reflecting these recommendations. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this language and share additional implementation insights. For questions or additional detail, please contact KaBria Payden, Government Affairs Manager for Higher Education, at kpayden@edtrustwest.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Bardo".

Melissa Bardo
Director of Government Affairs

CC:

Members of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and the Subcommittee No.1 on Education
Members of the Assembly Committee on Budget and the Subcommittee No. 3 on Education Finance
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Yong Salas, K-12 Consultant, Senate Subcommittee No.1 on Education Finance
Andrew Medina, Consultant, Office of the President pro Tempore
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Budget
Erin Gabel, Consultant, Assembly Subcommittee No. 3 on Education Finance
Misty Feusahrens, Deputy Policy Director, Assembly Speaker's Office
Mónica Henestroza, Special Assistant, Assembly Speaker's Office
Tobias Wolken, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office
Jessica Holmes, Education Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance