



THE ISSUE: 2016 Budget Act: K-12 Teacher Professional Development Tax Relief/Incentives would allow qualified teachers either an individual tax credit or deduction for professional development expenses to fulfill the requirements for a California Clear Multiple, Single Subjects Credential or Special Education (Education Specialist Instruction) Credential. **(Support)**

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

“All persons of whatever race, sex, condition, or age, by virtue of their dignity as human beings, have an inalienable right to a quality education.”

—U.S. Bishops, Political Responsibility: Proclaiming the Gospel of Life, Protecting the Least Among Us, and Pursuing the Common Good.

California’s growing demand for more school teachers is outpacing the supply of fully prepared educators. Professional credentials issued to new teachers are at an historic low at a time when hiring is needed to expand programs and restore positions eliminated during the Great Recession. As an emergency triage, schools are hiring an increasing number of teachers with substandard permits or credentials and relying on short-term substitute teachers.

Californians are well aware of the emerging shortage of K-12 public school teachers and think the state should take decisive action to rectify the situation. Eighty-six percent of voters view the shortage as a serious problem, and nearly two-thirds see it as very serious. California voters have expressed broad-based support for ensuring that all teachers receive rigorous training, ongoing professional development, as well as mentoring and support under the guidance of an expert teacher. Much of these support measures occur when a new teacher with a preliminary credential completes an induction program to receive a “clear” or permanent credential.

However, the cost for teachers who must cover these induction expenses out of their own pockets can be up to \$5,000. This is a significant deterrent for new educators who often are teaching in the most challenging schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty, paid at the lowest end of salary scales, and are the most at-risk of leaving their profession within the first 5 years.

Our proposed budget measure would provide teachers with preliminary credentials either up to a \$500 credit or \$2,500 deduction on their personal state income taxes for fees incurred toward the completion of an induction program through a school district, county office of education, college or university, consortium, or private school approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

CHURCH TEACHING

“Government has a responsibility to provide adequate resources for the attainment of quality education for all children, and these policy decisions are best made at the level closest to the actual teaching and learning situation.”

—U.S. Bishops, Principles for Educational Reform in the United States (1995)

TALKING POINTS

- ▶ Ensuring well-prepared and exceptionally qualified educators is the single most crucial strategy for providing students with an equitable and excellent education. Yet, learning in California’s classrooms is imperiled by a widening shortage of professionally prepared teachers.
- ▶ We seek to provide fiscally responsible tax relief/incentives in the state budget that support and encourage more professionally trained, credentialed teachers. Such a budget measure will help ensure an exemplary, statewide teaching force that serves all of California’s students.
- ▶ Such a vitally necessary tax policy would be of substantial benefit to over 17,000 to 20,000 California teachers and hundreds in thousands of students annually, with a very small fiscal effect on state resources of \$2 to \$5 million.