

EDGE Policy Update

End of Session Edition

October 2023

On October 14, Governor Newsom took final action on all pending measures that were passed by the Legislature – nearly 900 bills. Of these bills, hundreds were signed into law which will impact working families, returning students, opportunity youth, and the state's workforce. Building upon last year's efforts, the Governor signed critical measures that EDGE has been supportive of throughout the year in the areas of dual enrollment, expanding student financial aid access, and strategies that support opportunity youth and returning students who have been disconnected from the education and workforce systems.

Over the course of the 2023 legislative session, EDGE focused on various education, training, and workforce proposals. Specifically, our [2023 policy priorities](#) sought to strengthen and advance policies intended to secure a social safety net for underserved communities, sustain community colleges and their programs, and work with industry partners to stabilize their workforce – all while ensuring strategic funding and initiatives were developed through an equity lens.

In addition to legislation, EDGE advocated in support of various budget items that included investments in career technical education, social safety net services, and advocated for protection from trigger cuts for various workforce development programs that were promised in last year's budget. These budget priorities were included in the final [2023-24 State Budget Act](#), a total of \$310 billion spending plan that will support Californians who continue to face socioeconomic barriers across the state. For more information, view our full budget overview [here](#).

As we close the first year of the two-year legislative session, the work is far from done. Entering the 2024 legislative cycle, EDGE remains committed to working alongside our partners, the Legislature, and Administration to chart a path towards economic mobility for all Californians, while also supporting industry to meet their workforce needs. Strategic investments must prioritize communities that have been left out of our state's prosperity, particularly communities of color, women, opportunity youth, immigrants, and refugees; and should empower them with resources to complete education/training programs to secure family-sustaining jobs.

All bills that were signed by the Governor will become law and take effect on January 1, 2024, unless it contained an urgency clause. The Legislature is now in recess and will reconvene for the 2024 legislative session on January 3, 2024.

The following is a summary of EDGE's 2023 priority bills and budget proposals with their final outcomes.

2023 EDGE Priority Bills

ACR 16 (Mike Fong) Opportunity Youth in CA. This resolution encourages the State of California to create pathways to success for OY and the need to develop a statewide comprehensive plan that will prioritize investments in education and workforce training programs; expand innovative "earn and learn" opportunities such as apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities; advance dual enrollment implementation; ensure inclusivity of OY in the Cradle-to-Career Data System; remove barriers to access student financial aid programs; and protect social safety net investments that support basic needs – enabling OY to complete their education and training goals. EDGE is a Co-Sponsor along w/ COYN & New Ways to Work.

Position: Co-Sponsor

Status: Chaptered.

AB 368 (Holden) College & Career Access Pathways Partnerships. This bill would update the definition of "underrepresented in higher education" that is used for the College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) program, which facilitates dual enrollment programs. The bill intends to ensure underrepresented students are receiving priority registration for dual enrollment programs, including undocumented students, first-time college students, foster youth, homeless students, and student parents. The bill also requires data collection on student demographics and course completion.

Position: Support

Status: Chaptered.

AB 372 (Nguyen) CalWORKs. This bill would exclude pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships income in order to determine CalWORKs eligibility for individuals participating in these programs. This exclusion will expand access to cash assistance through CalWORKs for more underserved Californians who are facing socio-economic barriers and further incentivize individuals to participate in apprenticeships.

Position: Support

Status: Vetoed. See Governor's message [here](#).

AB 685 (Ramos) CA Youth Job Corps. This bill would establish in statute the CaliforniansForAll Youth Job Corps Program and expand the program statewide, with an emphasis on providing supportive services for homeless youth and current or former foster youth to enable their participation in the workforce development program.

Position: Support

Status: 2-year bill. \$78 million ongoing investment was included in the final budget.

AB 789 (Berman) Expanding Access to Financial Aid. This bill would enable students who struggle academically to continue their education by removing barriers to maintaining their financial aid. Research shows that nearly one in four first-year, low-income students attending a higher ed institution do not meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards required to receive state and federal financial aid, and many do not continue their education or training. AB 789 will create a common set of SAP standards, remove additional requirements that are more restrictive than those federally mandated, and ensure students have clear pathways to regain financial aid.

Position: Support

Status: Chaptered.

SB 227 (Durazo) Unemployment Insurance for Undocumented Workers. This bill seeks to provide unemployment insurance benefits to excluded immigrant workers in California who could not

access these benefits due to immigration status. The proposal would provide undocumented immigrants experiencing unemployment with \$300 per week for up to 20 weeks.

Position: Support

Status: 2-year bill.

[SB 467 \(Portantino\) Apprenticeships](#). This bill would prohibit an immigrant student from being denied admission to a community college apprenticeship or internship training program if the student uses an individual tax identification number (ITIN) for purposes of the background check required by the class or program.

Position: Support

Status: Chaptered.

2023 EDGE Budget Priorities

In addition to legislation, EDGE also advocated in support of critical budget investments related to education, workforce development, and social safety net services. Below is a list of EDGE's budget priorities that were accomplished in the 2023-24 budget cycle.

Investments In Education & Student Support Services

Community Colleges – received \$790 million ongoing for the Student-Centered Funding Formula, which also includes an 8.22% COLA increase – \$678 million. This same COLA increase is also provided to the Adult Education program and several categorical programs, as well as student support programs, basic need centers, and mental health services.

Community College Student Retention – \$50 million one-time Prop 98 allocation for student retention and recruitment strategies at the community colleges.

Cradle to Career Data System – received \$4.9 million ongoing to fund 10 positions to support implementation and capacity efforts. The data system will provide tools to help students reach their career goals & provide critical information on education and workforce outcomes.

Golden State Pathways Program – no cuts to the program, maintains last year's commitment of \$500 million. GSP is intended to provide integrated programs of study, work-based learning, dual enrollment, and career tech opportunities for underserved youth in sectors critical to regional economies.

Social Safety Net Investments for Underserved Communities

Food for All – maintains the commitment to expand the CA Food Assistance Program (CFAP) for undocumented immigrants 55 years or older and provides access to food benefits sooner than anticipated – from January 2027 to now October 2025. However, the proposed expansion to cover undocumented immigrants 54 and under was not included.

Child Care – \$2.8 billion (\$1.7 billion General Fund and \$1.1 billion Prop 98 General Fund) for reimbursements to preschool and child care and development program providers over two years subject to labor contract agreement between the Administration and Child Care Providers. The budget also waives family fees until September 2023.

Investments In Workforce Development & the Economy

Youth Job Corps – received \$78 million ongoing to permanently fund the program, with language to include undocumented youth. This program creates and expands youth employment opportunities that provide valuable job skills, public service career pathways, and help youth engage with their communities.

CA Youth Leadership Corps – rejected trigger cut of \$20 million and maintains total funding of \$60 million from last year's budget. This program provides earn-and-learn pathways for community college students to prepare youth paid low incomes – including youth of color, and immigrant youth – for community change careers in public/community health, clean energy planning/development, leadership, and social change.

Women in Construction Unit – maintained the \$15 million investment to establish the Women in Construction Priority Unit at the Department of Industrial Relations – intended to support women and nonbinary individuals in the skilled trades sector.

Breaking Barriers to Employment Program – received \$5 million one-time funding to support workforce and wraparound services for individuals facing barriers to employment opportunities.

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