



IN DEPTH



California EDGE Coalition 2026 Policy Priorities

The California EDGE Coalition (EDGE) is a nonpartisan alliance of business, labor, workforce, education, and social justice organizations working together to expand access to high-quality jobs and economic mobility for all Californians.

We believe California thrives when its diverse talent is fully supported to learn, train, and work in family-sustaining careers that meet the needs of employers and communities alike. Our mission is to advocate for education and workforce investments and to advance systems change that builds a more inclusive and resilient economy.

Our 2026 Policy Priorities reflect our shared vision of a socially just and economically thriving California where equitable access to education and skills training prepares adult learners, opportunity youth, people of color, immigrants, refugees, justice-involved individuals, and others earning low incomes to achieve lasting economic security and contribute to our collective prosperity.



Advance Equitable Pathways to Quality Jobs

- » Support implementation of ACR 16 (Fong, 2023), which calls for a statewide plan to create education, training, and employment pathways for Opportunity Youth - young people ages 16-24 who are not in school or working. The resolution urges state agencies to reduce economic disparities and invest in programs that help youth re-engage and succeed in the workforce.
- » Expand access to apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and work-based learning programs that connect Californians to in-demand industries.
- » Advance adult education, adult dual enrollment, competency-based education, and credit for prior learning to provide flexible, inclusive education options.
- » Strengthen career education, including technical education, and stackable credentials to promote career mobility.



Invest in the Social Determinants of Work

- » Expand access to affordable childcare, housing, transportation, and food security to enable full participation in education and employment.
- » Broaden access to health care coverage and student financial aid for all Californians, regardless of immigration status.
- » Protect and strengthen California's social safety net by opposing restrictive work requirements for essential benefits such as food and health care assistance.
- » Advance digital equity through expanded broadband access, affordable devices, and digital literacy training that supports learning and work readiness.





Strengthen Data and Policy Alignment for Economic Mobility

- » Support continued investment in the Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Data System to connect education, workforce, and human services data, giving policymakers and practitioners the tools to identify gaps and target resources effectively.
- » Advance the Governor's Master Plan for Career Education and the Interagency Council to align state policies, streamline funding streams, and promote coordinated implementation across systems.
- » Champion data-driven decision-making that enhances equity, transparency, and accountability across California's education and workforce landscape.



Protect and Sustain California's Workforce Infrastructure

- » Advocate for sustained investment in education and workforce programs amid federal and state budget uncertainty.
- » Promote innovative, long-term revenue strategies that maintain support for education and workforce development, job creation, and small business growth.
- » Advance policies that strengthen California's economic resilience, supporting both workers and employers as vital partners in shared prosperity.

