



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 mitigating the harms of restrictive work requirements tied to essential benefits like food and health care assistance, helping Californians maintain access and comply with new rules.
- » 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.

