



June 24, 2025

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi
Chair, Assembly Education Committee
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate Bill 638 (Padilla): California Education and Workforce Development
Coordinating Entity: Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant
Program**

Dear Chair Muratsuchi

I write on behalf of Just Equations, a policy institute focused on the role of math in education equity. We are pleased to offer **strong support for SB638**, which seeks to establish the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity and to establish the Career Technical Education and Career Pathways Grant Program.

Our research has repeatedly pointed to the need for greater coordination among education systems and workforce agencies in California. About 40% of jobs in California will require at least a bachelor's degree by 2030. Another one out of three jobs will require some college but less than a bachelor's degrees. California is not on track to produce the educated workforce that can meet these economic needs, and too many obstacles are interfering with the ability of Californians to prepare themselves academically for a high quality job.

California's needs have changed vastly since the Master Plan for Higher Education was created in 1960, and the state's workforce development system was historically designed for an entirely different type of job training than what is needed for individuals to access jobs that provide a decent standard of living. Furthermore, the billions of dollars California spends on workforce development is administered by multiple agencies and higher education institutions with a range of goals, criteria and funding streams.

Because of this disjointed system, Californians encounter a range of barriers as they pursue postsecondary opportunities and other workforce preparation. These barriers are highest for Black and Latinx students students in rural areas. Here are a few examples revealed by our research:

- Students seeking to transfer from community colleges to four-year universities face a labyrinth of obstacles—often including the need to take multiple sometimes duplicative math courses—due to insufficient coordination and consistency across California’s postsecondary institutions. The problem is particularly acute for students seeking to transfer in STEM fields. Maintaining the status quo of insufficient coordination serves to undermine the democratizing purpose of California’s community college system.
- California’s public higher education systems have not had a systematic process for including perspectives from the state’s K-12 education leaders in the process of updating admissions policies. The joint hearing co-hosted by your committee in October highlighted the difficulties caused by this lack of coordination.

SB 638 seeks to establish the California Education and Workforce Development Coordinating Entity in the Government Operations Agency. The coordinating entity would be tasked with developing a state plan regarding career technical education, career pathways, and workforce development.

For these reasons, SB 638 (Padilla) would further Just Equations’ goal of ensuring more seamless pathways through education and into the workforce. We are proud to support SB 638 (Padilla) and encourage your “aye” vote when it is heard in your committee.

Best regards,



Pamela Burdman, Executive Director
Just Equations