

# Local Assignment Options (LAOs)

A guide to educator assignment flexibility in California's public schools under Education Code and Title 5 Regulations.



# What Are Local Assignment Options?

## The Purpose

LAOs provide LEAs with legal avenues to assign certificated employees outside their basic credential authorization when no appropriately credentialed educator is available.

## Who Decides?

LAOs are used **solely at the discretion of the LEA**. The LEA is responsible for verifying all requirements and reviewing the language of the EC or Title 5. In most cases, assignments require agreement from site administrators, the governing board, **and** the individual's consent.



# Key Rules for All LAOs

## Full Credential Required

Most LAOs require a full teaching credential. Intern, Waiver, Provisional Internship, and Short-Term Staff Permit holders **cannot** serve on LAOs.

## Consent Is Mandatory

The teacher serving on the LAO must give their **consent** for the assignment. This is non-negotiable.

## General Ed Only

LAOs for teachers apply to **general education assignments only** — not Special Education, Career Technical Education, or English Learner assignments.

# Board Approval: Critical Requirements



## Approve Before Assignment Begins

For LAOs requiring governing board authorization, placement must be approved **prior to the start** of the assignment. Educators placed without board approval are considered **misassigned** until approval is in place.

## Annual Renewal Required

Governing board approval is required **annually**. Board agendas are public and accessible to parents and stakeholder groups — faithfully following LAO criteria may protect LEAs from legal action.

⚠ Misassignments must be corrected within **30 calendar days**.



# Departmentalized LAOs at a Glance

Several LAOs apply specifically to **departmentalized settings** — where teachers instruct students in a specific subject area rather than a self-contained classroom. The following slides detail each option by Education Code section.

# EC §44256(b) & EC §44258.2

## EC §44256(b)

- **Base Credential:** Elementary
- **Content Verification:** 12 lower or 6 upper semester units
- **Board Action:** Resolution
- **Grade:** 8th and below
- **Content:** Any

## EC §44258.2

- **Base Credential:** Secondary
- **Content Verification:** 12 lower or 6 upper semester units
- **Board Action:** Resolution
- **Grade:** 5th–8th (Middle school)
- **Content:** Any

Both options allow teachers to instruct in departmentalized settings outside their credentialed subject area, provided unit requirements are met and the board passes a resolution.

# EC §44258.3 (Craven) & EC §44258.7(b)

## EC §44258.3 — Craven

- **Base Credential:** Any Full Teaching Credential
- **Content Verification:** Subject knowledge as defined by the board
- **Board Action:** Specific Board Policy
- **Grade:** K-12
- **Content:** Any

## EC §44258.7(b) — Competitive Sport for PE Credit

- **Base Credential:** Single Subject or Secondary (not PE)
- **Content Verification:** Full-time district employment + minimum 20 hours of first aid instruction for the specific sport
- **Board Action:** Resolution
- **Grade:** K-12
- **Content:** Competitive sport for PE credit



# EC §§44258.7(c)(d): Committee on Assignments (COA)

## Base Credential

Any Teaching Credential

## Content Verification

Special skills and preparation in the **elective** taught

## Board Action

Specific Board Policy as outlined in EC §§44258.7(c) and (d)

## Setting & Grade

Departmentalized | K-12 | Elective subjects

**What is an Elective Course?** For this LAO, it is defined as a course other than **English, mathematics, science, or social studies**. The **committee** on assignments shall include an equal number of teachers, selected by teachers, and school administrators, selected by school administrators.

# EC §44263 & T5 §80005(b): Departmentalized

## EC §44263 — Departmentalized

- **Base Credential:** Any Teaching Credential
- **Content Verification:** 18 lower or 9 upper semester units in content taught
- **Board Action:** Resolution
- **Grade:** K–12 | **Content:** Any

## T5 §80005(b) — Departmentalized

- **Base Credential:** Credential based on BA and Student Teaching
- **Content Verification:** Knowledge and skills in content taught
- **Board Action:** None required
- **Grade:** K–12 | **Content:** Elective (cannot be one of the statutory Single Subject areas, e.g. AVID)

# Self-Contained LAO

These LAOs apply specifically to **self-contained settings** — whereby **all** subjects are taught by an instructor to a group of students and are usually found at the elementary level.

## EC §44263: Self-Contained

- **Base Credential:** Any Teaching Credential
- **Content Verification:** 60 semester units distributed among 10 subject areas
- **Board Action:** Resolution
- **Grade:** K-12 | **Content:** Any

This option allows a credentialed teacher to serve in a self-contained classroom by demonstrating broad academic preparation across 10 subject areas.



# EC §44865 — Alternative Settings & EC §44332 — TCC

## EC §44865 — Alternative Settings

**Base Credential:** Credential based on BA and Student Teaching

**Content Verification:** None | **Board Action:** None

**Settings:** Independent Study, Home/Hospital, Adult Ed, Continuation, Alternative, Opportunity, Juvenile Court, County/District Community Schools

**Grade:** K-12 and adult classes

## EC §44332 — Temporary County Certificate (TCC)

**Content Verification:** Basic Skills Requirement; application and fee submitted to the Commission; all credentialing requirements satisfied.

⊗ If educator does not qualify, LEA must immediately remove them and the TCC is cancelled.

# EC §58803: Specialized Secondary Programs



## → Document Required

Certificate of Clearance

## → Content Verification

Unique talents or skills from business, performing arts, or postsecondary institutions

## → Board Action

Resolution; LEA must also report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the number employed, subjects taught, and unique talents/skills possessed

## → Setting & Grade

Specialized Secondary Programs | Grades 9–12 | High technology and performing arts

*Example: Spanish Folklorico (traditional Mexican dances)*

# EC §44831: Speech and Language Services

## Requirements

### Content Verification

License issued by the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board  
**and** a Master's degree in Communication Disorders

### Board Action

Resolution

### Setting & Grade

Services | K-12 | Speech and Language Services



This LAO allows licensed Speech-Language Pathologists to provide services in public schools without a traditional teaching credential.

# T5 §80020.4 & T5 §80020.4.1(a)

## T5 §80020.4 — Staff Development

- **Base Credential:** Credential based on BA and Student Teaching; OR credential in subject of staff development
- **Content Verification:** Verification of subject expertise (if no credential in subject area)
- **Board Action:** Resolution (if no credential in subject area)
- **Setting:** Staff Development at school site, district, or county level
- **Content:** Any

## T5 §80020.4.1(a) — Program Coordination

- **Base Credential:** Credential based on BA and Student Teaching
- **Content Verification:** None
- **Board Action:** None
- **Setting:** Program Coordination at the school site
- **Content:** Any

# EC §44270(a)(1)(D)(ii): Administrative Services



*This option allows OT/PT-licensed administrators to supervise and evaluate teachers under an Administrative Services Credential.*

## **Base Credential**

Administrative Services Credential earned based on an Occupational Therapy or Physical Therapy license

## **Content Verification**

Educational or job experience, leadership training, or advanced degree qualifying the individual for school administrator responsibilities

## **Board Action & Setting**

None required | Administrative Services | Supervision and Evaluation of Teachers

# LAO Quick Reference Summary

| EC/T5 Section              | Base Credential                   | Content Verification            | Board Action            | Setting               | Grade      |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| EC §44256(b)               | Elementary                        | 12 lower / 6 upper units        | Resolution              | Departmentalized      | ≤8th       |
| EC §44258.2                | Secondary                         | 12 lower / 6 upper units        | Resolution              | Departmentalized      | 5th–8th    |
| EC §44258.3 (Craven)       | Any (no Emergency Permit)         | Board-defined subject knowledge | Specific Board Policy   | Departmentalized      | K–12       |
| EC §44258.7(b)             | Single Subject/Secondary (not PE) | Full-time + 20 hrs first aid    | Resolution              | Departmentalized      | K–12       |
| EC §§44258.7(c) (d)        | Any Teaching Credential           | Special skills in elective      | Specific Board Policy   | Departmentalized      | K–12       |
| EC §44263 (Self-Contained) | Any Teaching Credential           | 60 units / 10 subject areas     | Resolution              | Self-Contained        | K–12       |
| EC §44263 (Dept.)          | Any Teaching Credential           | 18 lower / 9 upper units        | Resolution              | Departmentalized      | K–12       |
| EC §44332 (TCC)            | N/A                               | Basic Skills + Commission app   | Resolution              | Any                   | Any        |
| EC §44831                  | N/A                               | SLP License + Master's degree   | Resolution              | Services              | K–12       |
| EC §44865                  | BA + Student Teaching             | None                            | None                    | Alternative Settings  | K–12/Adult |
| EC §58803                  | Certificate of Clearance          | Unique talents/skills           | Resolution + SPI Report | Specialized Secondary | 9–12       |
| T5 §80005(b)               | BA + Student Teaching             | Knowledge and skills            | None                    | Departmentalized      | K–12       |
| T5 §80020.4                | BA + Student Teaching             | Subject expertise*              | Resolution*             | Staff Development     | N/A        |
| T5 §80020.4.1(a)           | BA + Student Teaching             | None                            | None                    | Program Coordination  | N/A        |
| EC §44270(a) (1)(D)(ii)    | Admin Services (OT/PT)            | Experience/training/degree      | None                    | Administrative        | N/A        |

# Key Takeaways



## Verify Before You Place

LEAs bear full responsibility for verifying all LAO requirements before placing an educator in an assignment.



## Board Approval = Protection

Timely, annual board approval ensures transparency, protects LEAs from legal action, and keeps educators from being misassigned.



## Consent Is Non-Negotiable

Every LAO requires the educator's consent. No assignment can proceed without it.



## General Ed Only

LAOs cannot be used for Special Education, CTE, or English Learner assignments — only general education settings.

# Middle School Core Assignments

A new section begins — covering California Education Code § 44258.1 provisions for middle school teacher assignments.



# Middle School Core Assignments

HR Guidance for California K-12 Administrators on Appropriate Teacher Assignments Under Education Code § 44258.1

# Understanding Middle School Core Provisions



California's Middle School Core provision allows **Multiple Subject credential holders** to teach in **grades 5–8** using a partially departmentalized structure. This flexibility bridges elementary self-contained classrooms and full departmentalization while maintaining teacher-student continuity.

The law enables teachers to instruct **two or more subjects to the same student group daily**, with carefully defined parameters for additional "hanging periods."

# Core Criteria: What Qualifies as Middle School Core?

1

## **Credential Requirement**

Teacher must hold a Multiple Subject or other self-contained classroom credential authorizing instruction in grades 5–8

2

## **Two or More Subjects**

Instruction must cover at least two different academic or elective subjects each day

3

## **Same Student Group**

The cohort of students must remain substantially consistent across all core periods

4

## **Two or More Periods**

Core instruction must span multiple instructional periods throughout the school day

# How Core Assignments Work in Practice



A core setting creates a partially departmentalized schedule to support students' transition from elementary to middle school. It provides integrated instruction across multiple subjects, fostering consistent student relationships while combining subject expertise with relational stability.

- i Core assignments must be scheduled as departmentalized courses in CALPADS, not as self-contained classes, to ensure proper reporting and compliance.

# Appropriate Core Assignments

## Any Subject Combination

Teachers may combine any academic or elective subjects (e.g., Math + Science, History + ELA, or Math + Art) as long as **two or more are taught to the same group daily**.\*

## Valid Hanging Periods

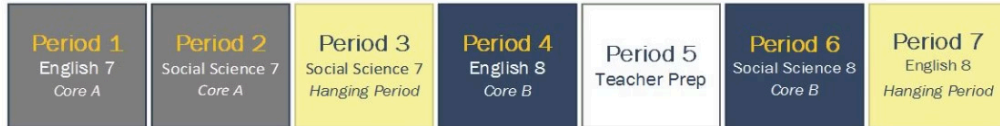
Teachers may teach one additional section of a subject **already in their core assignment**, provided it's the same grade level and doesn't exceed 50% of their total teaching load.

## Flexible Core Combinations

Schools have discretion to create core pairings that best serve student needs, from traditional academic cores to interdisciplinary combinations that integrate electives.

\*Note: See Assignments NOT Allowed slide for restrictions

# Understanding "Hanging Periods"



A hanging period allows a Multiple Subject teacher in a core assignment to teach one additional section of a subject they already teach in their core—but only under specific conditions.

## Same Subject Rule

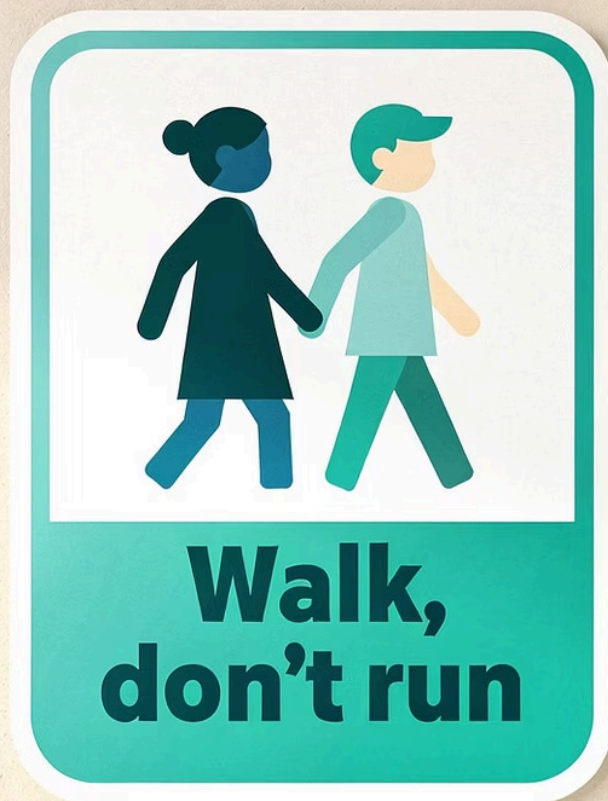
The additional class must be one of the subjects already taught within the teacher's core assignment

## Same Grade Level

The hanging period must serve students at the same grade level as the core assignment

## 50% Maximum Load

Hanging periods cannot exceed half of the teacher's total assignment—this ensures core remains the primary focus



# Assignments NOT Allowed Under Core

## **ELD Classes Cannot Be Cored**

ELD classes cannot be cored unless the teacher holds proper English Learner authorization (ELAM does not qualify)

## **Homeroom Periods Don't Count**

Homeroom periods don't count as core classes if no instruction or grades are provided

## **Rotating Elective Schedules Fail**

Rotating elective schedules fail the "same group" requirement unless student cohorts remain consistent

## **Different Grade Levels**

Different grade levels cannot be combined in a core or hanging period arrangement

These restrictions protect students by ensuring teachers have appropriate authorization and that core assignments maintain their intended structure. Violations typically result from misunderstanding the "same group" requirement or credential authorization limits.

# CALPADS and CalSAAS Monitoring



## → CALPADS Reporting

Core assignments must be coded as departmentalized courses in CALPADS, not self-contained classes

## → CalSAAS Validation

Properly reported core assignments will be predetermined as valid, but HR must verify accuracy

## → Exception Risk

Incorrect coding or invalid exceptions may be counted as misassignments at cycle end

- ❏ Local Assignment Options (LAOs) apply only to fully credentialed teachers and are separate from core assignment provisions. Don't confuse these two distinct authorization mechanisms when reviewing teacher assignments.

# Best Practices Checklist



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## Confirm Credentials

Verify teacher holds Multiple Subject or self-contained classroom credential for grades 5–8



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## Verify Hanging Periods

Confirm same subject, same grade level, and  $\leq 50\%$  of total teaching load



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## Avoid Ineligible Classes

Watch for ELD without authorization, homerooms, and rotating electives



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## Check Schedules

Ensure two or more subjects, same student group, daily instruction across multiple periods



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## Review CALPADS Coding

Correct course coding prevents unnecessary compliance exceptions



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## Annual Audit

Review all core assignments before each school year and after schedule changes

# Ensuring Compliant Middle School Core Assignments

Proper implementation of Middle School Core provisions protects both students and districts. By following these guidelines, HR professionals can maximize instructional flexibility while maintaining full compliance with California Education Code § 44258.1.



# Resources & Next Steps



## Education Code References

Review EC §§ 44256(b), 44258.1, 44258.2, 44258.3, 44258.7, 44263, 44270, 44332, 44831, 44865, 58803 and Title 5 §§ 80005(b), 80020.4, 80020.4.1(a) for full statutory language.



## Consult Your County Office

County Offices of Education can provide guidance on LAO verification, board resolution templates, and CALPADS coding support.



## Annual Review Cycle

Conduct annual audits of all LAOs and core assignments before each school year begins to ensure continued compliance and timely board approvals.

- ✔ Questions about specific assignments? Contact the San Diego County Office of Education Credentials Team Unit, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), or your district's legal counsel for case-by-case guidance. If you are a charter, you can consult your Charter Authority for guidance.

# Questions?

