



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PANEL
Friday, August 21, 2026**

Panel Members

Rebecca Bettencourt
Chair

Dee Dee Myers
Ex-Officio Member

Rick Smiles
Member

Gretchen Newsom
Member

Doug Tracy
Member

Jennifer Fothergill
Member

Mike Greenlee
Member

Executive Staff

Jessica Grimes
Executive Director

Kumani Armstrong
Assistant Director/Chief Counsel

Peter Cooper
Assistant Director/Senior Advisor

Laura Campbell
Chief Deputy Director

Tara Armstrong
Deputy Director of Technical Branch

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PANEL
CalEPA Coastal Room
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Friday, August 21, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR BETTENCOURT

Chair Bettencourt called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Rebecca Bettencourt
Rick Smiles
Gretchen Newsom
Jennifer Fothergill
Mike Greenlee
Emily Desai
Douglas Tracy Absent-

Executive Staff Present:

Jessica Grimes, Executive Director
Kumani Armstrong, Assistant Director/Chief Counsel
Laura Campbell, Chief Deputy Director
Tara Armstrong, Deputy Director of Technical Branch
Jana Lazarewicz, Chief of Program Operations

ACTION TO APPROVE AUGUST PANEL MEETING AGENDA

The August Panel Meeting Agenda was reviewed.

ACTION Member Newsom moved to approve the August Panel Meeting Agenda
Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the
affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

ACTION TO APPROVE JULY 2026 PANEL MEETING MINUTES

The July 2026 Panel Meeting Minutes included in the Panel Packet were reviewed.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve the July 2026 Panel Meeting Minutes. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye

Rick Smiles – aye

Gretchen Newsom – aye

Jennifer Fothergill – aye

Mike Greenlee – aye

Emily Desai – aye

EXECUTIVE REPORT

As we gather for the second panel meeting of the 2026–27 fiscal year, I’m eager to continue building on the momentum we’ve created together. As mentioned last month, this year brings a number of promising opportunities, such as our continued collaboration with the California Energy Commission’s Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP), the next round of the Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED) 3 microgrants, and the continued funding of the Paid Family Leave Program.

Additionally, I have some exciting news to share: the 2026 Budget Act included \$10.8 million in new funding for the Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED) initiative. For those who may not be familiar with SEED, the program provides microgrants, entrepreneurial training, and technical assistance to individuals facing significant barriers, specifically immigrants and entrepreneurs with limited English proficiency who are starting or expanding a small business in California. We are working on an Interagency Agreement to transfer the funds to from California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) to ETP.

Since its inception, SEED has demonstrated meaningful impact, awarding over \$18 million dollars and supporting thousands of individuals across the state. ETP staff are enthusiastic about building upon this success. More information on SEED will be shared in the coming months, and we look forward to continuing our partnerships and expanding opportunities that drive meaningful change in the year ahead.

Proposal Highlights

For today’s panel meeting, we have one amendment and nineteen proposals submitted for review. If approved, ETP will award approximately \$7.8 million dollars. Of these proposals:

- 47% fall within the priority industry sector of manufacturing,
- 47% represent small businesses,

- 81% are repeat contractors, and
- 19% are new contractors.

Presentations

Also, we have one staff presentation from Selene Mujica, ETP's Planning and Research Team Supervisor, who will present ETP's 2024–25 Annual Report, along with Phase II of the current 2024–27 Strategic Plan. These materials highlight ETP's recent accomplishments, our progress in expanding high-quality training opportunities, and our strategic direction for the years ahead.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Brief legislative update on bills we are currently tracking. Today is the last day to amend bills on the floor. August 31st is the last day for each House to pass bills before the final recess begins and September 30th is the last day for the governor to sign or veto bills passed by the legislature before September 1st.

We have two bills that we have been tracking. AB 1534, which is known as the Workforce Pell Grant, that bill was amended to remove an Advisory Board requirement where ETP would sit on that Advisory Board. We are no longer tracking this bill. The other is SB 1059; this bill is directed at electronic record keeping. Since our last update this bill was amended and passed out of committee. Yesterday, August 20, 2026, the bill was read a third time and passed the state Assembly. The bill must go back to the Senate for a vote to concur, that has yet to happen. So, we will continue to track this bill and provide updates.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Regarding Funding

Today's Panel Meeting will fund 19 projects for approximately \$7.8 million dollars. That includes 3 delegation orders totaling one hundred forty-seven thousand, one hundred forty dollars (\$147,140).

Delegation Orders are Proposals capped at 75 thousand dollars and approved under delegated authority by the Director on a continuous flow basis.

If all proposals for today's panel meeting are approved, the panel will have funded 41 projects in Fiscal year 26-27 for a total of seventeen million, eight hundred ninety thousand, four hundred seventy-four dollars. (\$17,890,474).

Regarding Demand

We have 280 applications in demand:

- 133 applications are currently in development.
- 37 applications are in eligibility review.
- And 110 submitted applications are pending review.

Regarding Allocations

If all projects are approved, funding would support training for six thousand one hundred eighty-nine (6,189) applicants across California, helping employers strengthen their

workforce and advance the state's economic and industry needs.

Closed Contracts Highlights

With that continued progress in mind, since our last panel meeting, ETP has successfully closed 38 contracts totaling \$10 million.

Of these contracts:

- 5 of these were Multiple Employer Contracts
- 11 were Apprenticeships
- 14 were Single Employer Contracts
- 7 were Small Businesses
- And 1 was a critical proposal

These outcomes reflect continued progress and impact on expanding workforce opportunities across sectors and business sizes.

ACTION ON PROPOSALS

Single Employer Contracts

Tab No. 1: Applied Materials, Inc.

Panel asked for clarification on whether registered apprentices were included in the proposal.

Lillian Chu stated that no they are not included.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to approve Applied Material, Inc. in the amount of \$898,800. Member Newsom Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye

Rick Smiles – aye

Gretchen Newsom – aye

Jennifer Fothergill – aye

Mike Greenlee – aye

Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 2: Ascend Healthcare, Inc.

Panel asked for clarification, under fringe benefits listed are individual insurance policies such as critical illness coverage, accident insurance is listed do you offer healthcare coverage.

Brittany Cohen stated that they do offer health, dental and vision as well.

Panel asked about the focus on retention mentioned, and to explain or expand on what is being done to ensure that you retain these trained employees.

Brittany Cohen explained that retention and growth within their organization is a part of the company culture. About 75% of people in leadership roles were promoted from within.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Ascend Healthcare, Inc. in the amount of \$162,960. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 3: Browning Contractors, Inc.

Panel asked about the two wage modifications, to lower a construction wage down from \$20 an hour. In the proposal there are five individuals, 4 laborers and one wire puller that would be paid less than \$20 an hour. That is a really low wage for construction.

Jose Lumis explained that more than likely those are new employees with no previous experience. In April we reevaluate and likely there will be an increase in those individuals due to the cross training.

Panel noted that the proposal states an additional wage modification for trainees in Job Number 1 from \$24.67 an hour down to \$20 an hour. Approximately 114 trainees across all occupations except foreman will need this wage modification. Do 114 need the further wage modification down to \$20 an hour?

Jose Lumis explained they are in the Central Valley which is an HUA. So, a lot of the guys need the cross training to be able to increase to the next level.

Subcontractor explained they are bucketed, obviously not all down at 20 and very few below 20 if any. This is bucketed based on current wages, there is a budget of \$23, \$24, \$25, which I would be happy to provide to Panel. Jose Lumis added that the average increase in the past two years has been 5%.

Panel stated that looking at the wage table there are a total of five under \$20 and then about 75 in the \$20-\$25.

Dr. Grimes explained that her understanding is that the first column says \$20 represents the 5 that would be at the \$20 post retention wage. And the next column that \$20.01 to \$25 is about the 70. So, tally that up to about 75 trainees.

Staff concurred.

Subcontractor stated that he believes the table is accurate but there is a typo in the narrative. He offered that it would be reasonable to drop that bucket.

Panel requested the 5 be moved after the two-year training program to receive a \$20 an hour minimum.

Jose Lumis explained that the numbers need to be adjusted, they are hiring starting at the \$21 an hour.

Panel asked if the post retention wage could be moved to \$21 an hour.

Jose Lumis stated yes definitely.

Panel clarified that all the employees who are going through the training at the end of the retention period will be at \$21 an hour. Panel asked if they could expand on how the project will promote employee retention.

Gloria Mendez explained that they are cross training and the goal is for them to stay within the Company.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Browning Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$398,580 subjected to the post retention wage of \$21 an hour. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye

Rick Smiles – aye

Gretchen Newsom – aye

Jennifer Fothergill – aye

Mike Greenlee – aye

Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 4: Central Valley Training Center, Inc.

Panel stated it appears they are requesting a wage modification, more of a double wage modification because it states the “Panel can lower a wage modification from \$44.85 an hour down to \$24.67 an hour or 25%”. This is a 45% wage modification. So, some language is missing that explains the HUA. In future you need to get that in there.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Central Valley Training Center, Inc. in the amount of \$532,800. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 5: KB Delta, Inc.

Withdrawn

Tab No. 6: Montage Medical Group

Panel commented the last contract achieved 79% (265,00 of the 335,00 awarded). Now the request is for more than what was accomplished last year, what has changed?

Jasmine Emsley explained they had some challenges with record keeping and have since added a manager to oversee all training and two support members. They continue to collect rosters. They are requesting more money because they have grown.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to approve Montage Medical Group in the amount of \$350,000. Member Desai Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 7: Person Centered Services, Inc.

Panel stated concern around two wage modifications requested. From \$44 to \$24.67 and then a further wage modification from \$24.67 down to \$18.50 an hour with a reduced work week hours from 35 down to 20 an hour. The calculation for somebody working full time, 29 hours at \$18.50, that's \$27,000 a year.

Denise Lane explained they have one person at \$21, everybody is \$22.50.

Panel asked why the reduce wage week hours?

Denise Lane explained they made the change to remain competitive with the workforce and to maintain existing employees. There are a growing number who have children with autism or just school needs. We kept the pay but adjusted the working hours.

Panel asked about possibly moving the post retention wage to \$21.00 per hour.

Subcontractor agreed.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Person Centered Services, Inc. in the amount of \$241,920 subject to a post retention wage of \$21 an hour. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 8: Pharmavite LLC

Panel appreciated the rightsizing of the contract and commended their organizing an internal audit to find any shortcomings.

ACTION: Member Fothergill moved to approve Pharmavite LLC in the amount of \$242,788. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 9: Quantumscape Battery, Inc. dba QuantumScape

Panel member Desai commented it was a pleasure working with them in the past.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to approve Quantumscape Battery, Inc. dba QuantumScape in the amount of \$531,552. Member Greenlee Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye

Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 10: Universal Health Services of Rancho Springs, Inc. dba Southwest Healthcare Rancho Springs and Inland Valley Hospital

Panel appreciated the high wages with a post retention wage of \$50.50 an hour and a wage range of \$50.50 to 73.81.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Universal Health Services of Rancho Springs, Inc. dba Southwest Healthcare Rancho Springs and Inland Valley Hospital in the amount of \$560,000. Member Fothergill Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 11: Vellutini Corporation dba Royal Electric Company

Member Smiles recused himself.

Panel asked for an explanation about prior performance not reaching 100% and coming back and asking for more than awarded last time.

Sean Mayer explained that they did some housekeeping in their documentation process. Some training was not being recorded. They educated their team about the benefits of the ETP program. The larger amount speaks to the growth they have been experiencing.

Panel wanted to build around the prior question of performance but also around audits. There was a sizable, disallowed credit in a prior audit. What is now in place to avoid this in the future.

Sean Mayer explained they took steps to see where the errors were happening (mainly clerical errors) and have more people supporting the program training with proper documentation of training hours which qualify, which don't, and how to discern before sending them off.

Panel commented that the number of trainees you are projecting is very similar to what you had approved last time. Are you training them in more skills? Are you seeing a greater number of hours needed based on what is happening? What is driving the greater amount?

Sean Mayer explained that they have additional training programs in place that will require more time. For example, qualified electrical worker training is a six-hour workshop followed by an in-person demonstration and assessment. We are revising it is not the same training.

Panel asked about the 210 electricians included in the projects that you mentioned giving an intro class, those are not electricians but electrical trainees, correct? That would then go through an apprenticeship program and after hours of training, become certified electricians in the state of California.

Sean Mayer explained that the qualified program is a safety program. The NFPA 70, requires a training program in place before we can allow them to conduct troubleshooting and testing operations on these systems. So, they may be a journeyman but that still does not mean we allow them to perform work without internal training understanding our electrical safety program and internal requirements that go beyond what is required in NFPA 70.

Subcontractor added that in the curriculum we are not picking that up for ETP purposes.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Vellutini Corporation dba Royal Electric Company in the amount of \$624,400. Member Fothergill Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 5 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

MULTIPLE EMPLOYER CONTRACTS

Tab No. 12: AGC Construction Education Foundation

Panel commented they are aware that some of the participating employers are union signatory, but it is not in the proposal. Is it that you are not training union workers, and you are training outside that scope.

Kendra Billow stated that is correct. Whenever there is a situation where we have an employer that wants to send trainees, we make an onboarding call with them to discuss who qualifies and who does not.

Panel asked for clarification of the wage table. You are seeking 2 wage modifications going from \$33.64 down to \$24.67 and then another wage modification down to \$18.50 an hour. But your post retention wage is \$20.01. The post retention wage for job number 2, 66 individuals, is a HUA. Panel asked if they could move up to \$21 an hour for the second job category because it is a two-year contract.

Kendra Billow and subcontractor agreed.

Panel asked what their plan was to capture employers in the Stanislaw and San Joaquin countries none of which are provided in the proposal.

Kendra Billow explained they have a team in the Construction Education Foundation that focuses specifically on small business development, they have contractors in those areas and have a plan in place to reach out in those areas if this proposal is approved.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve AGC Construction Education Foundation in the amount of \$899,562 subjected to Job Number 2 has a post retention wage of \$21.00 an hour. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 13: East County Economic Development Council

Panel asked on your Kesey partnership, is that work with industry statewide or withing your geographic territory?

Matt Stanford stated it is statewide with an emphasis in San Diego.

Panel expressed concern about the simplicity of the wage table all wage ranges for 5 different occupations are \$22.17 an hour to \$75 an hour. Do you not understand the needs of your participating employers? Did you just go from the lowest to the highest?

Matt Stanford stated yes, as a MEC with many participating businesses, some smaller some larger there is a variability in the wages.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve East County Economic Development Council in the amount of \$876,960. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 14: Studio Arts, Ltd.

Panel asked about the audit findings from years ago and just recently. Comment was made that ETP staff has done a great deal of work supporting this last contract. What are the three big things learned in terms of management of the contract to make sure to not repeat the audit findings?

Erik Killsman stated the industry is in upheaval and the group they are dealing with has had several transitions in their companies and they are having to figure out how they can compete on the world stage. Some of those difficulties were echoed in the last contract. One way to help protect the unions that are involved is to keep their membership employed. For non-union companies it would be about keeping their workforce actively engaged and learning the latest techniques.

Panel asked for clarification around whether the 35 are likely to be compensated at the end of the contract.

Lola Ramirez replied absolutely.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to approve Studio Arts, Ltd. in the amount of \$282,870. Member Greenlee Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 15: Sturdi-Quick Building Systems

Panel asked if the trainees are employed during the 24-month, 2-year program?

Mary Flowers stated no, there are eight-week sessions, about 5 of them in this contract and at the end of every eight-week session the trainees go on to placement.

Panel asked what the success rate of that placement was. Also, why is there no list of participating employers?

Mary Flowers stated about 98.2%. They are a consortium and represent the steel framing industry alliance, they have formed an alliance of employers, and those employers are general contractors, steel frame manufacturers and fabricators.

Panel asked about the prior contract more than five years ago and what was the amount and number of trainees supported?

Mary Flowers stated around 100 trainees, the contract was finished fast and they went back for a modification, she thinks the original contract was close to \$500,000 and they got an increase before the two years were up.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve Sturdi-Quick Building Systems in the amount of \$598,425. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Tab No. 16: The Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

No questions or comments.

ACTION: Member Newsom moved to approve The Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$259,966. Member Smiles Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

AMENDMENT

Tab No. 17: 4th Watch Educational Services dba Machinist Career College

Member Newsom recused herself.

Amendment requesting to add a second job number for 20 new hire multiple barrier trainees. This will reallocate approximately \$160,780 in funding for these trainees, and they are requesting an effective date of July 1, 2026, to support training demand.

No questions or comments.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to approve the panel amendment 4th Watch Educational Services dba Machinist Career College as presented. Member Fothergill

Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative for approval as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 5 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

PRESENTATION given by Selene Mujica

Employment Training Panels 2024-2027 Phase II and Annual Report 2024-2025

OPPORTUNITY FOR PANEL MEMBERS TO REQUEST AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE PANEL MEETING

No comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Phillip Herrera explained that the idea behind SB 1059 is that ETP can preserve accountability and compliance while reducing administrative requirements that no longer reflect how employers deliver and document training. Organizations increasingly rely on learning management systems, electronic attendance records, webinars, and blended learning. ETP already accepts some electronic records, but the rules still require contractors to duplicate information, recreate, paper style records, or report on data that does not materially improve oversight. Recommendations include allowing MECs to use LMSs eliminating unnecessary daily reporting for multi day courses, modernizing the trainer to trainee ratio requirements, improving the reporting of asynchronous online course completions, and accepting course crosswalks that connect an employer's course title to ETPs approved training categories. These and other improvements would reduce the necessary work for all applicants of ETP staff, promote consistency aligned with the roll out of Cal-E-Force, while allowing everyone to focus on meaningful compliance issues. Finally, regardless of whether Governor Newsom signs SB 1059 into law, he looks forward to continuing work through the regulatory process and collaboration with ETP staff, its legal counsel, and the ETP Policy Committee.

Chair Bettencourt asked for motion to adjourn the Panel meeting.

ACTION: Member Smiles moved to adjourn the Panel meeting. Member Greenlee Seconded. All Panel Members present voted in the affirmative to adjourn the Panel meeting as moved.

Motion carried by roll call vote, 6 to 0.

Rebecca Bettencourt – aye
Gretchen Newsom – aye
Rick Smiles – aye
Jennifer Fothergill – aye
Mike Greenlee – aye
Emily Desai – aye

Chair Bettencourt Adjourned the meeting at 11:44 p.m.