



SKILLS THAT SUPPORT THE CCCC EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Education and Human Development Sector plays a critical role in sustaining the regional workforce in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, particularly through its concentration of middle-skill career opportunities. While the sector accounts for a modest share of the overall middle-skill workforce at 5%, it supported 40,810 jobs in 2024 and is projected to grow by 3% through 2029. Notably, more than one-quarter of jobs within the sector are middle-skill occupations, generating over 6,000 annual openings. These roles are foundational to education systems, child development services, and community support infrastructure, positioning community colleges and K-12 partners as key drivers of workforce preparation and long-term regional stability.

This report examines the skills that define middle-skill education and human development occupations, relying on employer job postings for two minor occupational groups that together accounted for 40,810 regional jobs in 2024. Using a comparison of two date periods, 2019–2023 and 2024–2025, the analysis identifies which skills are increasing, declining, or persistently in demand across the sector.

Key Findings

Employer demand is increasingly concentrated in foundational, transferable competencies.

Across the education and human development sector, foundational skills account for the majority of the growing competencies, representing more than two-thirds of the increasing skills in the Inland Empire. These skills, such as interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and writing, are consistently requested across both occupational groups, indicating that they are not tied to a single role but are broadly required across the sector.

While foundational skills dominate growth, specialized and technical skills show more limited and differentiated increases across the sector. The relatively modest growth in these categories suggests that core technical competencies remain stable. Instead of introducing entirely new skill requirements, employer demand is shifting toward how existing competencies are applied, particularly in serving diverse and high-needs populations.

Cross-sector skills, such as lesson planning and working with children, individuals with autism spectrum disorder, and individuals with disabilities, led the growth in specialized skills. Other growing specialized skills aim to confirm job readiness, such as classroom management, preschool education, special education, student services support, and individualized education programs (IEP). This pattern is consistent with the highly interpersonal and dynamic nature of education and human development work, where roles often involve navigating complex environments, managing relationships, and adapting to the diverse needs of learners.

Certain foundational skills are declining in postings as they become baseline expectations.

The shrinking-skills analysis shows that foundational skills account for the majority of declining competencies (75% in the region and 100% statewide). These include:

- Patience
- Clerical work
- English language
- General mathematics
- Grammar

Rather than signaling reduced importance, this decline indicates that employers increasingly assume these skills and no longer treat them as distinguishing qualifications in job postings. Notably, there are

no observed declines in industry-specific or occupation-specific skills, reinforcing the continued importance and stability of core instructional practices and specialized role functions across the sector.

Certifications remain relevant to sector jobs.

Qualifications data for both occupational groups reinforce the emphasis on foundational certifications focused on classroom safety, including:

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- First Aid Certification

These credentials appear consistently and often serve as a signal of job readiness (e.g., Exhibits 2.1.9, 2.2.9). However, a teaching certificate was requested in only 1% of job advertisements across occupational groups, indicating that occupation-specific certifications are not required for the majority of employment opportunities in this sector.

These patterns reveal a structural shift in middle-skill education and human development work.

Taken together, these findings indicate a clear shift in how skills are valued and applied across the sector. Routine, generalized, and easily assumed competencies are becoming less visible in employer demand, while skills tied to human interaction, problem-solving, and adaptability are becoming more prominent.

At the same time, technical and role-specific competencies remain stable, with growth concentrated in their application rather than expansion. This suggests that middle-skill workers are increasingly expected to engage in complex, people-centered work that requires both strong foundational abilities and the capacity to apply them in varied and evolving contexts.

Implications for Education & Training in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

The regional shift in skill demand points to several opportunities for K-12 and community college programs to strengthen workforce alignment:

1. Align curriculum with foundational and cross-sector skills.

Programs should ensure that foundational competencies, such as communication, interpersonal effectiveness, problem-solving, and organizational skills, are explicitly embedded and consistently reinforced throughout the curriculum. In addition, the curriculum should incorporate cross-sector competencies, including working with children and supporting individuals with autism spectrum disorder and disabilities, to reflect the growing expectation for serving diverse populations.

2. Emphasize applied learning of stable technical competencies.

Given the stability of industry- and occupation-specific skills, programs should focus on how these competencies are applied in real-world settings. This includes classroom management, student support strategies, and individualized education planning. Work-based learning, simulations, and field experiences can help students translate technical knowledge into practice.

3. Strengthening K-12 pathway - Community College Education and Human Development Pathway Alignment

K-12 pathways in education, child development, and family and human services can play a critical role in early skill development. High school programs can introduce foundational competencies such as communication and professionalism, provide early exposure to classroom management and child development concepts, and prepare students for dual enrollment and opportunities in postsecondary programs. Stronger alignment across systems can improve student progression and better position learners for entry into middle-skill careers in the sector.

Conclusion

The CCCC education and human development sector is a critical component of the Inland Empire/Desert Region workforce, with employer demand increasingly centered on foundational, transferable competencies. Skills such as communication, leadership, and problem-solving are now most prominent across occupations, reflecting the field's interpersonal and complex nature. At the same time, technical competencies remain stable but are increasingly applied in practice, particularly in supporting diverse and high-needs populations.

This report is part of a ten-sector series that provides a skills-based roadmap for strengthening workforce preparation across K-12, community colleges, and regional partners. Together with forthcoming analyses on artificial intelligence, job-creation strategies, and climate-related shifts in the regional economy, this work will guide the development of programs that equip learners with the competencies required for today's education and human development workforce and for the evolving demands ahead.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to strengthen community college program development and review by aligning regional education pathways with the evolving skill needs of the Inland Empire/Desert economy. Using the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) priority sector framework as its foundation, this analysis focuses on the skills that define and sustain the region's middle-skill education and human development workforce, providing research for K-12 schools and community colleges to examine how well programs prepare students for occupations within this priority sector.¹

Within this framework, the CCCCCO education and human development sector represents one of the smaller, yet critical areas of middle-skill employment, with over 40,800 jobs in 2024. While middle-skill occupations in this sector are projected to grow by only 3% through 2029, there are more than 6,000 job openings projected each year over that period. This combination of modest growth and sustained annual openings reflects ongoing replacement demand. It reinforces the sector's role in maintaining a consistent pipeline of workers supporting education and human development services.

This report examines the specialized and foundational skills appearing in employer job postings for middle-skill education and human development occupations. Middle-skill occupations are those that typically require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree, and are largely associated with community college CTE programs, placing community colleges at the center of preparing the workforce that supports regional education and human development.

This report is one of a ten-part series that leverages the CCCCCO priority sector association to the region's middle-skill occupations. These sector reports will be released ahead of a companion analysis examining how emerging technologies are reshaping skill demand for middle-skill occupations. That research will sit alongside the sector series to help colleges understand both current and future drivers of workforce change. Before the release of this broader analysis, the COE will complete the sector reports, providing a full view of skill needs across the regional economy.

The ten-part skills analysis reports will be released in the following order:

1. Health
2. Energy, Construction, and Utilities
3. Advanced Manufacturing
4. Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media (ICT/DM)
5. Business and Entrepreneurship
6. Advanced Transportation and Logistics
7. Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism
8. Public Safety
9. Education and Human Development
10. Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies

The report seeks to answer three major questions:

- Section 1: How does the middle-skill education and human development workforce support the regional economy?
- Section 2: What skills are essential for middle-skill education and human development workers?
- Section 3: How can skills information be used to guide career education program development in the Inland Empire/Desert region?

¹ <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/Strong-Workforce-Program/SWP-Archive/Events/K12-SWP-Industry-Sector-Crosswalk>

METHODOLOGY

This report analyzes the skills essential to the middle-skill workforce in occupations associated with the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) education and human development sector. The Chancellor’s Office grouped career and technical education programs into twelve priority sectors, further referred to as CCCCCO priority sectors.² The grouping of community college programs by CCCCCO priority sector facilitates analysis of programs and occupations with similar knowledge bases and skill sets. The Center of Excellence, in collaboration with the CCCCCO, developed a crosswalk that identifies vocational occupations associated with each program code. This crosswalk serves as the foundation for program and workforce assessments by the CCCCCO priority sector. Please note that the CCCCCO priority sector should not be confused with the industry employment sectors identified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Additionally, only ten CCCCCO reports will be developed as the Life Sciences/Biotech and Global Trade priority sectors are typically rolled up into the larger sectors, Health and Business and Entrepreneurship, respectively.

Skills considered essential to the CCCCCO education and human development sector occupations were identified through an analysis of employer job advertisements. Job advertisement information, such as skills and qualifications, was obtained from Lightcast’s Job Posting Analytics, which aggregates job advertisements posted over 220,000 current and historical sources.³ To provide a more nuanced perspective and to ensure the utility of this report, skills and qualifications information are analyzed at the minor occupation group level.

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system aggregates occupation information by four levels: major group, minor group, broad occupation, and detailed occupation.⁴ This report relies on the minor occupational groupings of detailed occupations for the skills analysis, as they provide greater detail than the broader occupational groups and ensure the feasibility and readability of this study, which would be lacking in a detailed occupation-based skills analysis.

The following is an example of the SOC coding structure for Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2011).

- Major Occupational Group: Educational Instruction and Library Occupations (25-0000)
 - Minor Occupational Group: Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers (25-2000)
 - Broad Occupation: Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers (25-2010)
 - Detailed Occupation: Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2011)

Minor occupational groups enable this report to focus on occupations connected by similar work activities and areas of focus in the priority sector, to determine which skills are currently most in demand, demand is growing rapidly, or demand is shrinking rapidly. This data will allow program designers, owners, and administrators to have a window into what skills employers need in their workforce for each group of occupations and how to plan for growing future needs.

This report series typically focuses on minor occupational groups comprising three or more detailed occupations related to the CCCCCO sector, ensuring that the occupations are grouped by similar work activities and have sufficient job advertisements for analysis. However, there are no minor occupational

² DataVista Sector Explanation. 2024. Retrieved from: <https://datavista.cccco.edu/resources/7>

³ Lightcast. Job Posting Analytics (JPA) Methodology. 2025. Retrieved from: <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957446-job-posting-analytics-jpa-methodology>

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Standard Occupational Classification and Coding Structure. 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/soc_2018_class_and_coding_structure.pdf

groups comprising three or more middle-skill occupations related to the CCCC education and human development sector.

The skills analysis compares skills posted over a two-year period (January 2024 – December 2025) to a historical five-year period (January 2019 – December 2023) to identify skills that are growing and shrinking in terms of their prevalence in job ads. This report intentionally uses a two-year period for the current analysis to ensure a sufficient volume of recent job advertisements and avoid the instability that can come with relying on a single year of data. The five-year historical period provides a stable benchmark of longer-term industry skill patterns and reduces the influence of short-term fluctuations. This analysis also illuminates the skills with the highest share of job ads in the most recent period, addressing employer demand for skills that are persistently in demand across time.

One goal of this research was to include skills in this report that are most significant to the CCCC education and human development sector workforce, based on their frequency in employer job postings. To ensure the analysis focuses on skills that employers consistently value, only skills appearing frequently in job ads within each minor occupational group during the most recent period (January 2024 – December 2025) were included.

The Lightcast taxonomy organizes skills into a tiered structure that groups related competencies according to the type of work or task they support. Within this framework, skills are categorized as common, specialized, or software skills. To determine which skills should be included in our analysis, we examined how frequently individual skills appear in job postings. We calculated the median share of job ads in which common skills appear across all occupations, providing a baseline measure of typical skill prevalence. Our analysis found that common skills typically appeared in roughly five percent of job postings across occupations. We used this median value as the threshold for determining which skills were included in our research.

The five percent threshold is sufficient to capture in-demand skills while eliminating skills included in job ads that are not essential for employment in the minor occupational group. Additionally, in-demand skills found in employer job ads posted throughout California are also included in this analysis to provide context for the regional skills data, highlighting nuances of the regional employment environment.

Foundational skills, or common skills, “are prevalent across many different occupations and industries, including both personal attributes and learned skills.”⁵ Since these skills are found across industries, they are considered foundational for the workplace. Specialized skills, also known as technical skills, equip an individual to perform specific tasks effectively.⁶ Our analysis of specialized skills will indicate whether they were specific to a minor occupation group, identified across multiple minor occupation groups, or across sectors.

Specialized skills are classified based on how broadly they appear across job advertisements. Skills appearing only within a single occupational group are considered occupation-specific, while those found across multiple occupational groups within the same industry are classified as industry-specific. Skills appearing across occupations in multiple industries are categorized as cross-sector, and those appearing across most occupational groups are reclassified as foundational skills.

⁵ Lightcast. Skills Glossary. 2023. Retrieved from: <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/7934140-skills>

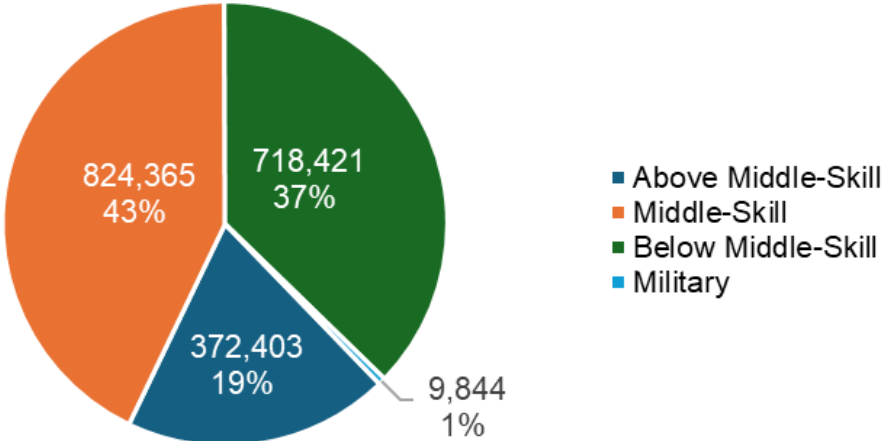
⁶ Ibid.

SECTION 1: HOW DOES THE MIDDLE-SKILL EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE SUPPORT THE REGIONAL ECONOMY?

1.1 REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

In 2024, there were nearly 1.93 million jobs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. Exhibit 1.1.1 displays the distribution of regional jobs in 2024 by skill level. Approximately 824,400 or 43% of regional jobs are middle skill. The number of regional jobs is projected to grow by more than 139,000 through 2029, representing 7% growth. While there are over 257,500 annual job openings expected between 2024 and 2029 across all jobs, these employment opportunities are not evenly distributed by skill level. Approximately 41% of annual job openings in the Inland Empire/Desert Region are expected for middle-skill workers, totaling over 107,500.

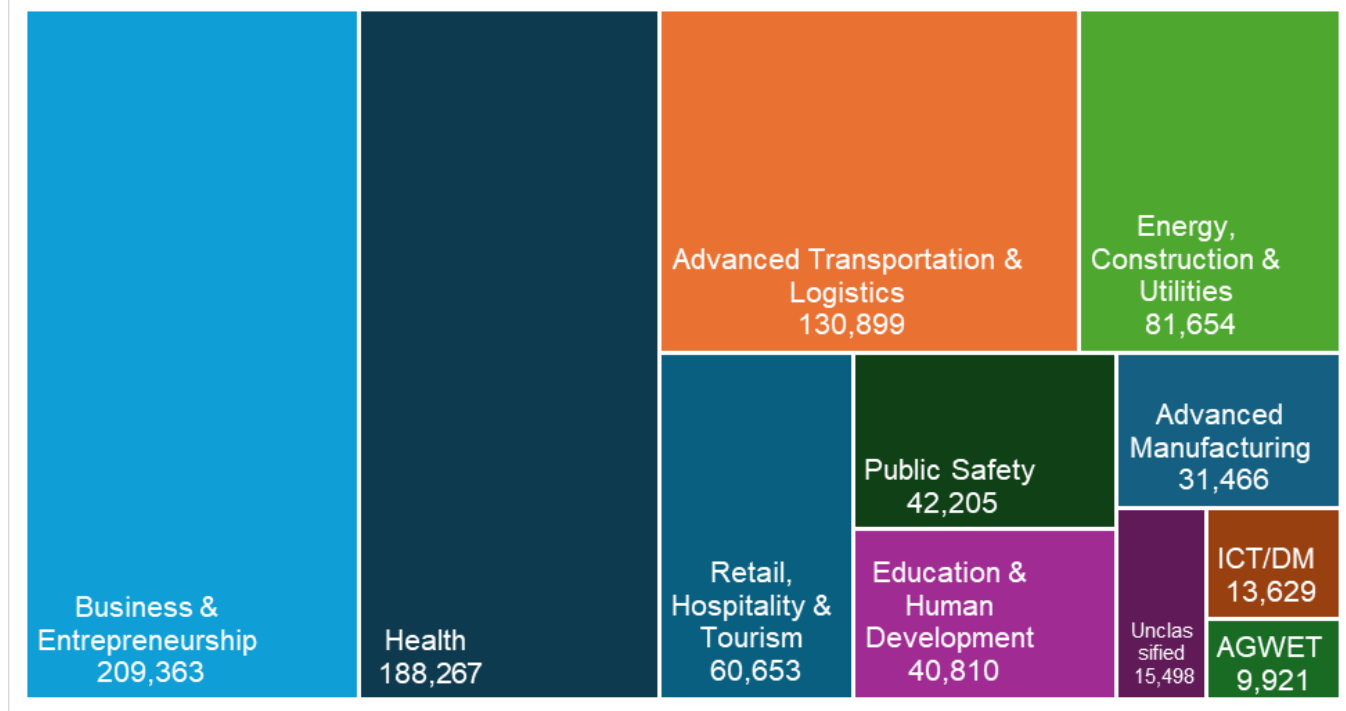
Exhibit 1.1.1: Distribution of Employment by Skill Level, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Exhibit 1.1.2 displays the distribution of middle-skill employment by CCCC priority sector in the Inland Empire/Desert Region in 2024. The CCCC education and human development sector is one of the smaller sectors in terms of middle-skill employment, with 40,810 middle-skill jobs in 2024, or 5% of all middle-skill employment in the region. This occupational group is projected to grow by 3%, adding nearly 1,300 jobs to the region, with over 6,000 job openings expected annually through 2029.

Exhibit 1.1.2: Distribution of Middle-Skill Employment by CCCC Priority Sector, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

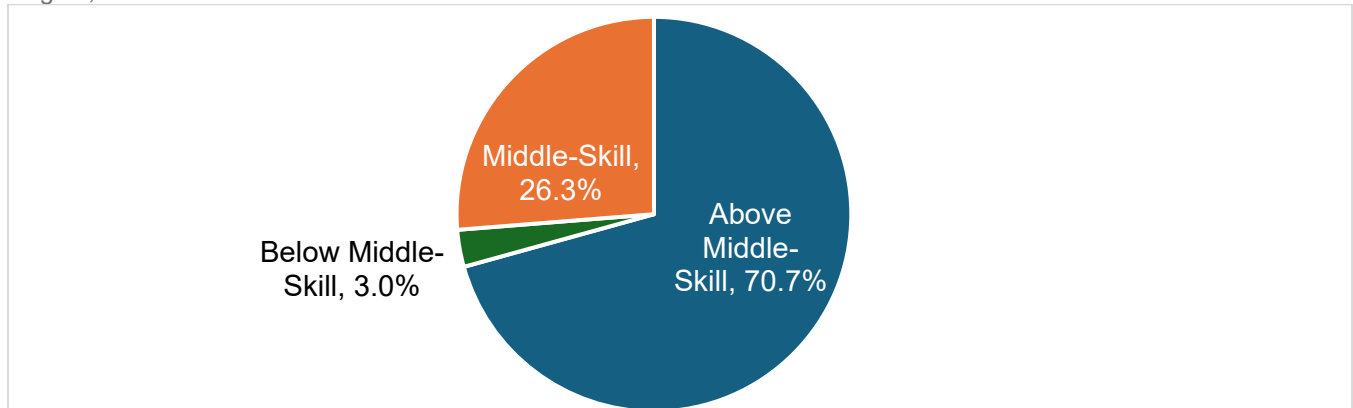
1.2: EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SECTOR OVERVIEW

There are 18 TOP codes in the CCCC education and human development sector that prepare students for employment. Across all levels of educational attainment, experience, and training, there are 40 occupations related to the CCCC education and human development sector. Approximately 8.1% of regional jobs across all education levels are related to the CCCC education and human development sector, at nearly 155,400 jobs in 2024. The share of regional education and human development employment is similar to that of California as a whole (8.2%) and the national average (7.9%).

However, regional education and human development employment is projected to grow by 6.5% through 2029, outpacing education and human development employment projections in California and nationally, at 4.6% and 3.3%, respectively. It should be noted that growth in this sector is concentrated in roles that typically require a bachelor’s degree or above, with this occupational group growing by 7.4% between 2024 and 2029.

Exhibit 1.2.1 displays the share of CCCC education and human development sector jobs by skill level in the Inland Empire/Desert Region in 2024. There are six middle-skill occupations that account for 26.3% of sector jobs in 2024. Of the 40 occupations related to the CCCC education and human development sector, 33 are above middle skill, due to the high education and experience requirements for these workers. Limited below middle-skill employment (3.0%) in the CCCC education and human development sector confirms the importance of education, experience, and training requirements in this sector.

Exhibit 1.2.1: Distribution of Education and Human Development Employment by Skill Level, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Exhibit 1.2.2 displays minor occupational group employment for middle-skill occupations in the CCCC education and human development sector. This report provides an in-depth skills analysis of two minor occupational groups within the CCCC education and human development sector, which accounted for over 40,800 jobs in 2024. Middle-skill education and human development occupations are projected to grow by 3% through 2029, primarily driven by job growth in the other educational instruction and library occupations minor group.

The other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group is projected to shed 63 jobs between 2024 and 2029, representing a 0.3% decline. This decline is exclusively due to projected job losses among childcare workers, with a 3.8% reduction in jobs expected through 2029. Excluding childcare workers, the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group is projected to grow by 6.5%, adding over 400 jobs to the region.

Exhibit 1.2.2: Middle-skill Education and Human Development Employment by Minor Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024-2029

SOC Minor Group Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024 - 2029 % Change	Average Annual Openings	Occupation Count
Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	22,068	23,427	6.2%	2,941	2
Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations	18,742	18,680	-0.3%	3,069	4
Middle-Skill Total	40,810	42,107	3.2%	6,010	6

Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

The following section will analyze the specialized skills, foundational skills, qualifications, and programs for the above minor occupational groups.

SECTION 2: WHAT SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR MIDDLE-SKILL EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WORKERS?

2.1: OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION AND LIBRARY OCCUPATIONS

Exhibit 2.1.1 displays current and projected employment data for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group from 2024 to 2029. This occupational group contains two occupations that had nearly 22,100 jobs in 2024. This occupational group is projected to grow by 6%, adding nearly 1,400 jobs to the region through 2029. While this occupational group does not offer high median wages, it has plentiful employment opportunities, with over 2,900 annual job openings projected over the next five years. The majority of employment opportunities in this occupational group are concentrated in teaching assistant positions below the postsecondary level.

Exhibit 2.1.1: Current and Projected Employment for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024-2029

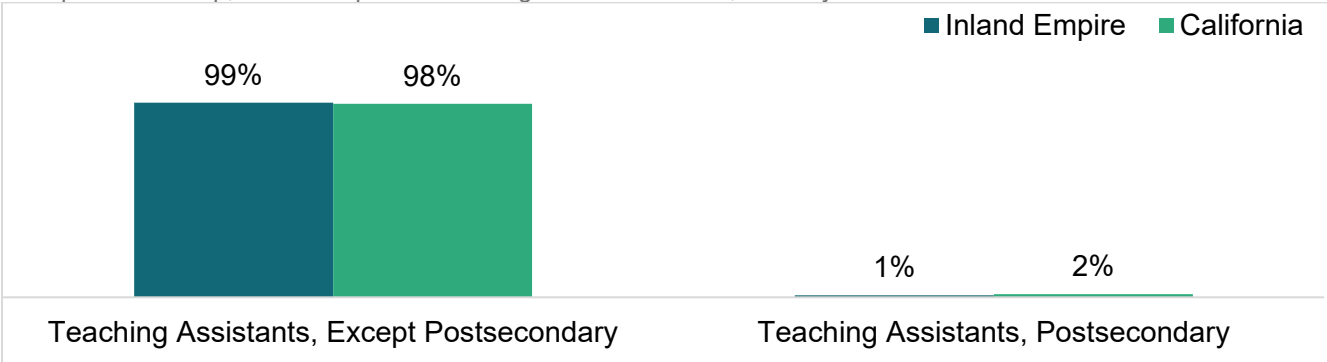
Occupation Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024-2029 % Change	Average Annual Openings	Median Hourly Earnings
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	20,966	22,293	6%	2,800	\$22.06
Teaching Assistants, Postsecondary	1,103	1,134	3%	141	\$18.53
Total	22,068	23,427	6%	2,941	

Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Over the last 24 months, from January 2024 to December 2025, referred to as the “most recent period” going forward, there were 3,705 job ads posted for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire, compared to 44,708 across California. In the previous period, January 2019 to December 2023, there were 9,008 job ads posted for this occupational group in the Inland Empire and 112,401 in California.

Exhibit 2.1.2 displays the share of job advertisements by occupation for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and California. The vast majority of regional and statewide job ads were posted for teaching assistants, except postsecondary. The scale of these occupational job advertisements aligns with traditional labor market figures. It suggests that this skills analysis will likely not provide insight into employers' skill demands for postsecondary teaching assistants.

Exhibit 2.1.2: Share of Advertisements by Occupation for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025

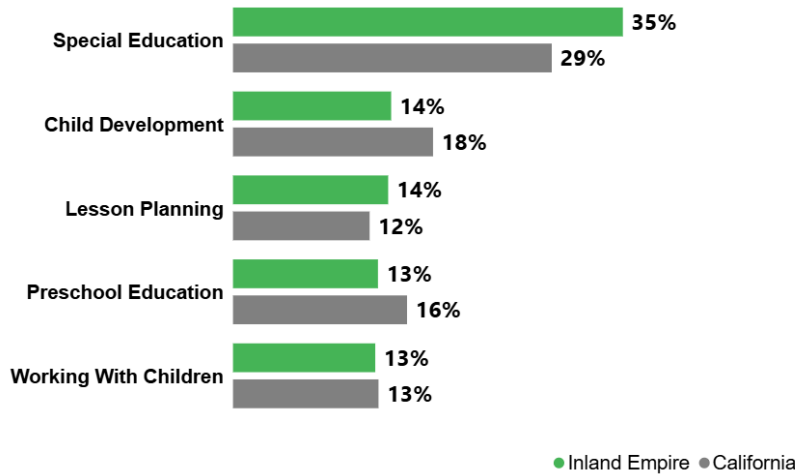


Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Specialized Skills

Exhibit 2.1.3 displays the top specialized skills included in employer job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and their share of job ads in California. The top skills may provide insight into the specialized skills employers find critical to employment.

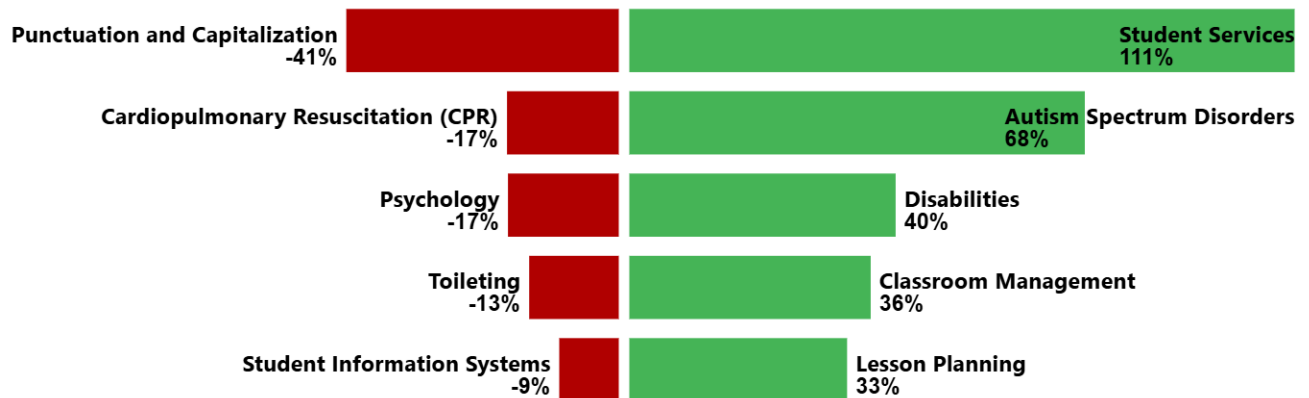
Exhibit 2.1.3: Top Specialized Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.1.4 displays the specialized skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with student services skills has more than doubled compared to the previous period (2019-2023). Employers’ desire for candidates with punctuation and capitalization skills has decreased by 41% between the two periods in the Inland Empire.

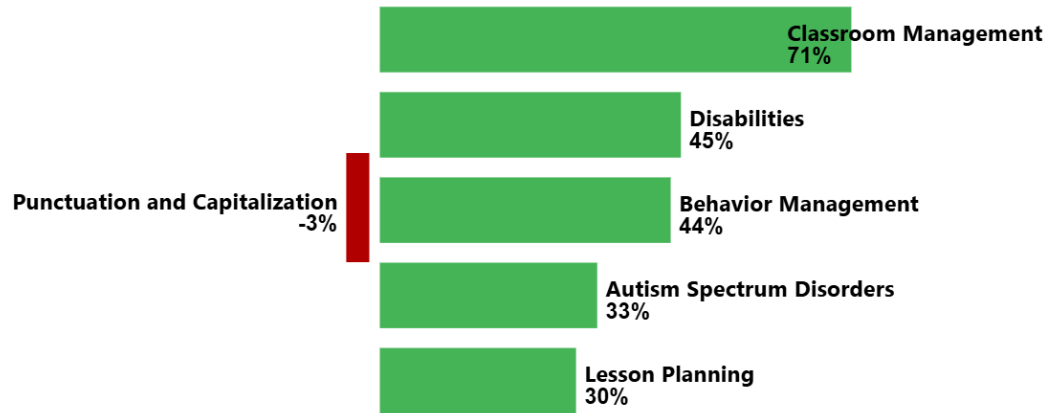
Exhibit 2.1.4: Specialized Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.1.5 displays the specialized skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in California, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with classroom management skills has increased by 71% since the previous period (2019-2023). In California, employers’ desire for candidates with punctuation and capitalization skills has decreased by 3% between the two periods.

Exhibit 2.1.5: Specialized Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group in California

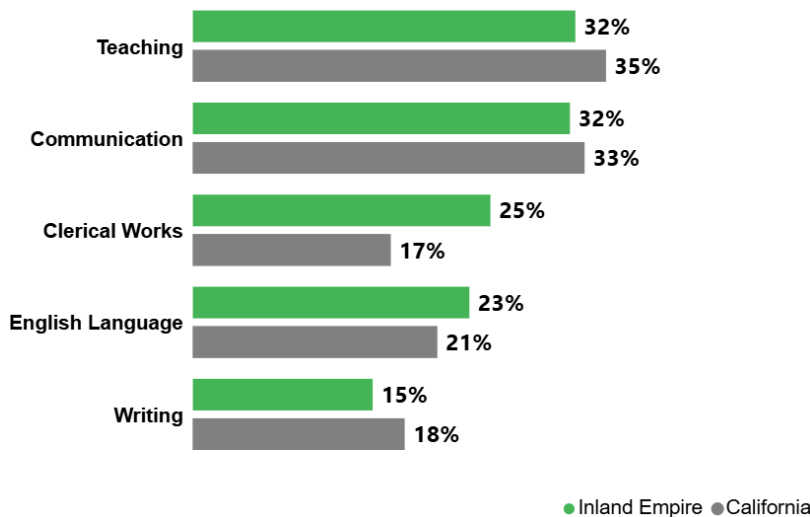


Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Foundational Skills

Exhibit 2.1.6 displays the top foundational skills included in employer job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and their share of job ads in California. The top skills may provide insight into the foundational skills employers find critical to employment. Teaching was the top foundational skill for this occupational group across both regions.

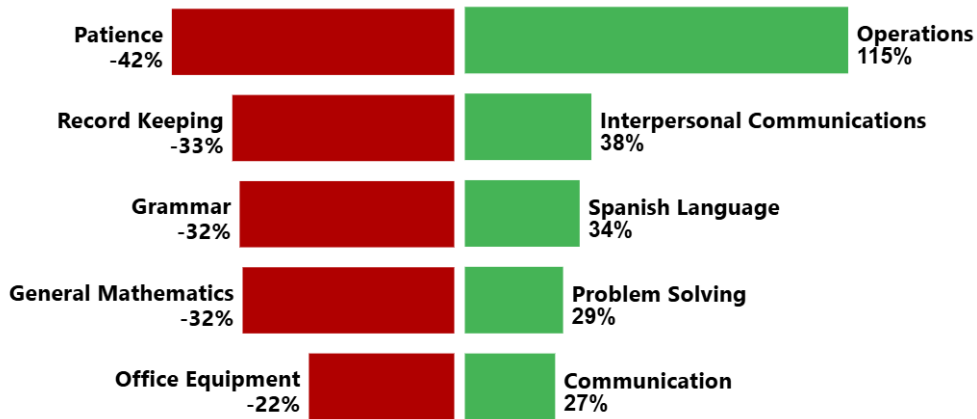
Exhibit 2.1.6: Top Foundational Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.1.7 displays the foundational skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with operations skills has increased by 115% since the previous period (2019-2023). Employers' desire for candidates with patience skills has decreased by 42% between the two periods in the Inland Empire.

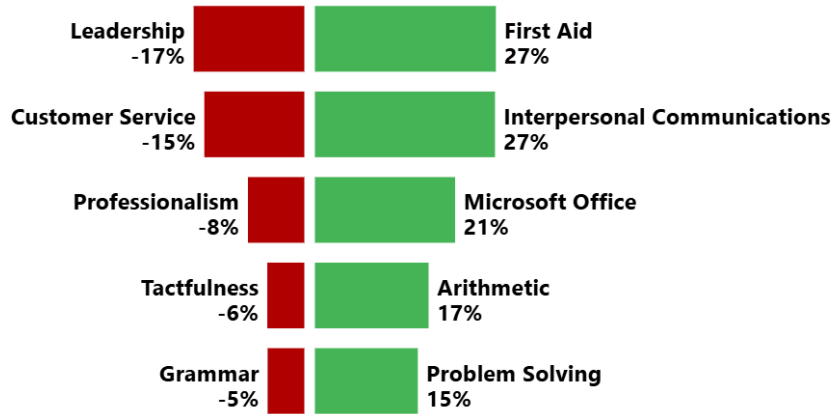
Exhibit 2.1.7: Foundational Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.1.8 displays the foundational skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group in California, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with first-aid and interpersonal communication skills has increased by 27% compared to the previous period (2019-2023). Employers’ desire for candidates with leadership and customer service skills has decreased by 15% or between the two periods in California.

Exhibit 2.1.8: Foundational Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group in California



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Qualifications and Programs

Exhibit 2.1.9 displays the qualifications most frequently included in employer job advertisements for the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification was the most frequently requested qualification in employer job advertisements, appearing in between 16% and 18% of job ads.

Exhibit 2.1.9: Top Qualifications Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025

Inland Empire/Desert Region		California	
Qualification	Share	Qualification	Share
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	16%	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	18%
First Aid Certification	14%	First Aid Certification	16%

Inland Empire/Desert Region		California	
Qualification	Share	Qualification	Share
Valid Driver's License (CDL Class C)	13%	Valid Driver's License (CDL Class C)	13%
No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Standards	6%	No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Standards	10%
American Red Cross (ARC) Certification	4%	Teaching Certificate	1%

Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

The following community college programs prepare students for employment in the other educational instruction and library occupations occupational group.

- Child Development/Early Care and Education (1305.00)
- Children with Special Needs (1305.20)
- Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant) (0802.00)
- Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant), Bilingual (0802.10)
- Infants and Toddlers (1305.90)
- Preschool Age Children (1305.40)
- Special Education (0809.00)
- The School Age Child (1305.50)

2.2: OTHER EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OCCUPATIONS

Exhibit 2.2.1 displays current and projected employment data for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group from 2024 to 2029. This occupational group comprises four occupations, with over 18,700 jobs in 2024. This occupational group is projected to shed 62 jobs, representing a 0.3% decrease in employment through 2029. This occupational group is projected to have nearly 3,100 job openings available annually. Approximately two-thirds of the other education and early childhood education occupational group's employment is concentrated in the childcare workers occupation.

Exhibit 2.2.1: Current and Projected Employment of the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2024-2029

Occupation Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024-2029 % Change	Average Annual Openings	Median Hourly Earnings
Childcare Workers	12,353	11,878	-4%	2,140	\$17.32
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	4,401	4,723	7%	565	\$20.74
Library Technicians	1,155	1,198	4%	212	\$26.67
Library Assistants, Clerical	832	881	6%	151	\$19.75
Total	18,742	18,680	-0%	3,069	

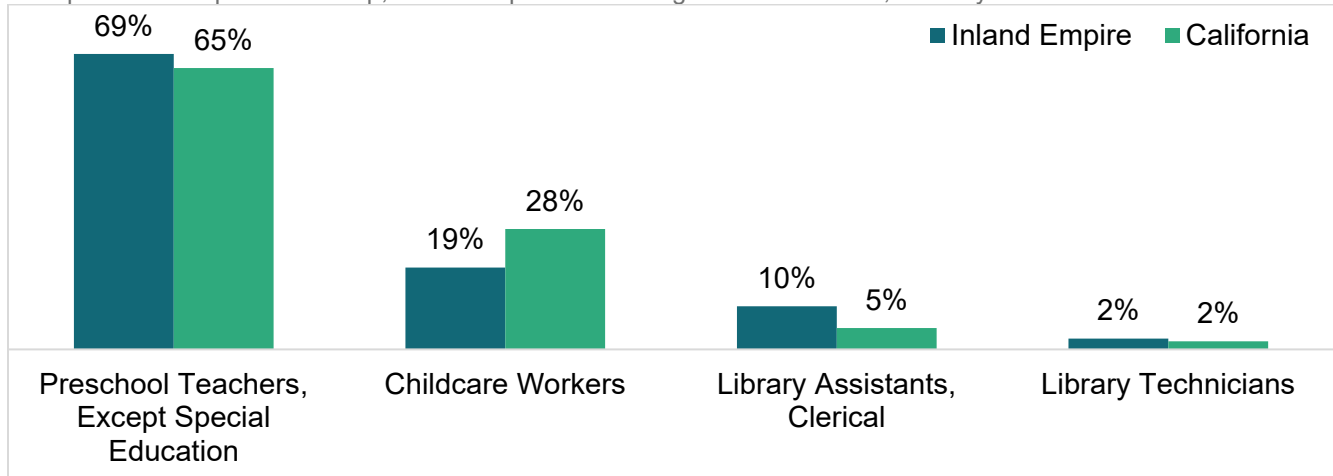
Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Over the last 24 months, from January 2024 to December 2025, referred to as the “most recent period” going forward, 3,287 job ads were posted for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire, compared to 41,614 across California. In the previous period, from January 2019 to December 2023, 11,840 job ads were posted for this occupational group in the Inland Empire and 145,213 in California.

Exhibit 2.2.2 displays the share of job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupational group by occupation in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and California. Approximately two-thirds of job ads were posted for preschool teachers, except for special education.

The scale of these occupational job advertisements may influence the skills most frequently requested by employers for this occupational group.

Exhibit 2.2.2: Share of Advertisements by Occupation for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025

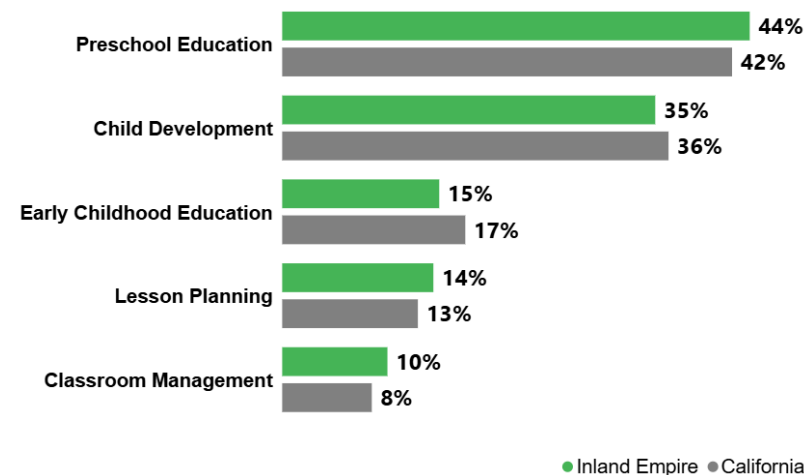


Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Specialized Skills

Exhibit 2.2.3 displays the top specialized skills included in employer job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and their share of job ads in California. The top skills may provide insight into the specialized skills employers find critical to employment.

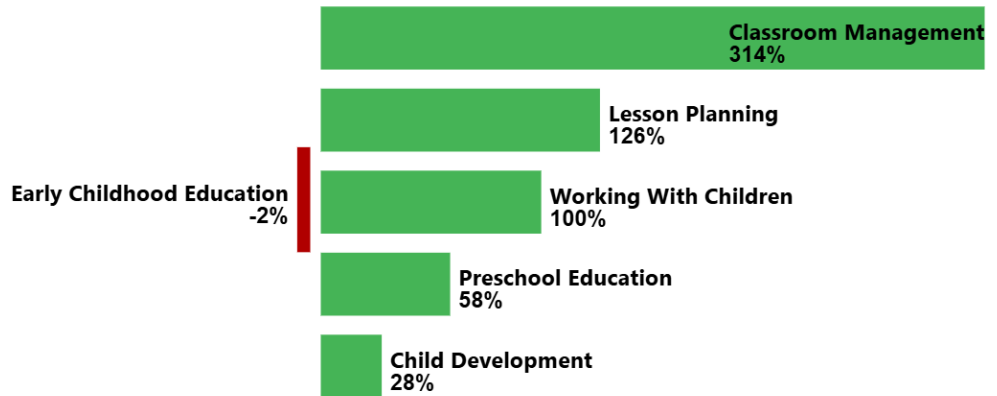
Exhibit 2.2.3: Top Specialized Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.2.4 displays the specialized skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with classroom management skills has increased by 314% compared to the previous period (2019-2023). Employers' desire for candidates with early childhood education skills has decreased by 2% or more between the two periods in the Inland Empire.

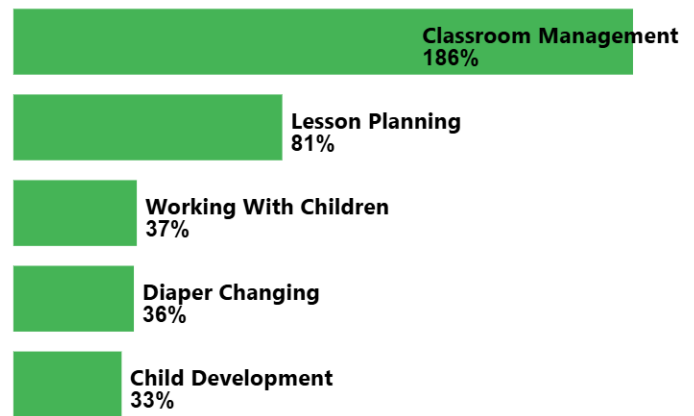
Exhibit 2.2.4: Specialized Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.2.5 displays the specialized skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in California, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with classroom management skills has increased by 186% compared to the previous period (2019-2023). There were no specialized skills that decreased in California over this period.

Exhibit 2.2.5: Specialized Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group in California

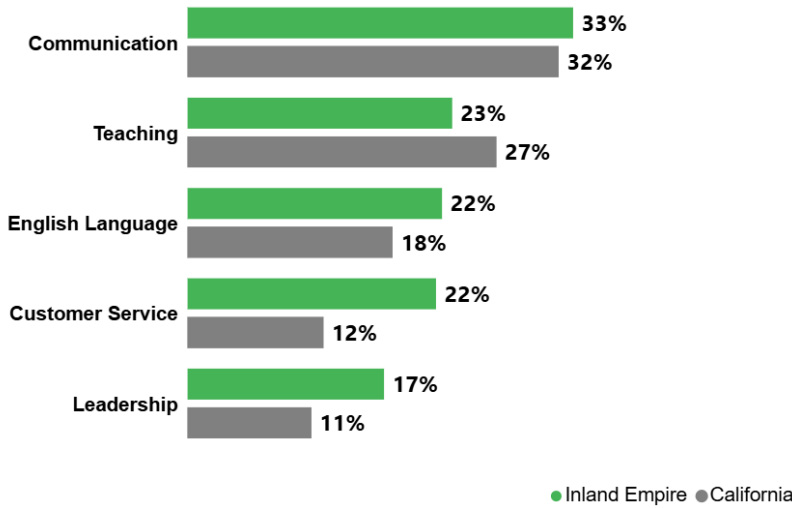


Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Foundational Skills

Exhibit 2.2.6 displays the top foundational skills included in employer job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region and their share of job ads in California. The top skills may provide insight into the foundational skills employers find critical to employment. Communication was the top foundational skill for this occupational group across both regions.

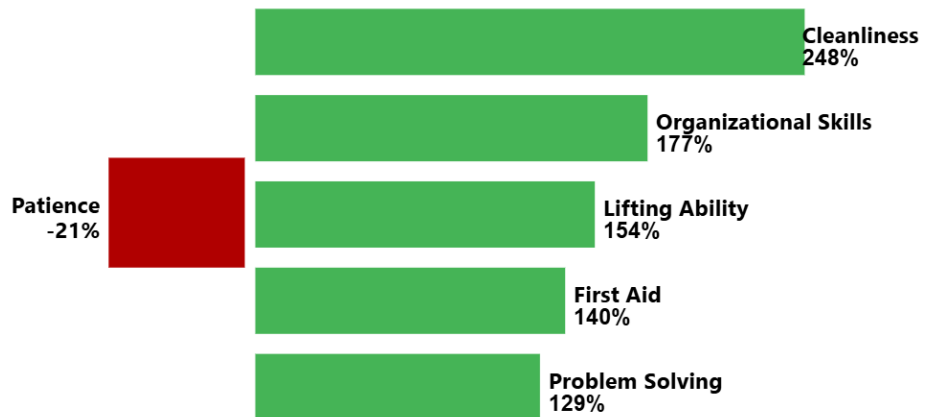
Exhibit 2.2.6: Top Foundational Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.2.7 displays the foundational skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with cleanliness skills has increased by 248% since the previous period (2019-2023). Employers’ desire for candidates with patience skills has decreased by 21% between the two periods in the Inland Empire.

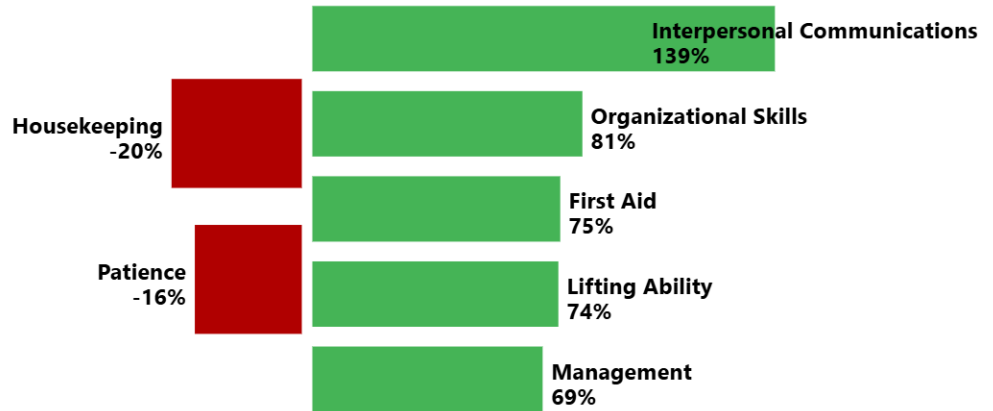
Exhibit 2.2.7: Foundational Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Exhibit 2.2.8 displays the foundational skills that have increased or decreased the most in their share of job advertisements for the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group in California, based on a comparison of the two time periods. Recent employer demand (2024-2025) for candidates with interpersonal skills has increased by 139% compared to the previous period (2019-2023). In California, employers’ demand for candidates with housekeeping skills has decreased by 20% between the two periods.

Exhibit 2.2.8: Foundational Skills that Have Increased or Decreased the Most in Their Share of Job Advertisements for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group in California



Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

Qualifications and Programs

Exhibit 2.2.9 displays the qualifications most frequently included in employer job advertisements for other education and early childhood education occupations. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification was the most frequently requested qualification in employer job advertisements, appearing in between 25% and 28% of job ads.

Exhibit 2.2.9: Top Qualifications Skills from Employer Job Ads for the Other Education and Early Childhood Education Occupations Occupational Group, Inland Empire/Desert Region and California, January 2024 – December 2025

Inland Empire/Desert Region		California	
Qualification	Share	Qualification	Share
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	28%	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	25%
First Aid Certification	24%	First Aid Certification	21%
Valid Driver's License (CDL Class C)	7%	Valid Driver's License (CDL Class C)	9%
Teaching Certificate	1%	Teaching Certificate	1%
Food Handler's Card	1%	Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Certification	1%

Source: Lightcast 2025.4 – Job Posting Analytics

The following community college programs prepare students for employment in the other education and early childhood education occupations occupational group.

- Child and Adolescent Development (1305.10)
- Child Development Administration and Management (1305.80)
- Child Development/Early Care and Education (1305.00)
- Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant), Bilingual (0802.10)
- Infants and Toddlers (1305.90)
- Library Technician (Aide) (1602.00)
- Preschool Age Children (1305.40)
- The School Age Child (1305.50)

SECTION 3: HOW CAN SKILLS INFORMATION BE USED TO GUIDE CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN THE INLAND EMPIRE/DESERT REGION?

To identify which skills are increasing most noticeably in employer demand, we compared their prevalence in job postings across the two time periods analyzed. We then examined how many middle-skill occupational minor groups each skill appeared in. Weighing skills by the number of occupational groups in which they increased provides a clearer indication of which skill shifts are occurring broadly across the sector rather than within isolated occupations. Below is the distribution within each skills tier for skills that are increasing by 10% or more:

- Foundational skills (69.0% IE/D; 61.4% California)
 - More than two-thirds of growing skills in the region are foundational, a higher concentration than statewide. This reflects the increasing importance of human-centered work, particularly in communication, coordination, and problem-solving, as day-to-day responsibilities become more interaction-intensive, requiring workers to manage complex student needs, navigate services, and communicate effectively across diverse populations. Writing, operations coordination, and problem-solving are not just baseline competencies, but core to day-to-day job performance.
- Specialized or technical skills
 - Industry-specific (9.5% IE/D; 13.6% California)
 - These skills reflect operational expertise that supports education-related roles, including classroom management, preschool education, and special education. The relatively smaller share of growth in industry-specific skills suggests that core competencies remain relatively stable, with growth concentrated in their application rather than in entirely new technical requirements.
 - Occupation-specific: (4.8% IE/D; 2.3% California)
 - These are highly technical skills tied to particular roles or specialized tasks, such as student services support and individualized education programs (IEPs). These skills require more advanced training and typically reflect the unique needs of educators. The limited growth across occupational groups indicates that these skills are becoming more concentrated within specific roles, reinforcing specialization rather than broad diffusion across the sector.
 - Cross-Sector: (16.7% IE/D; 22.7% California)
 - These are more specialized/technical than foundational skills but are still found across multiple sectors, such as lesson planning and working with children, individuals with autism spectrum disorder, and individuals with disabilities. This suggests a gradual blending of role expectations, particularly in serving diverse and high-needs populations.

Using the same approach as described above, we present the distribution of skills that declined in prevalence between the two time periods. This approach highlights which skill declines are sector-wide rather than limited to a single occupational group. Below is the distribution within each skills tier for skills that are decreasing by 10% or more:

- Foundational skills (75% IE/D; 100% California)
 - Foundational skills account for the majority of skill decreases in the region and all of the decreases in the state. The skills decreasing in prevalence reflect differences from those growing in prevalence as they may be assumed competencies for education and human development positions, such as patience, clerical work, English language, general mathematics, and grammar.
- Specialized or technical skills
 - Industry-specific (0% IE/D; 0% California)

- These skills are typically indicative of greater depth and require operational expertise. However, as a result of this report’s methodology, no industry-specific skills are declining for the education and human development occupations profiled. The absence of decline reinforces the stability and continued relevance of core technical competencies within the sector, suggesting that foundational instructional practices remain essential and consistently demanded.
- Occupation-specific: (0% IE/D; 0% California)
 - The lack of decline indicates that specialized role functions are not being de-emphasized, but rather maintained as critical components of specific positions within the field.
- Cross Sector: (25% IE/D; 0% California)
 - These skills are not unique to the education and human development field but support work across multiple sectors, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The limited presence of declining cross-sector skills suggests that broadly applicable certifications and competencies remain relevant, even if they are not driving growth in skills.

The distribution of skill demand in the region suggests a shift in how employers define and signal job requirements rather than a fundamental change in the work itself. A large majority of skills showing increased demand are foundational (69.0% IE/D; 61.4% California), indicating that employers are placing greater emphasis on capabilities that support day-to-day effectiveness in complex, service-oriented environments. These include communication, coordination, problem-solving, and writing skills that enable workers to engage with students, families, and systems in more dynamic and individualized ways.

By comparison, growth in more specialized skill categories is limited and targeted. Industry- and occupation-specific skills account for only a relatively small share of the increasing demand, suggesting that core instructional practices and role-specific functions are not rapidly evolving. Instead, these competencies appear to be stable expectations, with demand shifts occurring in how they are carried out rather than in the introduction of new technical requirements. Cross-sector skills continue to reflect overlap with related fields, reinforcing the importance of working across systems and supporting diverse and high-needs populations.

At the same time, many foundational skills appear among those declining in postings, particularly at the state level. This pattern likely reflects a normalization effect, in which widely expected competencies, such as basic communication, clerical skills, and general academic skills, are no longer explicitly listed because they are assumed. In contrast, the absence of decline among industry- and occupation-specific skills points to their continued importance as core qualifications that employers consistently require.

Overall, these trends indicate that changes in skill demand are less about the emergence of new competencies and more about shifts in emphasis and visibility. Employers are increasingly highlighting the skills that differentiate candidates in practice, particularly those tied to navigating complex human-centered environments, while relying on baseline expectations for more routine or universally understood competencies.

This shift underscores the importance of preparing students with strong foundational and cross-functional competencies that support increasingly dynamic, interdisciplinary, and student-centered models of education and human development. For K-12 and community colleges, these findings highlight several opportunities to strengthen program design and student outcomes:

Curriculum alignment with growing skills.

Growing skills indicate a stronger emphasis on foundational competencies. Colleges can review program and course learning outcomes to ensure that in-demand skills, such as interpersonal

communication, organizational ability, and problem-solving, are explicitly and consistently taught. Additionally, colleges should consider how to integrate rising cross-sector skills, including working with children, individuals with autism spectrum disorder, and individuals with disabilities, into the curriculum. K-12 education, child development, and family services pathways can support this effort by providing early exposure to these populations while giving students opportunities to practice and apply foundational skills.

Aligning curriculum and pathways to key certifications and credentials.

Qualification data across education and human development occupations point to a consistent set of baseline credentials required in both regional and statewide labor markets, with many serving as expected entry-level qualifications rather than role-specific differentiators. The distribution suggests that employers prioritize general safety, compliance, and job-readiness credentials alongside regulatory standards. The recurrence of these requirements across occupational groups indicates an opportunity for programs to intentionally align curriculum and fieldwork experiences with commonly requested credentials so that students graduate workforce-ready. Embedding dual enrollment opportunities within secondary and postsecondary pathways can further accelerate readiness and support smoother transitions into employment and continued education.

K-12 Pathway Alignment.

The qualification and program lists can help K-12 partners align foundational education, child development, and family services pathway courses with postsecondary preparation. High schools offering Child Development, Education, Family and Human Services, and Consumer Services pathways can integrate early exposure to skills such as communication, classroom management, and child development, while preparing students for employment opportunities.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGIES

Definitions

Labor market information was pulled from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm that specializes in providing insights for workforce development, economic planning, and education. Lightcast compiles its regional and occupational datasets from a variety of federal and state sources. Among these are the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which offers detailed industry employment and wage data, and other critical sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Quarterly Workforce Indicators, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics and Current Population Survey, and data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.⁷ These combined resources provide comprehensive insights into employment trends, wage patterns, and quality job workforce characteristics. The baseline year of 2024 was used to offer the maximum comparability with the student data available, and the projected data was through 2029.

Annual job openings include the projected growth (new jobs) and replacement needs of an occupation annually. This figure is often used to assess the expected employer demand for an occupation, providing a number of job openings that will require new workers to fill.

Educational attainment is the highest level of education attained by workers aged 25 years or older. This information may illuminate mismatches between resident skills and employment needs.

An **occupation** is a set of activities or tasks employees are paid to perform. Employees that perform essentially the same tasks are in the same occupation, whether or not they work in the same industry. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries; other occupations are found in many industries. For example, jobs for registered nurses are concentrated in the healthcare industry sector, but educational industries may also employ these jobs.

SOC code: The Standard Occupational Classification system is a federally defined system used to classify workers into occupational categories that are grouped together according to job duties.⁸

TOP code: The Taxonomy of Programs is a system of codes used by the State of California to compare differently named academic programs with similar outcomes across community colleges.⁹ Each course offered by California Community Colleges is assigned to a TOP code.

Methodologies and Sources

The data sources used in this study include data from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm that specializes in providing insights for workforce development, economic planning, and education. Lightcast compiles its regional and occupational datasets from a variety of federal and state sources. Among these are the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which offers detailed industry employment and wage data, and other critical sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Quarterly Workforce Indicators, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics and Current Population Survey, and data from the

⁷ Lightcast (2025). Version 2025.1. Retrieved from <https://lightcast.io/> in April 2025.

⁸ "Standard Occupational Classification," Bureau of Labor Statistics, bls.gov/soc/

⁹ "Taxonomy of Programs," California Community Colleges, <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/About-Us/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Academic-Affairs/What-we-do/Curriculum-and-Instruction-Unit/Files/TOPmanual6200909corrected12513>

Bureau of Economic Analysis.¹⁰ These combined resources provide comprehensive insights into employment trends, wage patterns, and industry-specific workforce characteristics across the Inland Empire/Desert regions.

The Lightcast taxonomy organizes skills into a tiered structure that groups related competencies according to the type of work or task they support. Within this framework, skills are categorized as common, specialized, or software skills. To determine which skills should be included in our analysis, we examined how frequently individual skills appear in job postings. We calculated the median share of job ads in which common skills appear across all occupations, providing a baseline measure of typical skill prevalence. Our analysis found that common skills typically appeared in roughly five percent of job postings across occupations. We used this median value as the threshold for determining which skills were included in our research.

The skills analysis compares skills posted over a two-year period (January 2024 – December 2025) to a historical five-year period (January 2019 – December 2023) to identify skills that are growing and shrinking in terms of their prevalence in job ads. This report intentionally uses a two-year period for the current analysis to ensure a sufficient volume of recent job advertisements and avoid the instability that can come with relying on a single year of data. The five-year historical period provides a stable benchmark of longer-term industry skill patterns and reduces the influence of short-term fluctuations. This analysis also illuminates the skills with the highest share of job ads in the most recent period, addressing employer demand for skills that are persistently in demand across time.

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system aggregates occupation information by four levels: major group, minor group, broad occupation, and detailed occupation.¹¹ This report relies on the minor occupational groupings of detailed occupations for the skills analysis, as they provide greater detail than the broader major occupational groups and ensure the feasibility and readability of this study, which would be lacking in a detailed occupation-based skills analysis.

¹⁰ Lightcast (2025). Version 2025.3. Retrieved from <https://lightcast.io/> in July 2025.

¹¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Standard Occupational Classification and Coding Structure. 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/soc_2018_class_and_coding_structure.pdf