

## CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES BILL ANALYSIS

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**BILL NUMBER:** SB 14                      **VERSION:** AMENDED MARCH 18, 2021

**AUTHOR:** PORTANTINO                      **SPONSOR:** CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF  
COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
AGENCIES

**RECOMMENDED POSITION:** NONE

**SUBJECT:** PUPIL HEALTH: SCHOOL EMPLOYEE AND PUPIL TRAINING: EXCUSED  
ABSENCES: YOUTH MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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### **Summary:**

This bill adds an absence for the benefit of a pupil’s mental or behavioral health to the list of school absences that must be excused. It also requires the Department of Education to identify and provide an evidence-based youth behavioral health training program for specified school employees and for pupils in grades 10-12.

### **Existing Law:**

1. Provides a list of reasons for which a pupil shall be excused from school, which include, among others, the following (Education Code (EC) §48205(a)):
  - a) Due to illness.
  - b) Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
  - c) For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
  - d) For the purpose of attending the funeral services, as specified.
  - e) For the purpose of spending time with an immediate family member who is an active duty member of the military, as specified.
2. States that the governing board of a school district shall give diligent care to the health and physical development of pupils and may employ properly certified persons for the work. (EC §49400):

### **This Bill:**

1. Adds an absence for the benefit of a pupil's mental or behavioral health to the list of school absences that must be excused. (EC §48205)
2. Requires the Department of Education to identify an evidence-based training program in youth behavioral health for a local educational agency to use to train classified and certificated school employees who have direct contact with pupils. However, this shall be implemented only if an appropriation is made in the annual Budget Act or another statute. (EC §49428.1(b) and (f))
3. Requires the Department of Education to make sure the training program meets certain specified requirements, including being peer-reviewed and evidence-based, provides instruction on recognizing the signs and symptoms of youth behavioral health disorders, and provides instruction on making referrals, maintaining privacy and confidentiality, and safe de-escalation of crisis situations. (EC §49428.1(c))
4. Requires a local educational agency to certify by January 1, 2023 that at least 50% of its combined certificated and classified employees at each school who have direct pupil contact, or at least 2 certificated and classified employees, whichever is greater, have received the training. (EC §49428.1(e))
5. Requires the Department of Education to identify an evidence-based youth behavioral health training program with a curriculum tailored for pupils in grades 10 to 12, for use by local educational agencies. However, this shall be implemented only if an appropriation is made in the annual Budget Act or another statute. (EC §49428.2(b) and (d))
6. Requires the identified training to meet certain specified requirements, including being peer-reviewed and evidence-based, provides developmentally appropriate instruction and skill building, provides instruction on reducing stigma, available resources, and accessing treatment, provides instruction on strategies to develop healthy coping techniques and peer support, and seeks to prevent suicide and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. (EC §49428.2(b))
7. Requires a local educational agency to report the number of pupils who have voluntarily completed the training program by January 1, 2023. (EC §49429.2(c))

### **Comment:**

- 1) **Author's Intent.** According to the author, "California's youth are suffering. Thirty percent of high school students report experiencing depression symptoms - feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row, so much so that they stopped doing some usual activities. Eighteen percent of high school students have seriously considered attempting suicide, and 8% attempted suicide one or more times. Suicide is the second cause of death for youth 15 to 24 years old and the third leading cause of death among youth aged 10 to 14. In addition, marginalized populations, particularly LGBTQ youth, are at even greater risk."

## 2) Support and Opposition

### Support:

- California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (Sponsor)
- Born This Way Foundation (Co-sponsor)
- California Association of Student Councils (Co-sponsor)
- County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (Co-sponsor)
- Disability Rights California (Co-sponsor)
- GENup (Co-sponsor)
- NextGen California (Co-sponsor)
- Asian Americans for Community Involvement
- Bay Area South Asian Network of Therapists
- Bay Area Student Activists
- California Hospitals Association
- California Student Board Member Association
- City of Santa Monica
- El Centro De Amistad
- Five Acres - the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society of Los Angeles County
- Fresno Barrios Unidos
- Generation Up
- Gwendolyn's Light
- Hamburger Home Dba Aviva Family and Children's Services
- Hillside
- Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
- National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
- Pacific Clinics
- Pathpoint
- Psychiatric Physicians Alliance of California
- Providence St. Joseph Health
- S.u.p.e.r. Peer Counseling Program, Ramona High School
- San Diego Unified School District
- San Francisco Unified School District
- Tessie Cleveland Community Services Corporation
- The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
- United Parents

### Opposition:

- None at this time.

## 3) History

### 2021

04/05/21 April 5 hearing: Placed on APPR suspense file.

03/23/21 Set for hearing April 5.

03/18/21 Read second time and amended. Re-referred to Com. on APPR.

03/17/21 From committee: Do pass as amended and re-refer to Com. on APPR.  
(Ayes 7. Noes 0.) (March 10).  
03/03/21 From committee with author's amendments. Read second time and  
amended. Re-referred to Com. on ED.  
02/23/21 Set for hearing March 10.  
01/28/21 Referred to Com. on ED.  
12/08/20 From printer. May be acted upon on or after January 7.  
12/07/20 Introduced. Read first time. To Com. on RLS. for assignment. To print.

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 18, 2021

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 3, 2021

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 14**

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**Introduced by Senator Portantino** (Principal  
coauthor: Assembly Member Low) (**Coauthors:**  
**Senators Pan, Rubio, and Umberg**)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Cunningham, Lee, and Quirk-Silva)

December 7, 2020

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An act to amend Section 48205 of, and to add Sections 49428.1 and 49428.2 to, the Education Code, relating to pupil health.

**legislative counsel's digest**

SB 14, as amended, Portantino. Pupil health: school employee and pupil training: excused absences: youth *mental and* behavioral health.

(1) Existing law, notwithstanding the requirement that each person between 6 and 18 years of age who is not otherwise exempted is subject to compulsory full-time education, requires a pupil to be excused from school for specified types of absences, including, among others, if the absence was due to the pupil's illness.

This bill would ~~include as another type of required excused absence~~ *include, within the meaning of an absence due to a pupil's illness, an absence that is for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health of the pupil.* ~~health~~ *The bill would require the State Board of Education to update its illness verification regulations, as necessary, to account for including a pupil's absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health within the scope of this provision.* To the extent this bill would impose additional duties on local educational entities, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) Existing law requires the governing board of a school district to give diligent care to the health and physical development of pupils and authorizes the governing board of a school district to employ properly certified persons for the work. Existing law requires a school of a school district or county office of education and a charter school to notify pupils and parents or guardians of pupils no less than twice during the school year on how to initiate access to available pupil mental health services on campus or in the community, or both, as provided.

This bill, contingent on an appropriation made for these purposes, would require the State Department of Education to identify an evidence-based training program for a local educational agency to use to train classified and certificated school employees having direct contact with pupils on youth behavioral health, as specified. The bill would define a local educational agency for purposes of these provisions to mean a county office of education, school district, state special school, or charter school that serves pupils in any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive. The bill would require a local educational agency, on or before January 1, 2023, to certify to the department that at least 50% of its combined certificated and classified employees having direct contact with pupils at each schoolsite, or at least 2 classified and at least 2 certificated employees having direct contact with pupils at each schoolsite, whichever is greater, have received the youth behavioral health training identified by the department. By requiring local educational agencies to provide training, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

This bill, contingent on an appropriation made for these purposes, would require the department to identify an evidence-based behavioral health training program with a curriculum tailored for pupils in grades 10 to 12, inclusive, for use by a local educational agency, as defined, that meets certain requirements. The bill would require a local educational agency, on or before January 1, 2023, to report to the department the number of pupils who have voluntarily completed the behavioral health training program. By requiring local educational agencies to prepare this report, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state,

reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 48205 of the Education Code is amended  
2 to read:

3 48205. (a) Notwithstanding Section 48200, a pupil shall be  
4 excused from school when the absence is:

5 (1) Due to the pupil's ~~illness~~ *illness, including an absence for*  
6 *the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health. The state*  
7 *board shall update its illness verification regulations, as necessary,*  
8 *to account for including a pupil's absence for the benefit of the*  
9 *pupil's mental or behavioral health within the scope of this*  
10 *paragraph.*

11 (2) Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city  
12 health officer.

13 (3) For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometrical, or  
14 chiropractic services rendered.

15 (4) For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member  
16 of the pupil's immediate family, so long as the absence is not more  
17 than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more  
18 than three days if the service is conducted outside California.

19 (5) For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by  
20 law.

21 (6) Due to the illness or medical appointment during school  
22 hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent, including  
23 absences to care for a sick child for which the school shall not  
24 require a note from a doctor.

25 (7) For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited  
26 to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service,  
27 observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil's religion,  
28 attendance at religious retreats, attendance at an employment  
29 conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the  
30 legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization  
31 when the pupil's absence is requested in writing by the parent or  
32 guardian and approved by the principal or a designated

1 representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the  
2 governing board of the school district.

3 (8) For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board  
4 for an election pursuant to Section 12302 of the Elections Code.

5 (9) For the purpose of spending time with a member of the  
6 pupil’s immediate family who is an active duty member of the  
7 uniformed services, as defined in Section 49701, and has been  
8 called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned  
9 from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position.  
10 Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for  
11 a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the  
12 superintendent of the school district.

13 (10) For the purpose of attending the pupil’s naturalization  
14 ceremony to become a United States citizen.

15 ~~(11) For the benefit of the behavioral health, as that phrase is~~  
16 ~~described in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) of Section 11325.2~~  
17 ~~of the Welfare and Institutions Code, of the pupil.~~

18 ~~(12)~~

19 (11) Authorized at the discretion of a school administrator, as  
20 described in subdivision (c) of Section 48260.

21 (b) A pupil absent from school under this section shall be  
22 allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the  
23 absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory  
24 completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full  
25 credit therefor. The teacher of the class from which a pupil is absent  
26 shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably  
27 equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and  
28 assignments that the pupil missed during the absence.

29 (c) For purposes of this section, attendance at religious retreats  
30 shall not exceed four hours per semester.

31 (d) Absences pursuant to this section are deemed to be absences  
32 in computing average daily attendance and shall not generate state  
33 apportionment payments.

34 (e) “Immediate family,” as used in this section, means the parent  
35 or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative  
36 living in the household of the pupil.

37 SEC. 2. Section 49428.1 is added to the Education Code, to  
38 read:

39 49428.1. (a) For purposes of this section, the following  
40 definitions apply:



1 (1) “Local educational agency” means a county office of  
2 education, school district, state special school, or charter school  
3 that serves pupils in any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive.

4 (2) “Youth behavioral health disorders” means pupil mental  
5 health and substance use disorders.

6 (3) “Youth behavioral health training” means training addressing  
7 the signs and symptoms of a pupil mental health or substance use  
8 disorder.

9 (b) The department shall identify an evidence-based training  
10 program for a local educational agency to use to train classified  
11 and certificated school employees having direct contact with pupils  
12 in youth behavioral health.

13 (c) In identifying an evidence-based training program pursuant  
14 to subdivision (b), the department shall ensure that the training  
15 program meets all of the following requirements:

16 (1) Is a peer-reviewed evidence-based training program.

17 (2) Provides instruction on recognizing the signs and symptoms  
18 of youth behavioral health disorders, including common psychiatric  
19 conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major clinical  
20 depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and common  
21 substance use disorders such as opioid and alcohol abuse.

22 (3) Provides instruction on how school staff can best provide  
23 referrals to youth behavioral health services or other support to  
24 individuals in the early stages of developing a youth behavioral  
25 health disorder.

26 (4) Provides instruction on how to maintain pupil privacy and  
27 confidentiality in a manner consistent with federal and state privacy  
28 laws.

29 (5) Provides instruction on the safe deescalation of crisis  
30 situations involving individuals with a youth behavioral health  
31 disorder.

32 (6) Is capable of assessing trainee knowledge before and after  
33 training is provided in order to measure training outcomes.

34 (7) Is administered by a nationally recognized nonprofit training  
35 authority in youth behavioral health disorders.

36 (8) (A) Includes in-person and virtual training with certified  
37 instructors who can recommend resources available in the  
38 community for individuals with a youth behavioral health disorder.

39 (B) For purposes of this paragraph, “certified instructors” means  
40 individuals who obtain or have obtained a certification to provide

1 the selected youth behavioral health training by a nationally  
2 recognized authority in behavioral health training programs.

3 (d) (1) A local educational agency shall provide the youth  
4 behavioral health training identified pursuant to subdivision (b) to  
5 certificated and classified employees during regularly scheduled  
6 work hours.

7 (2) If a certificated or classified employee receives the youth  
8 behavioral health training in a manner other than through an  
9 in-service training program provided by the local educational  
10 agency, the employee may present a certificate of successful  
11 completion of the training to the local educational agency for  
12 purposes of satisfying the requirements of subdivision (e).

13 (3) Training in youth behavioral health shall not be a condition  
14 of employment or hiring for classified or certificated employees.

15 (e) On or before January 1, 2023, a local educational agency  
16 shall certify to the department that at least 50 percent of its  
17 combined certificated and classified employees having direct  
18 contact with pupils at each school, or at least two classified and at  
19 least two certificated employees having direct contact with pupils  
20 at each school, whichever is greater, have received the youth  
21 behavioral health training identified pursuant to subdivision (b).

22 (f) This section shall be implemented only to the extent an  
23 appropriation is made in the annual Budget Act or another statute  
24 for these purposes.

25 SEC. 3. Section 49428.2 is added to the Education Code, to  
26 read:

27 49428.2. (a) For purposes of this section, the following  
28 definitions apply:

29 (1) “Local educational agency” means a county office of  
30 education, school district, state special school, or charter school  
31 that serves pupils in any of grades 10 to 12, inclusive.

32 (2) “Youth behavioral health disorders” means pupil mental  
33 health and substance use disorders.

34 (3) “Youth behavioral health training” means training addressing  
35 the signs and symptoms of a pupil mental health or substance use  
36 disorder.

37 (b) The department shall identify an evidence-based youth  
38 behavioral health training program with a curriculum tailored for  
39 pupils in grades 10 to 12, inclusive, for use by local educational  
40 agencies, that meets all of the following requirements:

- 1 (1) Is peer-reviewed and evidence-based.
- 2 (2) Provides developmentally appropriate instruction and skill  
3 building on identifying the signs and symptoms of, preventing,  
4 and increasing awareness of and assistance for, youth behavioral  
5 health disorders.
- 6 (3) Provides instruction on how to reduce the stigma around  
7 youth behavioral health disorders and available resources, including  
8 local school and community resources, and the process for  
9 accessing treatment.
- 10 (4) Provides instruction on strategies to develop healthy coping  
11 techniques and to support a peer, friend, or family member with  
12 a youth behavioral health disorder.
- 13 (5) Seeks to prevent suicide and the abuse of and addiction to  
14 alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs.
- 15 (6) Adheres to a curriculum developed by a nationally  
16 recognized nonprofit training authority in youth behavioral health  
17 disorders that is structured to train all pupils in grades 10 to 12,  
18 inclusive, ensuring every pupil in each grade level is equipped  
19 with the essential skills needed to seek help for themselves and to  
20 direct others seeking help to the appropriate avenues for support.
- 21 (7) Includes training with certified instructors who can  
22 recommend resources available in the community for individuals  
23 with a youth behavioral health disorder.
- 24 (c) On or before January 1, 2023, a local educational agency  
25 shall report to the department the number of pupils who have  
26 voluntarily completed the youth behavioral health training program.
- 27 (d) This section shall be implemented only to the extent an  
28 appropriation is made in the annual Budget Act or another statute  
29 for these purposes.
- 30 SEC. 4. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
31 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
32 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
33 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
34 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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