

Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education



2022

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P R E F A C E

The first annual Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education took place in 2000 and was established as an avenue for the California Legislature to receive feedback from the main stakeholders of the education system: students. Students at SABLE have served as representatives for the needs and perspectives of California students for the last twenty-two years.

The 2022 Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education (SABLE) took place virtually from January 21st to January 23rd. The delegation was composed of 45 high school students from all grades and representing all regions of California. At SABLE, delegates discussed the issues in California public education that they, as students, identified as most pertinent. Delegates then researched and developed bill proposals to best address these issues.

Topics addressed this year and their respective proposals include:

- Student Voice
- Mental Health
- Environmental Sustainability
- Post-High School Preparedness
- School Safety

The proposals outlined in this packet are the direct result of the work of students. Over only three days, students brainstormed, deliberated, and conducted thorough research to create effective and informed proposals that will make tangible change in their communities and statewide. We commend the delegation and their extraordinary initiative.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education was transitioned to an online platform for the first time in conference history, utilizing the same technology that millions of students across our state use to attend school every day. The pandemic has created new challenges and exacerbated existing inequities throughout the educational system, with students being the primary witnesses. The delegation's proposals will be instrumental in returning to in-person instruction and help create a better learning experience for students statewide.

Student Voice

Speaker: Mary Kim (AD-65, SD-29), Troy High School, Fullerton

Writer: Sarah Mian (AD- 38, SD-27), Chatsworth Charter High School, Los Angeles

Group Members: Thomas Nguyen (AD-68, SD-37), Portola High School, Irvine; Selina Song (AD-25, SD-10), Irvington High School, Fremont; Sissi Zhang (AD-25, SD-10), Irvington High School, Fremont; Linda Nong (AD-68, SD-37), Portola High School, Irvine; Christopher Pak (AD-16, SD-7), Granada High School, Livermore; Arlene Ramos (AD-32, SD-14) McKee Middle School, Bakersfield

Facilitator: Esther Kim (AD-55, SD-29), Chino Hills High School, Chino Hills

Research: Adalia Luo (AD-44, SD-27), Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park

SUMMARY

Students lack foundational knowledge of the school systems as well as transparency about current educational events preventing them from meaningfully engaging in educational decisions. This proposal would require school districts to distribute newsletters on the education system and the district board meetings to all education partners, targeting students specifically, through e-communication or hard-copy documents.

BACKGROUND

An increased effort to distribute accurate information to students will raise awareness and knowledge of the education system and inform them of opportunities that allow students to participate in leadership roles and voice their opinions. Active student voice is not only the catalyst for student-oriented, lasting systemic change, but also one of the most effective motivators for academic, social, and extracurricular engagement.

Research has found that in order for student voice opportunities to take root across a school district, the opportunities require the continued

support of school and district leadership. Students are able to deeply engage in education decision-making when it is provided to them by school and district leaders making it essential for the school and district leaders to continuously support students by providing student voice opportunities.

There have been efforts made by the district to publicly display information to school communities and e-communication is more prominent with the access to technological devices and internet hotspots to families from some school districts, but it is necessary to be taken further and directly advertised to the education partners that are affected the most with the focus on students, families, and their educators.

Additionally, rampant misinformation exists on topics such as the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating existing issues in education. For instance, the Los Angeles County Office of Education convened focus groups with parents in five districts and discovered there were misunderstandings about the dangers of COVID-19; especially regarding vaccines. Misinformation can be detrimental in groups such as educators, school boards, and families. The misinformation on topics such as COVID-19 stems from the lack of foundation knowledge or current educational events relating to the educational system. Without the accurate knowledge on these key parts of school districts, education partners are left with misinformation, causing major conflicts.

PROBLEM

Students lack access to foundational information about their education system and current events within their school districts. Without an understanding of the education matters that affect them, they are unable to express their student voice to the fullest and most equitable extent. Though some resources exist, such as the Los Angeles Unified School District's Superintendent Student Advisory Council and the position of Student Board Member in

districts, students are not as engaged because they lack foundational knowledge to understand the purpose of what the district provides them with. The resources are not accessibly advertised and are targeted to adults rather than the students themselves.

For instance, in Portola High School in Orange County, most students surveyed were unaware of the position of the district student board member. Even though one existed, students did not know how to communicate with them or the board, detracting from the purpose of the position and providing this disconnect between students and the district. Due to students being widely regarded as the "recipient" of education instead of an active influence in their learning outcomes, there is a lack of proactive communication between students and the board. This results in an absence in their foundational knowledge about the education system, hindering the ability to participate in educational decisions and make meaningful contributions to the district as well as reducing student motivation in the classroom. The lack of knowledge about the education system provided to students in California school districts and the need to uplift disengaged students caused student empowerment to have an inequitable and disproportionate take.

SOLUTION

All California public school districts are required to distribute bi-monthly digital or printed newsletters to students and parents consisting of three sections:

1. In section one, the district is required to include a summary of the discussion that occurred during the board meeting provided by the notes taken by the board clerk then given to the communication department, including background information on nuanced topics communicated in layman's terms to promote in-depth understanding and transparency for students.
2. In section two, include how to provide public comments.

3. In section three include links to the previous and next board meeting's agenda should be included.
4. In section four, include student involvement opportunities such as serving on district committees should be included as well.

This newsletter will be sent bi-monthly to all education partners (students, parents, and educators) through existing school email/physical mailing networks.

By giving families the necessary foundational knowledge on the education system, then they will be able to understand the current and accurate information regarding the educational decision-making of their governing board. This information will help students use their voice which will positively impact school sites through student lead change. Access to accurate information can also stop the spread of misinformation which will resolve many misconceptions so that they do not result in unnecessary harm to the community.

The newsletter opens the opportunity for students to voice their opinions, whether it be at district committee meetings, board meetings, or elsewhere in the community since they have the information necessary to actively participate. The information is easily accessible, clearly explains more complex topics, and conveys where they can serve to have their voice heard.

PRECEDENT

Assembly Bill 1614 requires the Superintendent of a school district to display their LCAP and LCFF publicly on the department's internet website to ensure transparency. This newsletter will take this measure one step forward, explaining the fiscal apportionments to the community and making this knowledge accessible both through language and availability.

Assembly Bill 399 requires that all board meeting agendas are posted publicly, giving notice for meetings and providing an opportunity for members of the public to address the legislative body directly pursuant to Section 54954.3. This proposal will bring awareness to

this obscure resource and actively encourage constituents to be more involved.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Existing positions within school districts—the board clerk and the districts’ communication departments—will be directed to collaborate to release these newsletters. Besides the possible printing costs of hard copies, no significant fees should be incurred.

Mental Health

- Speaker:** Madhuhaas Gottimukkala (AD-41, SD-23), Los Osos High School, Rancho Cucamonga
- Writer:** Ben Chen (AD-17, SD-11), Lowell High School, San Francisco, Sydney Dang (AD-60, SD-31), Santiago High School, Riverside
- Group** Yashelyn Hernandez (AD-53, SD-24), Alliance Dr. Olga Mohan High School, Los Angeles, Randy Xu (AD-44, SD-27), Westlake High School, Thousand Oaks, Nimi Patel (AD-68, SD-37), Arnold O. Beckman High School, Irvine Michael Tashman (AD-68, SD-37), Portola High School, Irvine
- Members:**
- Facilitator:** Ellie Lian (AD-68, SD-37), Portola High School, Irvine
- Research:** Karina Pan (SD-22), Temple City High School, Temple City

SUMMARY

In light of the pressing mental health service deficits brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Student Advisory Board on Legislation and Education strongly urges that the Senate and Assembly Committees on Education mandate all California public school districts to establish a Wellness Advisory Group if a petition reaches at least 500 high school student signatures or if the said petition obtains the signatures of 10% of the high school district student body.

BACKGROUND

The Student Advisory Board on Legislation and Education has identified that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had detrimental effects on the mental health of students. More than 2 in 5 US residents report struggling with mental or behavioral health issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including anxiety, depression, increased substance use, and suicidal thoughts. According to a CALPADS survey conducted in April of 2020, 32% of students expressed a newfound need for mental health

resources after the pandemic.

PROBLEM

Schools do not properly promote mental health resources and initiatives that can support students, and this lack of accessibility leaves students feeling as if they have no outlet to share their mental health needs and concerns. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 1 out of every 5 youth between the ages 13-18 had experienced some form of a severe mental disorder. The stigma attached to mental health and mental illnesses is one of the most prevalent factors that keep individuals from seeking help.

The lack of mental health professionals in schools also contributes to the unfortunate pattern of students not seeking help. There are an estimated 690 students per counselor in California; however, according to the American School Counselor Association, the ideal ratio would be 250 students per counselor to ensure that each student receives adequate attention to their personal needs. This large discrepancy between the desired ratio and the actual ratio proves that there is a lack of availability of resources for students.

Not only are there poor restrictions regarding the aid for students handling their mental health, the consequences of not addressing these issues also propose a problem. When analyzing the factors of youth suicides, Assembly Bill 2246 suggests that nearly 90% of the victims of youth suicides were associated with mental issues or substance abuse. Additionally, as of 2016, 61% of school shooters have exhibited feelings of depression, and 78% of shooters have reported suicidal ideation or attempts.

Though a student's mental health greatly contributes to their daily performance, the lack of acknowledgment about it within their school environment hinders the ability of students to express their needs and concerns regarding their mental health.

SOLUTION

The delegation of The Student Advisory Board on Legislation and Education proposes for each school district to establish a Wellness Advisory Group to address student mental health concerns upon demand from a student petition that reaches (A) a minimum of 500 signatures from pupils regularly enrolled in the school district high school(s), or (B) a minimum of 10 percent of the number of pupil signatures regularly enrolled in high school(s) of that district. Additionally, petition organizers must have a confirmed adult facilitator whose responsibility would be to oversee the Wellness Advisory Group. Through peer-to-peer meetings, students will have an opportunity to share mental health concerns and thoughts in a safe sanctuary. Based on the findings, the general observations will be compiled into a report of suggestive measures for the school district to implement. Further details regarding the facilitation and implementation of the advisory are to be decided by the school district depending on its specific mental health-related needs.

Student advisory groups will provide a more inclusive and supportive environment for students to share their mental health concerns with their peers and the school district. These groups will serve to destigmatize mental health throughout the school district while also initiating change that will involve both students and staff. Upon receiving the concerns from the pupils, the school district will take the necessary measures they deem fit to approach the mental health concerns of their students.

PRECEDENT

- Proposition 63 (2004):
 - This provides community-based mental health services to California residents. The MHSA provides the opportunity for education and mental health fields to collaborate and assist California's youth and students in achieving their educational and personal goals. It mandates that several entities such as the California State Department of

Mental Health and the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission oversee the counties underneath Proposition 63. AB 1162, a bill that gives the commission access to data, information, policies, procedures, and practices held or maintained by state and local agencies to develop these strategies, was created in tandem.

- Assembly Bill 309 (2021)
 - This requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop model mental health referral protocols for voluntary use by local educational agencies (LEAs) and to post the protocols on its website.
- Assembly Bill 8 (2019)
 - Existing law requires a school of a school district or county office of education and a charter school to notify pupils and 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.
- Senate Bill 224 (2021)
 - This requires LEAs and charter schools that currently offer one or more courses in health education to middle or high school students to include mental health content in those courses. It also requires the California Department of Education to develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California public schools on or before Jan. 1, 2024.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

This proposal will not incur any financial costs from the State Budget. Furthermore, there are minimal to no costs attributed to creating a volunteer-based council with minimal staff costs at the local level.

Environmental Sustainability

Speaker: Irene Kim (AD-68, SD-37), Mission Viejo High School, Mission Viejo

Writer: Nicholas Harvey (AD-16, SD-7), California High School, San Ramon

Group

Members: Emerson Lyons (AD-1, SD-1), University Preparatory School, Redding; Sarah Joo (AD-13, SD-5), Lincoln High School, Stockton; Eliana Morris (AD-50, SD-27), Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park; Aryan Dahiya (AD-74, SD-37), Portola High School, Irvine; Emma Lee (AD-65, SD-29), Fullerton Union High School, Fullerton; Kaitlyn Cui (AD-68, SD-37), Northwood High School, Irvine; Audrey Wang (AD-60, SD-31), Santiago High School, Corona

Facilitator: Michelle Alas, Brown University

Research: Kaylin Chung (AD-68, SD-37), Beckman High School, Irvine

SUMMARY

Schools often do not take environmental action because of the belief that environmental issues are not an urgent problem. Each year, California schools generate several hundred thousand tons of waste, much of which is not sorted into appropriate waste bins. This proposal mandates accessibility to composting and recycling bins on public school campuses, including charter schools, accompanied by educational signs that clarify the correct usage of these bins. Additionally, public schools, including charter schools, would provide food share tables in cafeterias for students to place unwanted food items that can be taken by other students, reused or donated to food banks. These actions can be a helpful step in combating the climate crisis, but further action is needed to ensure students inherit a healthy Earth.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, amidst an increasing population and growing consumption of resources, many

have recognized the importance of implementing sustainable practices whenever possible. When waste materials end up in landfills, they release toxic chemicals and convert into microplastics which are extremely harmful to the environment and ecosystem. The practice of recycling and composting can significantly reduce the amount of material waste that ends up in landfills, which can significantly alleviate the harms of material consumption. Recycling also helps conserve natural resources, and composted material can be valuable for farming. Thus, it is imperative to educate younger generations on sustainable practices and establish recycling as a habit to carry on into future generations. Some California schools, such as Sierra Middle School in the Lincoln Unified School District, currently have composting bins, but there is no legal requirement to do so. Furthermore, many high schools such as Santiago High School in Corona, have recycling systems, but recycling bins are only present in a few classrooms. For students who want to compost and recycle, the means to do so are not sufficiently accessible in many schools.

PROBLEM

Schools and universities generate about 562,442 tons of waste each year in California. Almost half of school waste is compostable materials such as paper, cardboard, and uneaten cafeteria food. Fewer than 5% of schools nationwide compost food waste, and only 0.5% of schools nationwide have food share tables. Much of the waste generated in the California education system is recyclable but often ends up in conventional landfills, even material from recycling bins. For example, at California High School in San Ramon, students often do not place recyclable items into the recycle bin because they believe the recyclables eventually end up in the landfill anyway. Furthermore, there is no information on many of the recycling bins as to what can and cannot be put in the bin, leading to conventional waste unknowingly being put in the recycling bins. Also at

California High School, food waste is placed in conventional garbage bins because there are no compost bins.

SOLUTION

Every public school, including charter schools, shall make recycling and composting bins accessible in classrooms and around campus with educational signs informing students what can and cannot go in these bins. The waste from recycling and composting bins shall be disposed of in their respective recycling and composting centers. School districts would make agreements with local recycling and composting centers to dispose of recyclable and compostable materials, including agreements with vendors to provide bins and manage waste. Additionally, all public schools, including charter schools, will provide food share tables in cafeterias for students to place unwanted food items that can then be taken by other students, reused or donated to food banks. Safety guidelines for such food share tables can be derived from existing Food and Drug Administration Food Code.

This solution ensures that all students have the ability to dispose of recyclable and compostable material in a more sustainable manner and know what material can actually be recycled or composted. The addition of food share tables to schools would reduce the amount of food waste generated while also respecting USDA guidelines on minimum nutrition requirements for lunches. Most importantly, the proposal also ensures schools do not place these materials in a conventional landfill.

PRECEDENT

- Senate Bill 1383; Short-lived Climate Pollutants (2015-2016)
 - Required CalRecycle, in consultation with the California Air Resources Board (ARB), to adopt regulations designed to reduce statewide landfill disposal of compostable materials.
 - It established two compostable material disposal reduction targets. These targets are tied to the 2014

baseline of 23 million tons of compostable material disposal and must be achieved by 2020 and 2025:

- By 2020 – 50 percent compostable material reduction from 2014 baseline (11.5 million tons allowed landfill disposal of compostable material).
- By 2025 – 75 percent compostable material reduction from 2014 baseline (5.75 million tons allowed landfill disposal of compostable material).
- Effective on January 1, 2022, schools and local education agencies will be required to prevent, reduce the generation of, and recycle compostable material. Additionally, effective on January 1, 2024, schools and local education agencies with an on-site food facility will be required to recover edible food.
- Senate Bill 1018; Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review (2011-12)
 - Included an amendment that requires a business or school that generates 4 cubic yards or more of commercial solid waste per week to arrange for recycling services.
- Senate Bill 373; Consumer Debt (2021-2022)
 - School Diversion and Environmental Education Law, effort to support instructional strategies that would improve recycling in California's school districts.
 - Distributed grants to schools, created the Office of Environmental Education Law.
- Assembly Bill 793; (2019-2020)
 - Beverage Container Postconsumer Plastic Minimum Content Standard
 - This bill requires beverages sold by a beverage manufacturer to have a postconsumer plastic recycled content standard of 15 percent beginning January 1, 2022, increasing to 25 percent by 2025 and 50 percent by 2030.

- Assembly Bill 341 (2011-2012); Solid Waste Diversion
 - Establishes a state policy goal that 75% of solid waste generated be diverted from landfill disposal by 2020; requires a commercial waste generator to arrange for recycling services; and, requires local governments to implement commercial solid waste recycling programs designed to divert solid waste from businesses.
- Oakland Unified School District Food Share Program
 - Ensures that every school in the Oakland Unified School district has a food-waste safety net: the Food Share table, with signs in five languages.
 - Food share programs exist at all 80 of OUSD's K-12 schools, serving 37,000 students.
 - OUSD has existing FDA- and USDA-compliant safety guidelines for food share tables that can be easily adopted by other districts.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Funding for educational signs, the initial payment and replacement of bins, tables, and potentially distribution networks with local nonprofits, would be provided through a minor ongoing cost filtering from the Proposition 98 General Fund.

If the Commission on State Mandates determines the bill's requirements to be a reimbursable state mandate, the state would directly reimburse these costs to educational institutions. Otherwise, funding could be provided through the Environmental Education Grant Program.

Post-High School Preparedness

- Speaker:** Aarnav Verma (AD-16, SD-6), Monte Vista High School, San Ramon
- Writer:** Christopher Tan (AD-6, SD-4), Granite Bay High School, Granite Bay
- Group Members:** Akshaya Aalla (AD-6, SD-1), Whitney High School, Rocklin; Katie Lin (AD-4, SD-3), Davis Senior High School, Davis; Rachel Lim (AD-13, SD-5), Lincoln High School, Stockton; Lelia Cottin-Rack (AD-13, SD-5), Lincoln High School, Stockton; Erin Tak (AD-44, SD-27), Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park; Steven Ma (AD-73, SD-36), Saint Margaret's Episcopal School, San Juan Capistrano
- Facilitator:** Mina Lee (AD-53, SD-24), John Marshall High School, Los Angeles
- Research:** Miriam Waldvogel (AD-13, SD-5), Lincoln High School, Stockton

SUMMARY

Delegates from the Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education propose requiring all schools in California to show a statewide or a locally developed digital presentation on financial literacy. This presentation will address the current inequalities and inequities in access to financial literacy and encourage further action to improve the quality of financial literacy education across California.

BACKGROUND

Financial literacy is a skill everyone is guaranteed to use every day for the rest of their lives. From credit cards to student loans to mortgages to retirement accounts, understanding how to manage finances is an integral part of adulthood. According to a 2017 T. Rowe Price survey, 69% of parents are reluctant to discuss financial matters with their children, and only 23% of youth talk to their parents frequently about money. In school, low-income students are

half as likely as their more privileged peers to have access to financial literacy instruction (Champlain College), a disparity that only exacerbates existing cycles of generational poverty.

A 2018 study from Montana State University saw fewer instances of low credit card balances and debt in high-interest student loans among low-income students who took financial literacy as a graduation requirement. In addition, three years after financial literacy education was implemented in Georgia, Idaho, and Texas, all three states saw a reduction in severe delinquency rates and saw their credit scores rise. Financial literacy substantially impacts the direction of students' futures and empowers them to make educated decisions on finances.

PROBLEM

Financial literacy, a key skill to student long-term success, is not consistently prioritized and taught to students across California. For example, at Newbury Park High School in Ventura County, school does not have accessible financial literacy courses, so many students, when asked, do not feel prepared for their career and life after high school. Therefore, in 2017, California was given a grade of F by the Champlain College Center for Financial Literacy for its ability to produce financially literate high school graduates. By not having a thorough understanding of finances after graduation, many students make damaging financial decisions that can burden them for years; according to the Education Initiative, the average student borrower takes 20 years to pay off their higher education loans. This problem also disproportionately affects marginalized groups and certain regions of California. In 2017, the Public Policy Institute of California found that only 17% of Black high school students in California were considered prepared for post-high school life, compared to 35% of students overall. Students in the Inland Empire, Central Valley, and Far North also demonstrated

lower levels of college preparedness than their peers on the coast.

SOLUTION

This proposal would require schools to show a financial literacy presentation at least once a year, using one of the following:

- A) An approximately 20 minute recorded presentation and requiring each pupil to complete a long-term financial planner, both created and provided for free by the California Department of Education.
- B) A locally-developed presentation approved by the governing board of the school district or the governing body of the charter school.

The presentations will be updated annually and will clearly demonstrate the importance of financial literacy. They will also provide personal finance resources for students such as online classes and programs at community centers and local financial institutions. Presentation topics may include but are not limited to:

- Money Management
- Living Expenses
- Credit and Borrowing
- Financial Planning
- Taxes
- Identity Theft Issues & Safety
- Post Secondary Financing
 - Student Loans
 - FAFSA and Cal Grants

For schools pursuing option A, the long term financial planner interactive will be provided in both digital and printable methods. Questions on the planner should be practical and interactive to foster real-life skills.

This proposal would authorize local educational agencies, including charter schools, to implement these presentations as they see fit. However, it is highly recommended that presentations are administered once to pupils in grades 11 or 12, keeping in mind timelines for college applications. The presentations should also ideally be administered in a classroom setting, not during a school-wide assembly.

PRECEDENT

- I. AB 423 (2021) - Voepel
Would implement a pilot program via the California Department of Education to incorporate financial literacy programs into existing courses.
- II. AB 639 (2021) - Cunningham
Would authorize a school district to incorporate a financial literacy program into existing economics classes in conjunction with banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions.
- III. AB 647 (2021) - Quirk-Silva
Would allocate \$1 million to a selected school district for implementing a Career Preparedness pilot program.
- IV. AB 103 (2020) - Holden
Would clarify access to College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnership to include continuation high schools, community schools, and juvenile court schools. A CCAP partnership is an agreement between a community college and a secondary school for CTE and college/career readiness.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The proposal will have a minimal fiscal impact on the State Budget, with the only cost being staff payments to develop the recorded lesson and planner.

School Safety

Speaker: Kristie To (AD-68, SD-37), Northwood High School, Irvine

Writer: Kavya Suresh (AD-37, SD-19), San Marcos Senior High, Santa Barbara

Group

Members: Amira Hutcherson (AD-1, SD-1), Shasta High School, Redding; Dhilan Patel (AD - 44, SD - 19), Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park; Sue Oh (AD-65 SD-29), Sunny Hills High School, Fullerton; Daniel Peñaloza (AD- 44, SD-27), Moorpark High School, Moorpark; Shreya Shetty (AD-28, SD-15), Cupertino High School, Cupertino

Facilitator: Ava Gebhart (AD-1, SD-1), Foothill High School, Palo Cedro

Research: Harper Johnston (AD-7, SD-6), C.K.McClatchy High School, Sacramento

SUMMARY

Schools do not adequately prioritize student and staff safety, nor do they effectively take into account student opinions on safety, resulting in damaged student learning and well-being. This proposal solves this by requiring one-third of highschool School Site Councils membership to be composed of students that have an active voice in the decision-making process of Comprehensive School Safety Plans and other school-safety related topics.

BACKGROUND

School safety can be defined as the protection of students from violence, drug use, theft, bullying, natural disaster, mental distress, and other illegal activities that affect the learning environment. Safe schools are concerned with maintaining secure environments free of physical danger and mental or emotional harassment. They are also sufficiently prepared to protect their students in case of threat and/or natural disasters.

The California Department of Education currently requires every K-12 school, including public, public charter, and court or community schools, to create Comprehensive School Safety

Plans that are approved by each School Site Council. However, these plans do not mandate but solely recommend student involvement, failing to address the immediate needs of those students; instead, they only focus on adult school stakeholders, admin, and parents' perceived hazards to school safety.

PROBLEM

Due to the lack of adequate student representation in setting school safety guidelines, the school safety guidelines do not accurately represent student needs. The 2017-2019 California Healthy Kids Survey found that “perceived school safety (safe or very safe) dropped markedly in all grades to the lowest rates in the last six years (to 61%, 55%, 54%). Among high school students, school safety has declined by between six and nine percentage points since 2011/3.” When students perceive threats to their wellbeing at school, it interrupts their educational success and decreases their comfort at school. Students are unable to concentrate on their learning when they don't feel their safety needs are being properly met by their schools' standards. In addition, a lack of transparency and communication from administration leaves many students unacquainted with their schools' safety plans and unaware of avenues to pursue productive dialogue with school leadership.

Without ample student representation in decision-making processes or bodies of authority, schools' safety plans and protocols do not successfully reflect the urgent needs and concerns of the student body.

SOLUTION

This bill would call for at least one-third of secondary School Site Council membership to be composed of students. Student members of the council should possess many of the same roles and responsibilities of other council members, such as reviewing and approving each school's Comprehensive School Safety Plan and

evaluating the mechanisms implemented by each school to meet each objective identified in their district's Local Control and Accountability Plan. In addition, students on the council would oversee the authoring and approval of each school/district's annual Comprehensive School Safety Plan to ensure that their respective student bodies feel that their wellbeing is a high priority. If the School Site Council chooses to delegate the creation of the Comprehensive School Safety Plan to existing Safety Committees, these committees should require the involvement of student input by including at least one student member, chosen from the existing School Site Council membership. This permits school sites and districts to incorporate active student input to create their safety plans that are best adapted for their individual school needs. Moreover, school administrators should promote open dialogue throughout the process of establishing their CSSPs by providing forums that are accessible to their entire student body. Lastly, this bill encourages schools to use their resources and reach out to underrepresented student populations in order to promote equity and diversity as they appoint students to their respective site councils. Safety is essential to optimizing student learning as well as student-staff relationships; therefore, promoting student advocacy in the implementation of school safety plans/protocols will help students encounter fewer obstacles in their educational and personal growth.

PRECEDENT

- Assembly Bill 2384 in 2014 amended Education Code including Sections 32281 and 52852 to include certain parameters concerning school site councils:
 - This requires school site councils to be established and regulated by the state.
 - It allows school site councils to delegate the task of updating school Safety Plans to a safety committee not required to include a student representative.

- This outlines the membership requirements of school site councils, requiring community stakeholders to be parents and/or students rather than requiring student voice.
- Assembly Bill 2380 in 2014 amended existing law, stating that when a single plan for pupil achievement (SPSA) is being reviewed annually and updated by a school site council, there should be a focus on alignment with the school district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP) and a minimization of the duplication of efforts.
- Education Code Section 32282 of 2018
 - This Education Code explains the guidelines for schools to establish and report a comprehensive school safety plan.
 - This includes various aspects of situations such as fire, earthquakes, tornados, etc.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Due to the nature of this proposal, the State Budget would incur no costs. There are minimal to no costs attributed to materials used for the additional student representatives present at in-person school site council meetings, implementation of the safety plan itself, and tools to fund advertisements for students to be representatives on their respective school site councils.