

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 19 (Joe Patterson, et al.)
As Amended February 27, 2023
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires public schools to maintain at least two doses of naloxone hydrochloride or another opioid antagonist to provide emergency medical aid to a person suffering from an opioid overdose.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires each individual public school operated by a school district, county office of education (COE), or charter school, to maintain at least two doses of naloxone hydrochloride or another opioid antagonist to provide emergency medical aid to a person suffering from an opioid overdose.

COMMENTS

Current law authorizes, but does not require, schools to stock and administer opioid antagonists. This bill would require each school in a school district, COE, or charter school to maintain at least two doses of naloxone hydrochloride or equivalent on its campus for use, as prescribed by current law.

Addressing Fentanyl Among California Youth. According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), fentanyl-related overdose deaths increased 625% among ages 10-19 from 2018 to 2020. In 2021, there were 224 fentanyl-related overdose deaths among teens ages 15–19 years old in California. Current law requires the SPI to establish minimum training standards for school employees who volunteer to administer naloxone or another opioid antagonist. In addition to setting minimum training standards, the CDE must maintain on its website a clearinghouse for best practices in training nonmedical personnel to administer naloxone or another opioid antagonist to pupils.

The CDE, in conjunction with the CDPH, provide LEAs with resources and information that they can readily share with parents and students to help keep them safe. The Fentanyl Awareness and Prevention toolkit page offers information about the risks of fentanyl and how to prevent teen use and overdoses. In addition to the toolkit, the CDPH's Substance and Addiction Prevention branch also provides resources for parents, guardians, caretakers, educators, schools, and youth-serving providers.

Governor's Proposed Budget. Currently, the Governor's budget proposes \$97 million in new investments to tackle the fentanyl and opioid crisis, including \$3.5 million for all middle and high school sites to maintain at least two doses of naloxone hydrochloride or another medication to reverse an opioid overdose on campus for emergency aid. The proposal also includes \$79 million to the Naloxone Distribution Project, \$10 million in grants for education, testing, recovery, and support services, as well as \$4 million to make test strips more widely available.

According to the Author

"Until my neighbor, high school teen Zach Didier, lost his life to Fentanyl, I had no idea how kids were getting their hands on this poison. Zach ingested a pill of what he believed to be

Percocet. As a father of four children, I can't imagine having to experience what my neighbor went through which is why I am authoring Assembly Bill 19. According to the CDE in 2012, California suffered 82 tragic deaths attributed to fentanyl overdoses, and last year that number jumped to more than 6,000. Fentanyl deaths accounted for more than 80% of all drug-related deaths among California's young people in 2021. AB 19 is part of my three-pronged approach to helping solve the Fentanyl crisis - accountability, education, and safety. This measure is about safety.

It is time we take the initiative to have simple and proven preventative care available to schools where our kids spend a majority of their time. Fentanyl is being disguised as candy and is readily available in every community - why aren't we putting this on every campus? I was pleased to hear that the Governor has set aside \$3.5 million in Prop 98 to fund this program for all middle and high school sites to maintain naloxone on campus, which answers any questions about funding for Assembly Bill 19. I am proud that this is a bipartisanship issue having the governor, Democrats, and Republicans recognize this policy will save children's lives."

Arguments in Support

According to the Los Angeles COE, "With the rapid increase in the prevalence of fentanyl abuse and poisonings amongst teenagers, schools are not properly equipped to save the life of a child suffering from the effects of fentanyl. The Los Angeles Times reported in September 2022 that seven teenagers, including a fifteen-year-old, died from overdosing on pills possibly containing fentanyl. That same month, a school administrator in Bakersfield was sent to the hospital due to exposure of counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl.

Fentanyl overdoses accounted for more than 80% of all drug-related deaths among California's young people in 2021. More than 770 Californians under the age of 24 died of fentanyl overdoses last year, a 21-fold increase since 2016. The access to opioids and drugs such as fentanyl is too easily available and to not have a standing state law that requires K-12 schools to have the preventives easily available is a concern.

While some K-12 schools have opted to offer this inexpensive life-saving medication, most still do not provide Naloxone on campus. AB 19 would require K-12 schools to have naloxone as a lifesaving measure on campus for students experiencing an opioid overdose. This bill ensures that our schools are prepared for the potential of an opioid overdose, which is becoming more common as fentanyl is flooding into California and doses have been made to look like prescription drugs and even candy."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund costs of about \$1.1 million annually for each public school to maintain at least two doses of naloxone hydrochloride or another opioid antagonist on its campus.
- 2) This estimate assumes a cost of \$47.50 per dose and 11,000 public schools. It also assumes all doses are used annually. Costs could be less to the extent doses are not used, as opioid

reversal medication typically has a shelf life of around two to three years. In addition, costs could be higher or lower, because Narcan, the most widely used opioid antagonist, was very recently approved for over-the-counter use and sale, which could affect its price.

- 3) If the Commission on State Mandates determines the bill's requirements to be a reimbursable state mandate, the state would need to reimburse these costs to LEAs or provide funding through the K-12 Mandate Block Grant.

VOTES

ASM EDUCATION: 7-0-0

YES: Muratsuchi, Megan Dahle, Juan Carrillo, Hoover, Lee, McCarty, Quirk-Silva

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-1

YES: Holden, Megan Dahle, Bryan, Calderon, Wendy Carrillo, Dixon, Mike Fong, Hart, Lowenthal, Mathis, Papan, Pellerin, Sanchez, Weber, Ortega

ABS, ABST OR NV: Robert Rivas

UPDATED

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CONSULTANT: Debbie Look / ED. / (916) 319-2087

FN: 0000834