
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1230 (Bonta) - Pupil discipline: expulsions: procedures

Version: July 3, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill makes various changes regarding the development and review of a rehabilitation plan for a student who is subject to an expulsion order.

Fiscal Impact: This bill could result in Proposition 98 General Fund costs ranging in the tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars for local educational agencies (LEAs) and their governing boards to fulfill the additional requirements for student rehabilitation plans and comply with the bill's data collection and reporting requirements. While there are approximately 4,000 expelled students in a given year, the costs for each LEA would vary depending on the exact number of its expulsions. The bill's requirements could be deemed to be a state reimbursable mandate.

Background: Existing law prohibits a student from being suspended from school or recommended for expulsion, unless the superintendent of the school district or the principal of the school determines that the student has committed any of specified offenses while on school grounds, while going to or coming from school, or during the lunch period whether on or off campus, or during or while going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity. These offenses include causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person, or willfully using force or violence upon another person, except in self-defense; possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless the student had obtained prior written permission to possess the item; and unlawfully possessing, using, selling, or otherwise furnishing a controlled substance.

Existing law requires the principal or superintendent of schools to recommend the expulsion of a student for any of the following acts committed at school or at a school activity off school grounds, unless it is determined that the expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct:

1. Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense;
2. Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student;
3. Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, as specified;
4. Robbery or extortion; and
5. Assault or battery, as defined, upon any school employee.

Existing law requires that a decision to expel a student be based on a finding that other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct; and/or due to the nature of the act, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others.

Proposed Law: This bill makes various changes regarding the development and review of a rehabilitation plan for a student who is subject to an expulsion order. Notable provisions of the bill include the following:

1. Requires the governing board of a school district to recommend a plan of rehabilitation for a student at the time of the expulsion order that includes a preliminary assessment for readmission at least 45 days before the end of the expulsion term.
2. Authorizes the rehabilitation plan to be developed in consultation with school personnel who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the pupil and is tailored to the student's individual needs, and addresses the student's behavior that led to the expulsion.
3. Requires the governing board of a school district to assist the student in locating opportunities accessible to the student that are necessary to complete the requirements of the rehabilitation plan, including but not limited to, opportunities for counseling and community services.
4. Provides that the governing board of the school district shall not require the student or their parent or guardian, to pay for any costs or services the governing board determines to be necessary for the student to complete a plan for rehabilitation.
5. Requires the governing board of the school district to adopt rules and regulations establishing a procedure for the transition process for readmitted pupils and make a description of the readmission procedure available to the student and their parent or guardian.
6. Requires the governing board, in the rehabilitation review procedure to include an indication of whether or not the student had access to the necessary resources to complete their rehabilitation plan.
7. Prohibits the denial of a student's request for readmission on the basis of a rehabilitation plan not being completed due to financial or transportation barriers or a lack of viable opportunities to complete the plan.
8. Removes as a condition to deny readmission that the student continues to pose a danger to campus safety or to other pupils or employees of the school district.
9. Requires the governing board to readmit a student upon the completion of the readmission review process, unless the governing board makes a finding, as specified.

10. Authorizes the expulsion term of a student to be extended for one semester at a time, if the student is not readmitted. If the student has not been readmitted, the student shall be reassessed for readmission, pursuant to the procedures developed by the governing board.
11. Requires the governing board to notify and review the available educational options for expelled students with the student and their family before the expulsion order is finalized, and requires that the initial referral of the student for enrollment in an educational program be completed within three days after the expulsion.
12. Adds to the outcome data that a school district must maintain pertaining to expulsions, all of the following: the disposition of the pupil after the end of the period of expulsion, including the completion of a rehabilitation plan or the successful readmission of the pupil, or both; and the average length of expulsions expulsion terms, including any extensions.
13. Requires the COE to notify the school district if they are unable to serve the expelled students, and requires, upon such notification, the school district to ensure that another educational program is provided to the student, and requires that the school district review the educational options available with the student and their parent or guardian.
14. Expands the requirements of the triennial plan update that each county superintendent of schools that operates community schools must develop, as specified.

Related Legislation: AB 1984 (Weber, Chapter 368, Statutes of 2024) requires LEAs to provide to the CDE data on student transfers due to disciplinary reasons, and the CDE to publish the information on their website.

SB 274 (Skinner, Chapter 597, Statutes of 2023) prohibits the suspension or expulsion of a student enrolled in grades 6 to 12 in a public school on the basis of willful defiance until July 1, 2029, and authorizes employees to refer students to school administrators for in-school interventions or supports.

Staff Comments: Expulsion is a disciplinary action that school administrators may recommend for students but can only occur through the action of the school district governing board. Due process procedures for student expulsion are outlined in statute which categorize the types of offenses that require an expulsion recommendation and those that do not. If a school administrator recommends expulsion for a specified offense, the student is entitled to a hearing within 30 school days after the determination unless the student or their parents or guardians request in writing that the hearing be postponed. At the time that an expulsion is ordered against a student, existing law requires the governing board of the student's home school to set a date upon which the student shall be reviewed for readmission and recommend a plan of rehabilitation for the student. Upon completion of the readmission process, the governing board must readmit the student unless the board makes a finding that the student has not met the conditions of their rehabilitation plan or they continue to pose a danger to campus safety or other students or employees of the school district. The law authorizes the

rehabilitation plan to include a periodic review, an assessment at the time of review for readmission, and recommendations for improved academic performance, tutoring, special education assessments, job training, counseling, employment, community service, or other rehabilitative programs. However, the provisions in statute that governing student rehabilitation plans have not been substantively amended in recent years.

According to the author, “AB 1230 strengthens expulsion rehabilitation plans to ensure that California’s most vulnerable students receive the support they need to return to their home schools. In 2023-24, over 4,000 students were expelled. These students are some of our most underserved and at highest risk for poor academic outcomes. Without meaningful rehabilitation, these students risk falling into the school-to-prison pipeline, leading to lower academic achievement and higher incarceration rates. This bill ensures that rehabilitation plans are tailored to students’ needs, removes financial and transportation barriers, and limits prolonged expulsion terms. It also mandates clear readmission pathways, transition support, and the use of expulsion data to improve district policies. AB 1230 prioritizes education over exclusion, providing expelled students with the resources necessary to succeed.”

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