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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

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<b>Bill No:</b>	AB 1653	<b>Hearing Date:</b>	June 10, 2026
<b>Author:</b>	Lackey		
<b>Version:</b>	March 23, 2026		
<b>Urgency:</b>	No	<b>Fiscal:</b>	Yes
<b>Consultant:</b>	Therresa Austin		

**Subject:** Pupil instruction: health framework: heat illness.

## SUMMARY

This bill requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), during its next revision of the Health Framework for California Public Schools (Health Framework), to consider including and recommending for adoption by the State Board of Education (SBE), specific content related to the prevention of, identification of, and response to signs and symptoms of heat illness.

## BACKGROUND

- 1) States that if a school district or charter school elects to offer any interscholastic athletic program, the governing board of the school district or the governing body of the charter school must ensure that there is a written emergency action plan in place that describes the location and procedures to be followed in the event of medical emergencies, including heat illness, related to the athletic program's activities or events. The written emergency action plan shall be posted in compliance with the most recent pertinent guidelines of the National Federation of State High School Associations. (Education Code (EC) § 35179.4)
- 2) Establishes the High School Coaching Education Training Program (HSCTP), which is administered by school districts and includes training, which includes a basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of concussions and heat illness and the appropriate response to concussions and heat illness. Concussion or heat illness training may be fulfilled through entities offering free, online, or other types of training courses. (EC § 35179.1)
- 3) Requires school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to develop, adopt, and implement standardized guidelines specifying temperature thresholds or index ratings that trigger modifications to pupil physical activities during extreme weather conditions. (EC § 33355)

## ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the IQC, during its next revision of the Health Framework, to consider including, and recommending for adoption by the SBE, specific content related to

the prevention of, and recognizing and responding to the signs and symptoms of, heat illness.

- 2) Requires the Commission or IQC, in their consideration pursuant to #1 above, to consider relevant heat illness prevention measures, heat illness signs and symptoms, and heat illness responses, as addressed by guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and adopted by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF).
- 3) Specifies the following for the purposes of this bill:
  - a) “Prevention of heat illness” includes, but is not limited to, measures to stay cool, hydrated, connected to others, and informed of heat alerts.
  - b) “Recognizing the signs and symptoms of heat illness” includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
    - i) A red or flushed face.
    - ii) Nausea.
    - iii) Muscle cramps.
    - iv) Headache.
    - v) Dizziness.
    - vi) Fatigue or weakness.
    - vii) Confusion.
    - viii) Heavy sweating or the lack of sweating.
  - c) “Responding to signs and symptoms of heat illness” includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
    - i) Stopping physical activity.
    - ii) Seeking shade or a cool area.
    - iii) Drinking water or otherwise hydrating.
    - iv) Cooling the body.
    - v) Notifying a teacher, staff member, or other responsible adult.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “As temperatures continue to rise across our state and nation, protecting the health and safety of our students must remain a top priority. Extreme heat is no longer a rare occurrence, it is a growing public health concern. Our children are especially vulnerable. Student athletes practicing outdoors, children waiting at bus stops, and students in classrooms without adequate cooling systems are all at risk. Yet heat illness is preventable when individuals understand the warning signs and know how to respond.

“Education saves lives. By incorporating age-appropriate heat safety lessons into health education curriculum, we empower students with practical knowledge they can use immediately at school, at home, and in their communities. This bill is not about adding burden, it is about prevention. A few minutes of education can prevent emergency room visits, long-term health complications, and even fatalities. Heat illness is predictable. It is preventable. And with this legislation, it is teachable.”

- 2) ***Existing CDE guidance on excessive heat.*** In recognition of the higher risk of heat illness due to California’s climate and geography, the CDE maintains an Excessive Heat resource page on its website to help local educational agencies (LEAs), students, and their families understand what to do when facing extreme heat temperatures and how to best mitigate their impact. This resource page includes CDE specific guidance for excessive heat waves as well as relevant guidance from the CDPH, the Office of Emergency Services (Cal-OES), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the American Red Cross.
- 3) ***CIF Bylaws on Sports Injuries.*** The CIF, founded in 1914, is a voluntary organization comprised of 1,615 public, public charter, and private high schools that are organized into ten geographical sections for the purpose of governing education-based athletics in grades 9 through 12.

As part of its adopted bylaws and state law, CIF currently has established injury protocols for concussions, sudden cardiac arrest, and heat illness. In each of these protocols, if a student athlete exhibits the respective injury while participating in, or immediately following, an athletic activity, or is known to have exhibited the respective injury while participating in, or immediately following, an athletic activity, they must be removed immediately from participating in a practice or game for the remainder of the day. A student athlete who has been removed from play after displaying signs and symptoms associated with the respective injury may not return to play until they have been evaluated by a licensed health care provider and have received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider.

Consistent with state law, CIF bylaws also require that information sheets on concussions, sudden cardiac arrest, and heat illness be issued annually to student athletes and their parents or guardians. These information sheets must be signed and returned by all student athletes and their parents or guardians before the student athlete’s initial practice or competition.

*This bill would require the IQC, when considering the inclusion of heat illness content in the next revision of the Health Framework, to consider relevant heat illness guidance and policies adopted by CIF.*

- 4) ***The IQC and the SBE.*** The Legislature has vested the IQC and the SBE with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The IQC develops standards aligned curriculum frameworks through a process involving practitioners and experts who have an in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The frameworks are then adopted by the SBE in a public meeting.

The resulting curriculum framework is intended to serve as a guidance document for educators and administrators on how to plan for and provide quality, skills-based, standards-aligned instruction on the various content areas.

The SBE also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks for grades K-8. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional materials aligned to these standards and frameworks.

The respective revision and adoption processes have traditionally occurred on a regular schedule, giving schools a predictable timetable to plan and budget for changes to the curriculum. Local adoption of new curricula also involves significant local cost and investment of resources for professional development.

- 5) ***Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.*** In May 2019, the SBE adopted the Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (the Framework) to provide instructional guidance and support to California teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, other educators, and school boards for implementation of the health education content standards. According to the California Department of Education (CDE), the Framework was designed to “help students build strong and healthy relationships with their families, friends, and communities while strengthening their resiliency and personal decision-making skills for healthy living.” The Framework covers six content areas of health education: nutrition and physical activity; growth, development, and sexual health; injury prevention and safety; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; mental, emotional, and social health; and personal and community health.

The six content areas are woven throughout the grade spans and build upon each other to ensure students gain a holistic understanding of health.

With respect to heat illness content, the current health education standards, adopted by the SBE in 2008, for grades 6-8, include a standard on identifying ways to reduce exposure to the sun, and the current health curriculum framework, adopted by the SBE in 2019, includes minimal content related to heat

illness. In the grades 7-8 section, the framework mentions sun safety as a health-management strategy.

To the extent that climate change related excessive heat continues to be realities faced by students across the state, expanding heat illness content in the framework may help ensure students know how to respond to and prevent such illness.

- 6) ***The Curriculum Guidance Study and future of curriculum development and adoption.*** The 2025-26 budget, through AB 121 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 8, Statutes of 2025), included \$1 million for a Curriculum Guidance Study to evaluate the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance, and to make recommendations about how to improve and streamline California's processes across all content areas. The report is required to include, among other topics:
- a) The roles and responsibilities of the CDE, the IQC, the SBE, the Legislature, LEAs, educators, parents and guardians, and the public; and
  - b) The processes and cycles for developing, revising, and adopting content standards, curriculum frameworks, and other instructional guidance, and how available instructional time in elementary and secondary schools is considered.

This report is required to be completed by January 1, 2027.

- 7) ***Prior and related legislation.***

AB 1653 (Sanchez, Chapter 589, Statutes of 2023) requires the CIF, in consultation with the CDE, to develop guidelines, procedures, and safety standards for the prevention and management of exertional heat illness, as specified, by July 1, 2024.

SB 499 (Menjivar, 2023) would have required (1) all schoolsites and child care facilities to develop an extreme heat action plan addressing the planting of shade trees, installation or planting of a school garden, and installation or planting of a green barrier; (2) the CDE, in consultation with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), to develop a template for an extreme heat action plan, make available a model program guidebook; and, (3) the CDSS to identify a liaison for child care facilities. *SB 499 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

AB 384 (Calderon, 2023) would have required the CDE to conduct a research study on recommended indoor air temperature ranges and temperature control standards for public schools and an inventory of heating and cooling systems, and to submit a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2026. *AB 384 was vetoed by the Governor, citing concerns about significant long-term cost pressures that are not accounted for in the budget.*

AB 2800 (Chu, Chapter 21, Statutes of 2018) adds basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of, and appropriate responses to, heat illness, to the training component of the 1998 California High School Coaching Education and Training Program.

**SUPPORT**

Alameda County Office of Education  
California Health Coalition Advocacy  
California Nurses for Environmental Health & Justice  
California School Nurses Organization  
Center for Ecoliteracy  
CFT  
Elders Climate Action Northern California Chapter  
Elders Climate Action Southern California Chapter  
Green Schoolyards America  
HED  
Ten Strands  
UndauntedK12

**OPPOSITION**

None received

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