
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1721
Author: Muratsuchi (D)
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/17/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0, 5/21/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Pupil safety: comprehensive school safety plans

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the Education Commissioner to, in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE) and specified stakeholders, review existing comprehensive school safety plans (CSSPs) and make recommendations on the development, approval, and statutorily required elements of the CSSP.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/21/26: 1) replace references to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) with the Education Commissioner; 2) removes the requirement and deadline for the Commissioner to convene a stakeholder workgroup; and 3) directs the Commissioner to consult with the SBE and specified stakeholders to develop recommendations on the development and approval processes for school safety plans.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires each school district or county office of education (COE) to be responsible for the overall development of all CSSPs for its schools operating kindergarten or any of grades 1 through 12. (Education Code (EC) § 32281)
- 2) Requires each school to adopt its school safety plan by March 1 and review and update its plan annually by March 1. Requires each school to annually report, in July, on the status of its school safety plan, including a description of key elements of the plan, in the annual school accountability report card (SARC). (EC § 32286)
- 3) Specifies that the CSSP must include:
 - a) An assessment of the current status of school crime committed on school campuses and at school-related functions;
 - b) Identification of appropriate strategies and programs to provide or maintain a high level of school safety;
 - c) Child abuse reporting procedures;
 - i) When a CSSP is next reviewed and updated, or by no later than July 1, 2026, procedures specifically designed to address the supervision and protection of children from child abuse or neglect or sex offenses.
 - d) Disaster procedures, including adaptations for pupils with disabilities;
 - e) An earthquake emergency procedure system;
 - f) Accommodations related to relevant federal disability laws; a requirement that the annual evaluation of plans ensure appropriate adaptations; and allow parents and others to bring a concern about a student's safety to the principal;
 - g) Policies regarding pupils who commit specified acts that would lead to suspension or expulsion;
 - h) Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous pupils;
 - i) A discrimination and harassment policy;
 - j) Any schoolwide dress code;
 - k) Procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and school employees to and from school;

- l) A safe and orderly environment conducive to learning;
 - m) Rules and procedures on school discipline;
 - n) Procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents, including procedures related to individuals with guns on school campuses and at school-related functions;
 - o) Procedures to assess and respond to reports of any dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity that is being conducted or threatened to be conducted at the school, at an activity sponsored by the school, or on a school bus serving the school;
 - p) Accommodations for students with special needs in case of emergency;
 - q) Procedures related to severe fires, including a communication, refuge, and evacuation plan;
 - r) Procedures to respond to incidents involving an individual experiencing a sudden cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening medical emergency while on school grounds;
 - s) Procedures for notifying parents and guardians of pupils, teachers, administrators, and school personnel when the school confirms the presence of immigration enforcement on the schoolsite;
 - t) A protocol for responding to a student suffering from an opioid overdose;
 - u) An instructional continuity plan to establish communication with pupils and their families and provide instruction to pupils when in-person instruction is disrupted due to an emergency, including procedures for pupil engagement and a plan to provide access to in-person instruction or remote instruction, as soon as practicable; and
 - v) Commencing with the 2026–27 fiscal year, a procedure to identify appropriate refuge shelters for all pupils and staff to be used in the event of an evacuation order in the event of a fire. Also requires each public school serving more than 50 pupils that is in a high or very high fire hazard severity zone to coordinate the procedure with the operational area having jurisdiction within the school’s boundaries. (EC § 32282)
- 4) Requires the CSSP to be submitted annually to the school district or COE for approval and requires a school district or COE to notify the California

Department of Education (CDE) by October 15 of every year of any school that is not in compliance. (EC § 32288)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Commissioner, in consultation with the SBE and stakeholders, on or before July 1, 2027, to develop recommendations on the development and approval processes for CSSPs. Requires the stakeholders to include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a) Two current schoolsite administrators.
 - b) Two certificated public school teachers.
 - c) Two representatives of a local school employee organization.
 - d) One representative of a parent organization.
 - e) One current high school pupil.
 - f) Two representatives of local law enforcement agencies, at least one of whom shall be a peace officer, as specified.
 - g) Two representatives of local fire agencies.
 - h) One member of a local educational agency (LEA) with specific expertise in school safety.
 - i) Two representatives of school districts holding a pupil personnel services credential or service credential with a specialization in health for a school nurse.
 - j) One member of either the governing board of a school district or a county board of education.
 - k) One member of the governing body of a charter school.
- 2) Requires the Commissioner, to the greatest extent possible, to ensure that the stakeholders consulted include the following:
 - a) Educators employed in both elementary and secondary schools, including those with experience in working with pupils with exceptional needs.
 - b) Individuals who represent the geographic diversity of the state and has a balance of educators and first responders from both urban and rural areas.

- 3) Authorizes the Commissioner, in consultation with the stakeholders, to consult with outside experts in school safety issues.
- 4) Requires the Commissioner, in consultation with stakeholders, to review existing CSSP and make recommendations on the development and approval processes for, and the required elements of, the CSSP. Requires that the review include the following:
 - a) Defining the goals and purposes of a CSSP.
 - b) Reviewing the required elements of a CSSP, including the process for future updates to a CSSP.
 - c) Reviewing the development and adoption process of a CSSP, including the process for future updates to a CSSP.
 - d) Making recommendations for all of the following:
 - i) Improvements to the structure, organization, and layout of a plan to ensure it captures critical elements and is accessible and useful for schoolsite staff and the community, including parents and law enforcement.
 - ii) Improvements to the local development and approval process to ensure that it is transparent and includes sufficient opportunity for input from stakeholders.
 - iii) Procedures for the addition or deletion of elements of a plan to ensure continued cohesion and accessibility.
- 5) Requires the Commissioner, on or before July 1, 2028, to submit a report on the recommendations on the development and approval of CSSPs to the California Department of Finance (DOF) and appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature, as specified.
- 6) Authorizes the CDE to enter into exclusive or nonexclusive contracts with nongovernmental entities on a bid or negotiated basis for the purposes of this bill's provisions. Exempts a contract entered into or amended pursuant to the provisions of this bill from certain state contracting requirements and from the review and approval of any division of the Department of General Services.

- 7) Authorizes a nongovernmental entity contracted pursuant to #7 above to subcontract as necessary in the performance of its duties, subject to the approval of the Commissioner.
- 8) Makes a series of legislative findings and declarations related to the importance of CSSPs in creating a safe environment for schools and the need for a formal review of existing CSSP requirements to ensure they retain their focus.

Comments

- 1) *Need for the bill.* According to the author, “Schools are responsible for creating learning environments that are safe and secure for students, staff, and visitors. Schools must be prepared to respond to emergencies, including natural and man-made hazards, and strive to prevent violence and behaviors that undermine safety and security. Following the addition of multiple new requirements for a comprehensive school safety plan in recent years, there is a need to have experts review the requirements, conduct a thorough assessment, and make recommendations on how to improve and update the plans while maintaining those elements critical to school safety.”
- 2) *Comprehensive School Safety Plans.* LEAs, COEs, and charter schools serving students in grades kindergarten through 12 are required to develop and maintain a CSSP designed to address campus risks, prepare for emergencies, and create a safe, secure learning environment for students and school personnel.

The law requires designated stakeholders to annually engage in a systematic planning process to develop strategies and policies to prevent and respond to potential incidents involving emergencies, natural and other disasters, hate crimes, violence, active assailants/intruders, bullying and cyberbullying, discrimination, and harassment, child abuse and neglect, discipline, suspension and expulsion, and other safety aspects.

The law requires that each school update and adopt its CSSP by March 1 annually. Before an LEA, COE, or charter school adopts their CSSP, the schoolsite council or school safety planning committee must hold a public meeting at the schoolsite to allow members of the public to express an opinion about the school safety plan. Once the public meeting has been held and the CSSP is adopted, the school must submit its CSSP to its respective LEA or COE for approval. LEAs and COEs must annually notify the CDE by October 15 of any schools that have not complied with requirements.

If the SPI determines there has been a willful failure to make a required report, the SPI is required to notify the school district or COE in which the willful failure has occurred and make an assessment of not more than \$2,000 against that school district or COE.

- 3) *CDE resources for the development of CSSPs.* In 2018, the Legislature passed AB 1747 (Rodriguez, Chapter 806, Statutes of 2018), which, among other things, required the CDE to develop, maintain, and conspicuously post on its website, best practices for developing, reviewing, and approving CSSPs as well as a formal CSSP compliance checklist. To inform the development of the compliance checklist and webpage, CDE implemented a statewide survey of LEAs, school safety administrators, and stakeholders and gathered information on current practices, challenges, and resource needs. The resulting Compliance Tool for a Comprehensive School Safety Plan outlines more than 30 items that should be considered during the CSSP development process. The CSSP webpage compiles extensive references and resources to help LEAs understand their obligations and roles that are prescribed in statute.
- 4) *The list of required components in a CSSP continue to grow.* CSSPs are intended to serve as a functional document that outlines an LEA's strategies to address campus risks, prepare for emergencies, and create a safe, secure learning environment for students and school personnel. As the state continues to grapple with the issues of school safety and emerging threats, the Legislature has expanded the scope of the CSSP in an effort to ensure that LEAs are appropriately prepared to serve students, rain or shine. Because these additional requirements have always been additive, concerns have been raised by groups representing school administrators and educators, that CSSP become unwieldy.

This bill requires the SPI to convene a statewide stakeholder workgroup to review existing CSSPs and make recommendations on how to improve their development and approval processes, as well as their accessibility and cohesion across the various required elements.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The California Department of Education estimates General Fund costs in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars and the equivalent of 2.0 positions to convene the workgroup, make recommendations, and complete the required report.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

Alameda County Office of Education
Association of California School Administrators
California Association of School Business Officials
California Association of School Counselors
California IT in Education
California School Nurses Organization
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Peace Officers Research Association of California
San Benito High School District
San Bernardino County District Advocates for Better Schools
San Francisco Unified School District

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 73-0, 5/21/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Chen, Garcia, Kalra, Lackey, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez

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8/24/26 11:22:59

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