

Date of Hearing: March 18, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Darshana Patel, Chair
AB 1766 (Krell) – As Introduced February 9, 2026

SUBJECT: Health curriculum framework: human trafficking and online safety

SUMMARY: Requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), the next time it revises the health curriculum framework, to consider including specified content on human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires that, when the health curriculum framework is next revised on or after January 1, 2027, the IQC consider including recommendations that local educational agencies (LEAs) provide annual, developmentally appropriate lessons for each grade that cover, at a minimum, all of the following topics:
 - a) How to prevent human trafficking, including understanding online exploitation and how traffickers target vulnerabilities, and how to prevent exploitation for labor or services, with instructional materials addressing both community-based and intrafamilial exploitation risks;
 - b) How to stay safe from sexually exploitative materials and deepfakes online, including information on reporting processes and pupil rights, and foundational digital citizenship skills that equip pupils to respond safely when exposed to harmful or uncomfortable online content; and
 - c) Skills-based content that builds protective factors, such as help-seeking strategies, healthy boundaries, digital citizenship, rights of workers, and identifying trustworthy adults, and supports early disclosures through predictable, developmentally appropriate safety routines aligned with mandated reporting expectations.
- 2) Requires that the recommendations the IQC would be required to consider:
 - a) Follow a cumulative, age-appropriate progression from kindergarten to 12th grade, ensuring foundational safety skills are taught in early grades and expanded upon in later grades. Requires that for students in grades Kindergarten to 6th grade, recommended instruction be nongraphic and developmentally aligned, introducing concepts of healthy touch, bodily autonomy, safe versus unsafe secrets, how to say “no,” how to seek help from trusted adults, and basic online safety in an age-appropriate manner. Requires that the recommendations ensure that universal safety concepts provided in early grades, such as bodily autonomy, boundary setting, and how to access help, remain developmentally appropriate and consistent with statewide child abuse prevention standards, especially for pupils at heightened risk of intrafamilial exploitation; and
 - b) Be evidence-based, survivor informed, culturally responsive, and aligned with trauma responsive best practices.

- 3) Requires that the recommendations be grounded in research-supported prevention models and may include curriculum developed by community-based organizations with demonstrated evidence of effectiveness, including those using survivor-informed and culturally responsive frameworks. Requires that recommended instruction be designed to gradually introduce concepts tied to exploitation prevention, ensuring age-appropriateness for younger pupils and increasing complexity at developmentally suitable stages.
- 4) Requires that instruction that is recommended be consistent with the instructional quality standards established under current law and shall meet all of the following criteria:
 - a) Reinforce prevention-focused content required under the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA);
 - b) Promote cultural competency, including content relevant to disproportionately impacted communities;
 - c) Be designed to reduce stigma for survivors and pupils with applicable lived experience; and
 - d) Ensure that instructional materials reflect a developmental sequence that builds knowledge year to year supporting healthy relationship education, online safety skills, and the ability of pupils to recognize and report concerning behaviors.
- 5) Requires that the IQC consider including content specifying that LEAs provide at least three staff members with annual evidence-based, survivor-informed, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed training, and that the content be consistent with state and federal best practices and shall include information about all of the following topics:
 - a) Identifying pupils who may be victims of human trafficking or online exploitation, including recognizing indicators of forced labor and intrafamilial abuse across developmental stages;
 - b) Responding using trauma-responsive, survivor-informed protocols;
 - c) Mandatory reporting responsibilities and referral pathways;
 - d) How to engage culturally and linguistically diverse pupils safely;
 - e) How to avoid criminalization of pupils who may be exploited; and
 - f) Understanding how disclosures occur differently across ages and how to support early, developmentally appropriate reporting pathways.
- 6) Requires that, for purposes of the recommendations related to an LEA providing at least three staff members with training, at least two staff members shall be recommended to be school counselors, school nurses, school social workers, or school psychologists, and at least one staff member shall be recommended to be a certified classroom teacher.

- 7) Requires that the recommended training be curriculum produced by qualified organizations with demonstrated expertise in evidence-based human trafficking prevention education, including using survivor leadership in curriculum development.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires that students in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and once in high school about adolescent relationship abuse and intimate partner violence, including the early warning signs thereof. (Education Code (EC) 51934)
- 2) Requires, as part of comprehensive sexual health education, that LEAs and charter schools provide students with information on local resources for assistance with sexual assault and intimate partner violence. (EC 51934)
- 3) Requires public schools, including charter schools, and private schools, that serve students in any of grades 7 to 12, and public and private institutions of higher education that issue pupil or student identification cards, to print the telephone number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and local domestic violence hotlines on those identification cards. (EC 215.5)
- 4) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to post on its website resources on teen dating violence prevention, local and national hotlines and services for youth experiencing teen dating violence, and other relevant sources for parents, guardians, and other caretakers of students. (EC 231.7)
- 5) Requires that, when the health education framework is revised after January 1, 2017, the IQC consider including comprehensive information for kindergarten and grades 1 to 8, inclusive, on the development of healthy relationships, which is age and developmentally appropriate and consistent with the health education standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). (EC 33546)
- 6) States that, for purposes of this section, the “development of healthy relationships” includes, but is not limited to:
 - a) Understanding the principles of treating one another with respect, dignity, and kindness;
 - b) Demonstrating the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to address and resolve disagreement and conflict; and
 - c) Recognizing when and how to respond to dangerous or other situations that may result in the bullying, harassment, harming, or hurting of another person. (EC 33546)
- 7) Requires that, when the health education framework is revised after January 1, 2016, the IQC consider including comprehensive information for grades 9 to 12, inclusive, on sexual harassment and violence that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Information on different forms of sexual harassment and violence, including instances that occur among peers and in a dating relationship; a discussion of prevention strategies;

- how students report sexual harassment and violence; and potential resources victims can access;
- b) Discussion of the affirmative consent standard, as defined, and skills students may use to establish boundaries in peer and dating relationships; and
 - c) Discussion of legal aspects of sexual harassment and violence under state and federal law. (EC 33544)
- 8) Requires that, if the governing board of a school district requires a course in health education for graduation from high school, the governing board of the school district include instruction in sexual harassment and violence, including, but not limited to, information on the affirmative consent standard, as defined. (EC 51225.36)
- 9) Requires that, if the governing board of a school district provides instruction on sexual harassment and violence, it ensure teachers consult information related to sexual harassment and violence in the health education framework when delivering health instruction. (EC 51225.36)
- 10) Requires that when the health education framework is next revised after January 1, 2015, the IQC consider including a distinct category on sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
- a) Information on different forms of sexual abuse and assault; discussion of prevention strategies; how to report sexual abuse or suspected sexual abuse; and local resources for victims;
 - b) Discussion of healthy boundaries for relationships; how to recognize potentially harmful and abusive relationships; and refusal skills to overcome peer pressure and to avoid high-risk activities;
 - c) Information on sex trafficking and risk factors; the recruiting tactics of sex traffickers and peer recruiters, including recruitment through the internet; how to report sex trafficking or suspected sex trafficking; and local resources for victims;
 - d) Discussion of legal aspects of sexual abuse and sex trafficking under state and federal laws; and
 - e) Discussion of how culture and mass media influence and desensitize our perceptions of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, including, but not limited to, stereotypes and myths about the victims and abusers, victim blaming, and the role of language. Requires that this instruction emphasize compassion for people who have suffered from sexual abuse or sex trafficking, and support positive reentry experiences for survivors returning to school. (EC 33545)
- 11) Authorizes a school district to provide sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education, defined as instruction on the prevalence and nature of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, strategies to reduce their risk, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely report an incident. (EC 51950)

- 12) States that a parent or guardian of a student has the right to excuse his or her child from all or part of sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education, and assessments related to that education. (EC 51950)
- 13) Authorizes the CDE to make available on its website resources on sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention for professional learning purposes, and relevant materials for parents and guardians of students.
- 14) Encourages schools to collaborate with law enforcement on intervention programs for high-risk students and minors. (EC 51950)
- 15) Authorizes in-service training to be conducted periodically to enable school district personnel to learn about new developments in the understanding of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, and to receive instruction on current prevention efforts and methods. (EC 51950)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. The author states, “Human trafficking prevention education saves lives. On average, sex trafficking survivors were first victimized at age 13. Children need tools to protect themselves and their peers from exploitation.

In some cases, traffickers target students on school grounds. In others, traffickers target school-aged children by reaching out through social media and online gaming. Many cases of trafficking involve family members, leaving children unprotected at home. Our schools can act as the first line of defense by teaching students and educators proven prevention strategies, identifying possible victims, and helping to break cycles of exploitation and abuse.”

Trafficking education mandated under current law. As noted above, the CHYA requires that students in grades 7 to 12 receive instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and once in high school about sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and human trafficking. Current law requires that information on human trafficking include both of the following:

- Information on the prevalence, nature, and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance; and
- Information on how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

Trafficking education in 2019 Health Education Framework. The current health curriculum framework, adopted by the SBE in 2019, includes content within grade chapters and also in an appendix devoted to sex trafficking specifically. These additions were made to reflect the requirements to teach this content pursuant to the CHYA, and at least in part pursuant to SB 1165 (Mitchell), Chapter 713, Statutes of 2014, which requires the IQC to consider including sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education in the health framework when it was next revised.

The framework notes that:

- Teachers have a unique opportunity to provide prevention education as well as observe behavior and possible warning signs that a student may be in an abusive relationship, experiencing child sexual abuse, or being trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation;
- Education in this area can begin as early as TK and kindergarten as students explore protective skills such as setting boundaries, identifying emotions, and telling a trusted adult;” and
- In California, the average age that a child is first brought into commercial sexual exploitation, or sex trafficking, is twelve to fourteen for girls and eleven to thirteen for boys.

In the chapter for grades 7-8, the Framework contains an extensive discussion of healthy relationships, dating violence, and sex trafficking, which includes a sample lesson on dating violence.

The framework appendix on sex trafficking includes content on:

- Prevention and early education, including trafficking indicators;
- Impact, including examples of trauma and psychological impact;
- Intervention, including an example of a survivor support system and a vignette depicting a school intervention example;
- Guidance on developing school protocols as an addendum to child abuse protocols, with a recognize-respond-refer approach, as well as a sample school or district protocol; and
- References for additional information.

Finally, CDE’s website includes a page devoted to information and resources on commercially sexually exploited children and youth.

Content Standards, Frameworks, and Model Curricula. The Legislature has vested the IQC and the SBE with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The IQC develops curriculum frameworks in each subject by convening expert panels, developing drafts, and holding public hearings to solicit input. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The SBE then adopts the frameworks in a public meeting. 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. This process has 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 involves significant local costs, including resources for professional development.

These existing processes involve 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.

Curriculum development and adoption process under review. The 2025-26 budget, through AB 121 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 8, Statutes of 2025, included \$1 million for a study on the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance, and to make recommendations about how to improve and streamline California's processes. This report is to be completed by January 1, 2027.

The report is required to include, among other topics:

- The roles and responsibilities of the CDE, the IQC, the SBE, the Legislature, LEAs, educators, parents and guardians, and the public; and
- 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.

Veto message states that changes to curriculum should wait until study is complete and recommendations adopted. In 2025, the Governor vetoed AB 86 (Boerner), which would have required the SBE to adopt instructional materials for health education for kindergarten through 8th grade, on or before July 1, 2028, with the following message:

The Budget Act of 2025 authorized a Curriculum Guidance Study to evaluate and improve the current state-level curriculum guidance adoption process to improve efficiency and consistency across all content areas. Proposals like AB 86 should only be considered after this study is complete and changes to the process are adopted. In the meantime, local governing boards continue to have the authority to evaluate and select a range of materials that align with the state standards and the associated curriculum framework.

Two-house curriculum bill policies. For several Sessions, the Assembly and Senate Education Committees have adopted identical policies on curriculum measures. These policies state, in part:

- The Committee strongly discourages the introduction of measures which require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum through changes to the curriculum framework, or the course of study, which require that specific curriculum be taught, or which require the development of new model curricula or any other state-adopted curriculum.
- The Committee encourages Members to engage in the existing administrative processes for modifying state curricula. Members may wish, for example, to provide written comments or public testimony to the Instructional Quality Commission, the State Board of Education, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Committee staff can share a model letter to the Instructional Quality Commission. Members may also wish to engage with the Legislative Members who are appointed to serve on the Instructional Quality Commission, or to engage in the Legislature's oversight or appointment processes for this purpose.

The policies also state that bills proposing changes to the curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, or the course of study shall either request or require that the IQC consider including content not already included in the existing or draft curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, the course of study, model curricula or any other state-adopted curriculum, to be added in the next regularly scheduled revision of a framework. *The Committee may wish to consider* that this bill conforms to this provision.

Arguments in support. The Alameda County Office of Education writes, “There is a critical gap in student knowledge regarding how to safely navigate online spaces, leaving students vulnerable to exploitation, deepfakes, and sexually exploitative materials. Preventing human trafficking and breaking cycles of familial trafficking require robust efforts from our school system by educating students, supporting their safety, and providing protections on and off campuses. Vulnerable youth are often targeted on school grounds and may continue to remain in school while being trafficked. For students who are trafficked by a family member, schools may be the only safe place to seek help.

ACOE strongly supports AB 1766’s approach of asking the Instructional Quality Commission and SBE to consider integrating these topics into the health curriculum framework. By utilizing the existing framework revision process, the state can ensure this instruction is consistent and impactful without overburdening the current curriculum. We also support the idea of LEAs providing annual training to at least three staff members to increase students’ awareness of tactics, boundary setting, risk factors, and behaviors and to promote healthy relationships and school safety.”

Related legislation. AB 1792 (Michelle Rodriguez) of the 2025-26 Session would require that, during the next revision of health curriculum framework, the IQC consider including, and recommending for adoption by the SBE, specific content related to sexual health instruction to educate pupils about dating abuse and digital violence.

AB 2053 (Mathis), Chapter 695, Statutes of 2024, requires that instruction about adolescent relationship abuse and intimate partner violence include the resources available to students related to adolescent relationship abuse and intimate partner violence, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline and local domestic violence hotlines that provide confidential support services for students that have experienced domestic violence or stalking, and that are available by telephone 24 hours a day.

AB 1071 (Hoover), Chapter 65, Statutes of 2023, requires the CDE to post on its website resources on teen dating violence prevention, local and national hotlines and services for youth experiencing teen dating violence, and other relevant sources for parents, guardians, and other caretakers of students.

AB 1861 (Rodriguez), Chapter 807, Statutes of 2018, requires that students receive instruction on how social media and mobile device applications are used in human trafficking, by adding it to the content included in comprehensive sexual health education.

AB 1868 (Cunningham), Chapter 428, Statutes of 2018, authorizes school districts to include, as part of comprehensive sexual health education, instruction on the risks and consequences of creating or sharing sexually suggestive or explicit materials using cellular telephones, social networking websites, computer networks, or other digital media.

AB 2601 (Weber), Chapter 495, Statutes of 2018, requires charter schools to ensure that all pupils in 7th through 12th grade receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education.

SB 316 (Rubio), Chapter 270, Statutes of 2019, requires public schools, including charter schools, and private schools, that serve students in any of grades 7 to 12, and public and private institutions of higher education that issue pupil or student identification cards, to print the telephone number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and local domestic violence hotlines on those identification cards.

AB 643 (Frazier), Chapter 574, Statutes of 2017, requires that content on the early warning signs of adolescent relationship abuse and intimate partner violence be included in mandated sexual health instruction.

SB 1435 (Jackson) Chapter 633, Statutes of 2016, requires, when the health curriculum framework is next revised after January 1, 2017, the IQC to consider including comprehensive information for kindergarten and grades 1 to 8, inclusive, on the development of healthy relationships, as specified.

SB 592 (Leyva) of the 2015-16 Session would have required school districts to provide educational programs that promote healthy relationships and prevent adolescent relationship abuse to students in grades 6-12, required the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to provide information for use by schools, and required school safety plans to include procedures and policies to prevent and respond to adolescent relationship abuse. SB 592 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee. AB 329 (Weber), Chapter 398, Statutes of 2015, makes instruction in sexual health education a requirement, revises HIV prevention education content, expands topics covered in sexual health education, requires this instruction to be inclusive of different sexual orientations, and clarifies parental consent policy.

SB 695 (de Leon), Chapter 424, Statutes of 2015, requires the IQC to consider adding content to the health curriculum framework for grades 9-12 on sexual harassment and violence, including the affirmative consent standard, and requires school districts which require a health course for graduation to include this content.

AB 1227 (Bonta), Chapter 558, Statutes of 2017, establishes the Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act, which allows schools to provide training on human trafficking, and makes changes to the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program by, among other things, including educational entities among the groups with whom a county must collaborate, as specified.

SB 1165 (Mitchell), Chapter 713, Statutes of 2014, requires the IQC to consider including sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education in the health framework when it is next revised.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

3Strands Global Foundation
Alameda County Office of Education
American Association of University Women - California
California Chamber of Commerce
California Federation of Teachers
California Survivor Coalition
Computer and Communications Industry Association
CTIA - the Wireless Association
Insights Association
SFV Alliance
TechNet
2 individuals

Opposition

None on file

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