

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 2460 (Celeste Rodriguez) – As Amended April 6, 2026

Policy Committee: Education

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: Yes

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE), on or before July 1, 2027, to post updated pupil behavioral health model referral protocols including guidance on providing equity-centered mental health supports to pupils for immigration enforcement or deportation related local emergencies. The bill also requires a local educational agency (LEA) serving grades seven to 12, on or before July 1, 2028, to update its existing policy for mental health referral protocols to include guidance on providing equity-centered mental health supports to pupils for immigration enforcement or deportation-related local emergencies either based on CDE’s model policy or developed in consultation with school and community interest holders and school-linked behavioral health professionals.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Minor and absorbable costs to the CDE to update model referral protocols.
- 2) Proposition 98 General Fund costs of an unknown amount, likely minor and absorbable, for LEAs to update their existing referral protocols.

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.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

In many immigrant communities, aggressive immigration enforcement has created deep anxiety for children who fear family separation, parental detention, or sudden disruption at home. That fear does not stay outside the school gates — it affects attendance, concentration, emotional well-being, and a student’s ability to learn. AB 2460 recognizes that schools need a clearer mental health framework to respond when students are experiencing this kind of community-wide trauma. California’s children deserve learning environments that are prepared to support them with stability, compassion, and continuity during times of crisis

- 2) **Background. *California Families and Immigration Status.*** According to the Urban Institute, approximately 4.2 million children in California had at least one immigrant parent in 2017 to 2018. Of these children, 93% are U.S. citizens. Over 1 million children in California have at least one undocumented parent. While previous guidance from DHS treated schools as “protected areas” from immigration enforcement actions, an updated memo from the U.S. Department of Justice issued on January 21, 2025, rescinded that guidance.

Recent Immigration Enforcement Actions at Schools. On Monday, April 7, 2025, several plainclothes federal agents arrived at two Los Angeles-area elementary schools looking for five children who the agents claimed had entered the country without authorization. According to Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent Alberto Carvalho:

They declared to the principals in both instances that the caretakers of these students have authorized them to go to the school. We have confirmed that this is a falsehood. We’ve spoken with the caretakers of these children, in some cases parents, and they deny any interactions, deny providing authorization for these individuals to have any contact with these children at the school.

An analysis by Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) published in 2022 found “consistent evidence that Latinx and Latinx English learner (EL) students experienced declines in achievement, attendance, and perceptions of school climate and safety when more immigration arrests occurred in the counties where their schools were located.”

LEA Policy on Referral Protocols. Current law requires an LEA serving grades seven to 12 to adopt a policy on referral protocols to behavioral health professionals and support services for addressing pupil behavioral health concerns and requires the CDE to develop a model policy for addressing pupil mental health concerns for voluntary use by LEAs. Under existing law, an LEA’s adopted policy must specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including, but not limited to: bereaved pupils, pupils with concern of a behavioral health disorder, pupils with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders, homeless or foster care pupils, and LGBTQ pupils. While nothing in current law precludes an LEA from adopting a policy for mental health referral protocols including support services that were equity-centered specific to pupils affected by immigration enforcement activities or deportations, this bill explicitly requires inclusion of such referral protocols within both CDE’s model policy and an LEA’s adopted policy, on or before July 1, 2027, and July 1, 2028, respectively.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 49 (Muratsuchi) Chapter 122, Statutes of 2025, establishes the California Safe Haven Schools Act prohibiting school officials and employees of an LEA from allowing an officer or employee of an agency conducting immigration enforcement to enter a school site without providing a valid judicial warrant or court order.

SB 98 (Pérez) Chapter 124, Statutes of 2025, requires the governing boards or body of an LEA to include procedures within its comprehensive school safety plan for notifying parents and school staff when immigration enforcement is confirmed on the school site, and places

similar immigration enforcement activity notification requirements on higher education institutions.

AB 419 (Connolly) Chapter 663, Statutes of 2025, requires an LEA to post specified information about immigration enforcement actions at California schools on its website and the website of each school within the LEA.

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