

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 302
Author: Bauer-Kahan (D)
Amended: 6/30/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: 11-0, 7/15/25

AYES: Umberg, Allen, Arreguín, Ashby, Caballero, Durazo, Laird, Stern, Wahab,
Weber Pierson, Wiener

NO VOTE RECORDED: Niello, Valladares

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/24/26

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

NO VOTE RECORDED: Cabaldon

SENATE PRIV., DIGITAL TECH. & CONS. PROT. COMMITTEE: 9-0, 6/29/26

AYES: Cabaldon, Seyarto, Gonzalez, McNerney, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Reyes,
Umberg, Wiener

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 56-11, 5/23/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Pupil and parental communication: extracurricular activities:
addictive feeds

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill, beginning with the 2027-28 school year, prohibits a local educational agency (LEA) from (1) excluding a pupil from participating in any extracurricular activity, including sports and clubs, due to the pupil not having or using addictive feeds and (2) using addictive feeds as the only means of contacting pupils or pupils' parents or guardians.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the governing board of a school district that maintains one or more schools containing any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive, as a condition for the receipt of specified school funding allocations, to establish a school district policy regarding participation in extracurricular and cocurricular activities by pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive. Requires that the criteria applied to extracurricular and cocurricular activities ensure that pupil participation is conditioned upon satisfactory educational progress in the previous grade level. (Education Code (EC) § 35160.5)
- 2) Defines “extracurricular activity” for the purposes of #1 above as a program that has all of the following characteristics:
 - a) The program is supervised or financed by the school district.
 - b) Pupils participating in the program represent the school district.
 - c) Pupils exercise some degree of freedom in either the selection, planning, or control of the program.
 - d) The program includes both preparation for performance and performance before an audience or spectators.
- 3) Authorizes the governing board of a school district to adopt, as part of its policy on participation in extracurricular and cocurricular activities, provisions that would allow a pupil who does not achieve satisfactory educational progress, as specified, in the previous grade period to remain eligible to participate in extracurricular or cocurricular activities during a probationary period. (EC § 35160.5)
- 4) Provides that the parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools have a right and should have the opportunity, as mutually supportive and respectful partners in the education of their children within the public schools, to be informed by the school, and to participate in the education of their children, as specified, including the following:
 - a) To be notified on a timely basis if their child is absent from school without permission.

- b) To receive the results of their child's performance on standardized tests and statewide tests and information on the performance of the school that their child attends on standardized statewide tests.
 - c) To be informed of their child's progress in school and of the appropriate school personnel whom they should contact if problems arise with their child.
 - d) To have access to the school records of their child.
 - e) To receive information concerning the academic performance standards, proficiencies, or skills their child is expected to accomplish.
 - f) To be informed in advance about school rules, including disciplinary rules and procedures, attendance policies, dress codes, and procedures for visiting the school. (EC § 51101)
- 5) Requires the governing board of each school district to annually notify the parent or guardian of a minor pupil regarding various rights or responsibilities of the parent or guardian relevant to the school environment. (EC § 48980)
- 6) Establishes the intent of the Legislature that opportunities for participation in athletics be provided on an equitable basis to all students. (EC § 49021)
- 7) Authorizes the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school to adopt a policy to limit or prohibit the use by its pupils of social media while the pupils are at a schoolsite or while the pupils are under the supervision and control of an employee or employees of that school district, county office of education (COE) or charter school. (EC § 48901.8)
- 8) Defines "addictive feed" as an internet website, online service, online application, or mobile application, or a portion thereof, in which multiple pieces of media generated or shared by users are, either concurrently or sequentially, recommended, selected, or prioritized for display to a user based, in whole or in part, on information provided by the user, or otherwise associated with the user or the user's device, unless any of the following conditions are met, alone or in combination with one another:

- a) The information is not persistently associated with the user or user's device and does not concern the user's previous interactions with media generated or shared by others.
- b) The information consists of search terms that are not persistently associated with the user or user's device.
- c) The information consists of user-selected privacy or accessibility settings, technical information concerning the user's device, or device communications or signals concerning whether the user is a minor.
- d) The user expressly and unambiguously requested the specific media or media by the author, creator, or poster of the media, or the blocking, prioritization, or deprioritization of such media, provided that the media is not recommended, selected, or prioritized for display based, in whole or in part, on other information associated with the user or the user's device, except as otherwise permitted by this chapter and, in the case of audio or video content, is not automatically played.
- e) The media consists of direct, private communications between users.
- f) The media recommended, selected, or prioritized for display is exclusively the next media in a preexisting sequence from the same author, creator, poster, or source and, in the case of audio or video content, is not automatically played.
- g) The recommendation, selection, or prioritization of the media is necessary to comply with state law or regulation. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) § 27000.5)

This bill:

- 1) Prohibits an LEA from excluding a pupil from participating in any extracurricular activity, including sports and clubs, due to the pupil not having or using addictive feeds, beginning with the 2027-28 school year.
- 2) Prohibits an LEA from using addictive feeds as the only means of contacting pupils or pupils' parent or guardians.

- 3) Encourages LEAs to inform pupils and pupils' parents or guardians about the pupils' rights established by this bill in its pupil handbook or a similar document made generally available to pupils and their parents or guardians.
- 4) Defines "addictive feed" as meaning an internet website, online service, online application, or mobile application, or a portion thereof, in which multiple pieces of media generated or shared by users are, either concurrently or sequentially, recommend, select, or prioritize for display to a user's device, in whole or in part, on information provided by a the user, or otherwise associated with the user or the user's device, unless any of the following conditions are met:
 - a) The information is not persistently associated with the user or the user's device and does not concern the user's previous interactions with media generated or shared by others.
 - b) The information consists of search terms that are not persistently associated with the user or user's device.
 - c) The information consists of user-selected privacy or accessibility settings, technical information concerning the user's device, or device communications or signals concerning whether the user is a minor.
 - d) The user expressly and unambiguously requested the specific media or media by the author, creator, or poster of the media, or the blocking, prioritization, or deprioritization of that media, provided that the media is not recommended, selected, or prioritized for display based, in whole or in part, on other information associated with the user or the user's device, except as otherwise permitted by this chapter and, if the media is audio or video content, is not automatically played.
 - e) The media consists of direct, private communications between users.
 - f) The media recommended, selected, or prioritized for display is exclusively the next media in a preexisting sequence from the same author, creator, poster, or source and, if the media is audio or video content, is not automatically played.
 - g) The recommendation, selection, or prioritization of the media is necessary to comply with state or federal law.

Comments

Need for the bill. According to the author, “Schools are increasingly reliant on social media and addictive feeds for communication and networking with students and families. Children are forced to join addictive platforms in order to participate in school clubs and activities that enrich their school experience. By forcing teens onto platforms which prey on them, schools are feeding into the increasing mental health crisis largely caused by social media usage. AB 302 prohibits schools from using addictive feeds as the sole form of communication with students or parents/guardians and ensures that students have access to after school clubs and activities without having to join potentially dangerous platforms.”

Addictive feeds. Consistent with existing law, this bill defines addictive feeds as websites, apps, and services in which multiple pieces of media generated or shared by users are, either concurrently or sequentially, recommend, select, or prioritize for display to a user’s device, in whole or in part, on information provided by a the user, or otherwise associated with the user or the user’s device. Addictive feeds or algorithms are often utilized by social media platforms to capture the attention of a user and prolong their engagement and total use or screen time.

In 2023, the U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory about the effects of social media use on youth mental health. In the advisory, the Surgeon General issued a call for urgent action by policymakers, technology companies, researchers, families, and young people alike to gain a better understanding of the full impact of social media use, maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of social media platforms, and create safer, healthier online environments to protect children. The advisory stated the following:

- While social media may offer some benefits, there are ample indicators that social media can also pose a risk of harm to the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents.
- Children are affected by social media in different ways, including based on cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors. Among the benefits, adolescents report that social media helps them feel more accepted (58%), like they have people who can support them through tough times (67%), like they have a place to show their creative side (71%), and be more connected to what’s going on in their friends’ lives (80%).

- Studies have also shown a relationship between social media use and poor sleep quality, reduced sleep duration, sleep difficulties, and depression among youth.
- More research is needed to determine the full impact social media use has on nearly every teenager across the country.

According to a 2020 article in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*, “Is social media screen time really associated with poor adolescent mental health?”, a greater amount of time spent on social media was associated with an increased risk of self-harm, depression, and lower levels of self-esteem in 13–15-year-old girls. Findings were similar for weekday and weekend use.

Some research has suggested that there is likely a correlation between the increased use of technology and smartphone use and the increased rates of teenage anxiety and depression. A widely cited book by Dr. Jean Twenge, a professor of psychology at San Diego State, *iGen*, presents evidence of an increase in depression and suicide among American teenagers that may be caused by increased mobile device screen time and social media use.

Examples of students being excluded. This bill prohibits an LEA from excluding a student from participating in extracurricular activities, including clubs and sports, due to the student not having or using addictive feeds. The author’s office has provided the following anecdotal examples of when students have been excluded or pressured due to their nonuse of platforms that utilize addictive feeds:

- a) A Southern California student was required to create an Instagram account in order to communicate with members of their high school baseball team. When their parent indicated that they did not approve of their child using the app, the parent was advised to start a profile on the student’s behalf.
- b) A Southern California student was required to create a SnapChat account in order to communicate with members of their high school water polo team.
- c) A Northern California student shared that they were removed from their student leadership position due to them not having an Instagram account.

In these scenarios, it is not clear whether there was a formal policy enforced by the LEA requiring students to create social media accounts that use addictive feeds or if the requirement was more of an informal rule. Because the requirements for

membership or participation in a student club or sport are determined locally, it is difficult to quantify how widespread these exclusions are.

Parent communications. Generally, for matters involving an individual student, school administrators and LEA staff directly contact parents and guardians through traditional means of email, phone call, or written notice sent home with students. Recently, many schools have also launched dedicated school messaging services and apps to streamline and standardized communication between parents, teachers, and school leaders. For more general updates intended for broader audiences, LEAs may also maintain official social media accounts and pages to share updates, school news, and general reminders with students, their families, and community members.

This bill prohibits LEAs from using addictive feeds as the only means of contacting students and their parents or guardians. It does not prohibit LEAs from utilizing platforms that use addictive feeds, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, to continue sharing general updates with parents and community members.

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

SUPPORT: (Verified 6/30/26)

Common Sense Media
Distraction-Free Schools California
Healthier-Tech

OPPOSITION: (Verified 6/30/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 56-11, 5/23/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Solache, Stefani, Wallis, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: Castillo, DeMaio, Dixon, Ellis, Gallagher, Hadwick, Lackey, Macedo, Patterson, Ta, Tangipa

NO VOTE RECORDED: Alanis, Bryan, Chen, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Hoover,
Nguyen, Sanchez, Sharp-Collins, Soria, Valencia, Wicks

Prepared by: Therresa Austin / ED. / (916) 651-4105

7/2/26 8:41:28

**** **END** ****