

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 334 (Reyes) – As Amended July 7, 2025

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 January 1, 2028, to review the existing California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys system (CalSCHLS) to identify areas of the surveys administered through this system where age-appropriate questions related to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual abuse safety may be incorporated.

The bill also requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), upon the next revision of the Health Education Framework, to consider including information regarding sexual harassment and associated disciplinary consequences, the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP), and Title IX. Lastly, the bill establishes the second full week of September as Sexual Harassment Safety Week and encourages public schools to provide for increased focus, resources, and information regarding sexual harassment, abuse, and assault prevention.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

- 1) Ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressures of an unknown but likely significant amount, potentially in the millions of dollars, for local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide additional training, activities, and resources and periodically conduct policy review during the annual Sexual Harassment Safety Week.
- 2) Ongoing General Fund costs of approximately \$300,000 for the CDE to hire additional staff to create and maintain CDE webpages addressing sexual abuse prevention resources and training along with necessary technical assistance for LEAs, and perform review of the survey.
- 3) Negligible costs for the IQC to add consideration of sexual harassment and associated disciplinary consequence information to IQC's next Health Education Framework revision.

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:

I am deeply concerned by the repeated failure to protect our students from sexual harassment. One striking example took place at Redlands USD in my district, where the California Department of Justice determined that the District systemically violated laws in place to protect against and address complaints related to sexual assault, harassment, and abuse, including Title IX, the Child Abuse and Neglect and Reporting Act (CANRA), and provisions of the California Education Code. Furthermore, the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights also "identified several areas needing improvement regarding their Title IX processes" and entered into an agreement responding to 35 identified reports of sexual harassment at the school district. There have also been other instances recently in other school districts in California.

- 2) **Background. Recent Department of Justice (DOJ) Investigation.** Pursuant to a 2024 stipulated judgement, the Redlands Unified School district must address "critical and system shortfalls in the District's policies and practices regarding their response to allegations and complaints of sexual harassment, assault, and abuse of students." This judgement results from a civil rights investigation into the district's handling of these complaints involving sexual abuse of minor students by the district's personnel.

The investigation found that the district failed to follow several laws and regulations regarding a Title IX Coordinator's duties, responding adequately to allegations of sexual harassment, assault, and abuse of students, promulgation of procedures and policies governing the district's response to such allegations, and proper dissemination of policies on nondiscrimination and sexual harassment. As part of the judgement, the district will be overseen for five years by the court, and the Attorney General, and must undertake various reforms ensuring it respond in a legally adequate manner to promptly prevent, stop, and remedy sexual harassment, assault, or abuse on its campus. Such remedies include development of an electronic centralized tracking and response system for all oral and written reports and complaints of sexual harassment, abuse, and assault, provision of compensatory education and mental health services to victims, provision of an anonymous climate survey at the end of each academic semester, and timely proof of compliance with all provisions of the judgement to the DOJ.

**Health Education Framework.** Adopted by the SBE on May 6, 2019, the Health Education Framework includes information about how students can learn about healthy relationships, child sexual abuse, and human trafficking, which includes sex trafficking (in age-appropriate ways), and learn about related topics, such as affirmative consent, relationship violence, bullying, sexual harassment, and media influences. The framework specifically includes definitions, examples, and impacts related to sexual assault and sexual harassment. However, it does not include information specific to the topics required by this bill, such as the Uniform Complaint Procedures, the authority of the federal Office for Civil Rights, and other information about Title IX. This bill requires the IQC to consider including in the next revision of the Health Framework information about what a student should do if they believe another student has been subjected to sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or retaliation, including how to make a report and how to file a complaint with the local educational agency's Title IX coordinator.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Aaron Heredia / APPR. / (916) 319-2081