

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 80

Introduced by Assembly Member Dickinson
(Principal coauthor: Senator Steinberg)

August 27, 2013

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 80—Relative to Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 80, as introduced, Dickinson. Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court Day

This measure would designate December 4, 2013, as Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court Day.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, More than 700,000 suspensions involving over
2 365,000 students occur in California's public schools each year;
3 and
4 WHEREAS, More than 1.8 million students are truant in
5 California public schools each year; and
6 WHEREAS, African American students represent only 6.5
7 percent of the enrollment in California public schools but receive
8 19 percent of the total suspensions; and
9 WHEREAS, Students with disabilities face the highest risk of
10 suspension of any students in California; and
11 WHEREAS, Children in foster care are more likely to be
12 suspended and experience problems with chronic absenteeism;
13 and

1 WHEREAS, Suspension rates have been increasing since the
2 1970s, with racial disparities in suspension rates increasing at very
3 high rates; and

4 WHEREAS, Suspension and chronic absenteeism are linked to
5 academic failure, higher school dropout rates, and involvement in
6 the juvenile and criminal justice systems; and

7 WHEREAS, Almost one-half of all suspensions in California
8 are for disruption and defiance, rather than for acts of violence or
9 acts involving weapons or drugs; and

10 WHEREAS, Research shows that schools with high rates of
11 suspension do not have better attendance or academic performance
12 than demographically similar schools with much lower rates of
13 suspension; and

14 WHEREAS, Implementation of evidence-based and promising
15 practices to respond to disruptive student behavior and improve
16 school climate, such as Schoolwide Positive Behavioral
17 Interventions and Supports and Restorative Justice, have allowed
18 schools to reduce their rates of suspension and improve school
19 climate; and

20 WHEREAS, Court-based interventions, such as truancy courts,
21 have shown promise in reducing chronic absenteeism and
22 improving academic performance; and

23 WHEREAS, Juvenile courts are actively engaged in monitoring
24 the educational needs of children under their jurisdiction, and
25 juvenile court judges are encouraged to take an active role in their
26 communities to encourage adequate support and services for at-risk
27 youth as well as to develop a close liaison with school authorities;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Children in foster care with more stable placements
30 experience better educational outcomes and are more likely to
31 graduate; and

32 WHEREAS, The Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom
33 Torlakson, has focused resources of the State Department of
34 Education to assist school districts in California to implement new
35 approaches to school discipline and attendance that will lead to
36 safer and more effective schools in California; and

37 WHEREAS, The Judicial Council has determined that keeping
38 students in school and out of our court system is an important
39 objective for all of California, and is hosting a December 4, 2013,
40 summit to bring collaborative teams from many California counties

1 together to plan reforms that will address the impact of existing
2 school discipline policies and the challenges of chronic
3 absenteeism; and

4 WHEREAS, The Assembly and the Senate are committed to
5 working together to reduce unnecessary suspensions and ensure
6 that all students in California have an opportunity to thrive in a
7 safe and supportive school environment; now, therefore, be it

8 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California the Senate*
9 *thereof concurring*, that the Legislature hereby designates
10 December 4, 2013, as Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court
11 Day, during which multidisciplinary teams from across California
12 will gather to develop collaborative plans to improve school
13 discipline practices and school attendance so that children in
14 California will succeed in school and avoid involvement in criminal
15 activity; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, that the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
17 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.