

Senate Bill No. 330

Passed the Senate September 10, 2013

Secretary of the Senate

Passed the Assembly September 9, 2013

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2013, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to add Section 51900.5 to the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 330, Padilla. Pupil instruction: health framework: mental health instruction.

Existing law requires the State Department of Education to prepare and distribute to school districts guidelines for the preparation of comprehensive health education plans, and requires approval of district plans to be made in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education. Existing law also establishes the Instructional Quality Commission and requires the commission to, among other things, recommend curriculum frameworks to the state board.

This bill would require, during the next revision of the publication "Health Framework for California Public Schools," the commission to consider developing, and recommending for adoption by the state board, a distinct category on mental health instruction, as described, to educate pupils about all aspects of mental health. The bill would require the commission to ensure that one or more experts in the mental health and educational fields provides input in the development of the mental health instruction in the health framework, as provided.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Mental health is critical to overall health, well-being, and academic success.

(b) Mental health challenges affect all age groups, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic classes.

(c) Millions of Californians, including at least one in five youths, live with mental health challenges. Millions more are affected by the mental health challenges of someone else, such as a close friend or family member.

(d) Mental health education is one of the best ways to increase awareness and the seeking of help, while reducing the stigma associated with mental health challenges. The public education system is the most efficient and effective setting for providing this education to all children and youth. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all California kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, pupils have the opportunity to benefit from a comprehensive mental health education curriculum.

SEC. 2. Section 51900.5 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51900.5. (a) During the next revision of the publication “Health Framework for California Public Schools” (health framework), the Instructional Quality Commission shall consider developing, and recommending for adoption by the state board, a distinct category on mental health instruction to educate pupils about all aspects of mental health.

(b) As used in this section, “mental health instruction” shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) Reasonably designed and age-appropriate instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health.

(2) Defining common mental health challenges such as depression, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, and anxiety, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

(3) Elucidating the services and supports that effectively help individuals manage mental health challenges.

(4) Promoting mental health wellness, which includes positive development, social connectedness and supportive relationships, resiliency, problem solving skills, coping skills, self-esteem, and a positive school and home environment in which pupils feel comfortable.

(5) Ability to identify warning signs of common mental health problems in order to promote awareness and early intervention so pupils know to take action before a situation turns into a crisis. This should include instruction on both of the following:

(A) How to appropriately seek and find assistance from mental health professionals and services within the school district and in the community for themselves or others.

(B) Appropriate evidence-based research and practices that are proven to help overcome mental health challenges.

(6) The connection and importance of mental health to overall health and academic success as well as to cooccurring conditions, such as chronic physical conditions and chemical dependence and substance abuse.

(7) Awareness and appreciation about the prevalence of mental health challenges across all populations, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses, including the impact of culture on the experience and treatment of mental health challenges.

(8) Stigma surrounding mental health challenges and what can be done to overcome stigma, increase awareness, and promote acceptance. This shall include, to the extent possible, classroom presentations of narratives by peers and other individuals who have experienced mental health challenges, and how they coped with their situations, including how they sought help and acceptance.

(c) In the normal course of recommending curriculum frameworks to the state board, as required by Section 60204, the Instructional Quality Commission shall ensure that one or more experts in the mental health and educational fields provides input in the development of the mental health instruction in the health framework. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Instructional Quality Commission seek experts from culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse communities, representatives from all mental health professions, teachers, counselors, parents, those involved in promoting mental wellness, and those living with a mental health challenge and their families.

(d) This section does not require or authorize the Instructional Quality Commission to recommend new health education content standards.

Approved _____, 2013

Governor