

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1025**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Thurmond**

February 26, 2015

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An act to add Section 124174.7 to the Health and Safety Code, relating to pupil health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1025, as introduced, Thurmond. Pupil health: multitiered and integrated interventions pilot program.

Existing law establishes a system of public elementary and secondary schools in this state, and provides for the establishment of school districts and other local educational agencies to operate these schools and provide instruction to pupils. Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction, among his or her other duties, to serve as the chief executive officer of the State Department of Education.

This bill would require the State Department of Education to establish a 3-year pilot program to encourage inclusive practices that integrate mental health, special education, and school climate interventions following a multitiered framework in 3 schools in 10 school districts, as specified. The bill would require the State Department of Education to select schools where at least 60% of the student body is eligible for a free or reduced-price meal program and whose applications provide an estimate for the amount of funding being requested for start up and evaluation and detail a model approach that targets the behavioral, emotional, and academic needs of pupils with multitiered and integrated mental health, special education, and school climate interventions. The bill, contingent on the enactment of an appropriation for this purpose, would require the department to provide startup and evaluation funding

to each school participating in the pilot program, and would require the schools to provide certain information to the State Department of Education in accordance with a comprehensive evaluation plan developed by the State Department of Health Care Services and the State Department of Education to assess the impact of the pilot program and disseminate best practices. The bill would require the State Department of Education to submit a report to the Legislature evaluating the success of the pilot program at the end of the 3-year period.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
 State-mandated local program: no.

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

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that pupils  
 2 from all backgrounds and circumstances in California deserve  
 3 adequate behavioral and academic support to achieve their full  
 4 potential. The Legislature further finds and declares all of the  
 5 following:  
 6 (1) Pupils in California face relational and environmental  
 7 stressors that diminish their ability to achieve their full potential.  
 8 Among these complex challenges may be poverty, frequent  
 9 exposure to violence, placement in the foster care system, and  
 10 other negative experiences that result in chronic stress and trauma.  
 11 Nearly 700,000 pupils in California receive special education  
 12 services, and nearly one-in-four youth are living in poverty. Nearly  
 13 60,000 youth are currently placed in foster care, and as many as  
 14 20 percent of youth are in need of mental health interventions.  
 15 (2) Pupils with these stressors are frequently failed by the current  
 16 policies and systems in place, as measured by indicators for  
 17 academic outcomes, social inclusion, emotional development,  
 18 mental health support, and general pupil well-being.  
 19 (A) In California, more than 20 percent of special education  
 20 pupils spend less than 40 percent of their day within their regular  
 21 classroom, an indicator of inclusion, compared to 14 percent of  
 22 special education pupils nationally and a federal target of less than  
 23 9 percent.  
 24 (B) Only 59 percent of special education pupils graduated from  
 25 high school within four years in the 2010–11 fiscal year compared  
 26 to 76 percent of all pupils.

1 (C) Statewide, a recent study found only 58 percent of foster  
2 youth in grade 12 graduated compared to 85 percent of all youth,  
3 with nearly 14 percent of foster youth in grade 12 dropping out of  
4 school.

5 (D) Far too often, youth with mental health challenges do not  
6 receive the services they need. For instance, one study found that  
7 nearly two-thirds of adolescents who experienced a major  
8 depressive disorder in the last year did not receive treatment.

9 (E) Even by grade 3, low-income pupils perform substantially  
10 below their higher income peers in areas of social and emotional  
11 skill, social and emotional development, engagement in school,  
12 and physical well-being.

13 (3) Current funding practices fail to adequately incentivize  
14 schools to invest in front-end preventative measures that would  
15 reduce overall cost of special education.

16 (4) Delivery of comprehensive community-based support and  
17 resources requires a high level of collaboration among schools,  
18 school districts, and county mental health agencies.

19 (5) Inclusive multitiered systems of behavioral and academic  
20 supports are essential to providing high-quality, cost-effective  
21 special education programs that benefit all pupils.

22 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that, upon demonstrated  
23 success of the pilot program established pursuant to Section  
24 124174.7 of the Health and Safety Code, the evaluated models can  
25 be adopted by a large number of schools to increase the efficient  
26 and effective utilization of available community resources in order  
27 to promote the success of all pupils.

28 SEC. 2. Section 124174.7 is added to the Health and Safety  
29 Code, to read:

30 124174.7. (a) (1) The State Department of Education shall  
31 establish a three-year pilot program in accordance with this section  
32 to encourage inclusive practices that integrate mental health, special  
33 education, and school climate interventions following a multitiered  
34 framework.

35 (2) For purposes of this section, “department” means the State  
36 Department of Education.

37 (b) The department shall establish the pilot program in three  
38 schools in each of 10 school districts that apply to participate  
39 through the submission of detailed applications providing estimates  
40 for the amount of funding being requested for start up and

1 evaluation of the program and specifying their intended models.  
2 The department shall select schools where at least 60 percent of  
3 the student body is eligible for a free or reduced-price meal  
4 program and whose applications detail a model approach that  
5 targets the behavioral, emotional, and academic needs of pupils  
6 with multitiered and integrated mental health, special education,  
7 and school climate interventions. In addition to reflecting the  
8 school’s specific culture and needs, a school’s model shall include  
9 all of the following:

10 (1) Formalized collaboration with local mental health agencies  
11 to provide school-based mental health services that are integrated  
12 within a multitiered system of support.

13 (2) Leverage of school and community resources to offer  
14 comprehensive multitiered interventions on a sustainable basis.

15 (3) An initial school climate assessment that includes  
16 information from multiple stakeholders, including school staff,  
17 pupils, and families, that is used to inform the selection of strategies  
18 and interventions that reflect the culture and goals of the school.

19 (4) A coordination of services team that considers referrals for  
20 services, oversees schoolwide efforts, and utilizes data-informed  
21 processes to identify struggling pupils who require early  
22 interventions.

23 (5) Whole school strategies that address school climate and  
24 universal pupil well-being, such as positive behavioral interventions  
25 and supports or the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, as well  
26 as comprehensive professional development opportunities, that  
27 build the capacity of the entire school community to recognize and  
28 respond to the unique social-emotional, behavioral, and academic  
29 needs of pupils.

30 (6) Targeted interventions for pupils with identified  
31 social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs, such as  
32 therapeutic group interventions, functional behavioral analysis and  
33 plan development, and targeted skill groups.

34 (7) Intensive services, such as wraparound, behavioral  
35 intervention, or one-on-one support, that can reduce the need for  
36 a pupil’s referral to special education or placement in more  
37 restrictive, isolated settings.

38 (c) Contingent on the enactment of an appropriation in the  
39 annual Budget Act for the purpose of implementing this section,  
40 the department shall provide startup and evaluation funding to

1 each school participating in the pilot program in the following  
2 amounts:

3 (1) Two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in year one.

4 (2) Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in year two.

5 (3) One hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) in year three.

6 (d) (1) The State Department of Health Care Services and the  
7 department shall develop a comprehensive evaluation plan to assess  
8 the impact of the pilot program and disseminate best practices.

9 (2) Outcomes and indicators to be reported pursuant to this  
10 subdivision by schools participating in the pilot program shall  
11 include, but need not be limited to, those already being collected  
12 by schools, as well as designated measures of pupil well-being,  
13 academic achievement, and school engagement and attendance.

14 (3) (A) The department, in compliance with Section 9795 of  
15 the Government Code, shall submit a report to the Legislature at  
16 the end of the three-year period evaluating the success of the  
17 program and making further recommendations. The department  
18 shall make the report available to the public, and shall post it on  
19 the department's Internet Web site.

20 (B) The requirement to submit a report to the Legislature  
21 imposed under subparagraph (A) is inoperative, pursuant to Section  
22 10231.5 of the Government Code, four years after the report is  
23 due.