

**Introduced by Senator Hancock**

February 25, 2015

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An act to add Chapter 18.5 (commencing with Section 53320) to Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to school climate.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SB 463, as introduced, Hancock. School climate: Safe and Supportive Schools Train the Trainer Program.

Existing law establishes a system of public elementary and secondary schools in this state, and authorizes local educational agencies throughout the state to provide instruction to pupils.

This bill would establish the Safe and Supportive Schools Train the Trainer Program. The bill, to the extent that one-time funding is made available in the Budget Act of 2015, would require the State Department of Education to apportion funds to a designated county office of education, selected from applicant county offices of education, that would be the fiduciary agent for the program. The bill would require the designated county office of education to consult with specified organizations and to be in charge of establishing specific professional development activities that will lead to statewide professional development support structures and a network of trainers allowing for the development and expansion of the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports programs, restorative justice, social and emotional learning, trauma-informed practice, and cultural competency professional development in each region of the state, as provided.

The bill would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to review the impacts of this professional development effort and report to the Governor and the Legislature on or before June 30, 2019, on specified

aspects of this training. The bill would require that any funding allocated for this program be expended on or before January 1, 2019.

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. The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:

3 (a) California schools issued more than 600,000 suspensions in  
4 the 2012–13 school year. Recent statistics indicate that 20 percent  
5 of schoolage youth experience a functional or significant behavior  
6 or mental health disorder. Studies estimate that between 3.3 million  
7 and 10 million children in the United States witness violence in  
8 their own homes each year. Children who have experienced early,  
9 chronic trauma, such as family or community violence, can develop  
10 emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and relationship difficulties that  
11 can adversely affect their ability to learn and function well in  
12 school. Exposure to trauma is associated with a higher risk for  
13 school dropout, and in turn, dropping out of school increases the  
14 risk of being imprisoned. Behavioral problems among schoolage  
15 youth are associated with high rates of depression, experiencing  
16 a traumatic or violent event, and other significant homelife stresses.  
17 Unfortunately, too many youth, particularly pupils of color and  
18 other vulnerable groups of pupils, such as foster youth, who have  
19 been subjected to significant trauma are suspended from school  
20 each year. For pupils with these mental health concerns, the  
21 American Academy of Pediatrics has found that suspension can  
22 increase stress and may predispose pupils to antisocial behavior  
23 and even suicidal ideation. Psychologists have similarly found that  
24 disciplinary exclusion policies can increase pupil shame, alienation,  
25 rejection, and breaking of healthy adult bonds, thereby exacerbating  
26 negative mental health outcomes for young people. Removing  
27 pupils from school through disciplinary exclusion also increases  
28 the risk that they will become victims of violent crime.

29 (b) The local control funding formula identifies school climate  
30 as a state priority. However, there are a number of school districts  
31 in hard-to-serve locations in the state that do not have access to,  
32 and are not served by, professionals who have training in  
33 research-based, schoolwide strategies that can address pupil social,

1 emotional, and mental health learning needs. The demand for  
2 trainers and training in these practices in California has exceeded  
3 the supply.

4 (c) Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports  
5 (SW-PBIS) programs, restorative justice, social and emotional  
6 learning and trauma-informed practices have been shown to address  
7 these needs while also significantly reducing suspension and  
8 expulsion rates.

9 (d) SW-PBIS can provide a comprehensive and collaborative  
10 prevention and intervention framework for schools to improve  
11 academic and behavioral outcomes for all pupils. Recent research  
12 from Orange County has shown that in school districts where  
13 SW-PBIS has been implemented there has been a 26-percent drop  
14 in in-school suspensions, a 55-percent drop in out-of-school  
15 suspensions, and a 30-percent drop in expulsions. Schools that  
16 have established and maintained SW-PBIS systems with integrity  
17 have teaching and learning environments that are less reactive,  
18 aversive, punitive, dangerous, and exclusionary, are more engaging,  
19 responsive, preventive, productive, and participatory, address  
20 classroom management and disciplinary issues such as attendance,  
21 cooperation, participation, and meeting positive expectations,  
22 improve support for pupils whose behavior requires more  
23 specialized or intensive assistance for emotional and behavioral  
24 disorders and mental health issues, and maximize academic  
25 engagement and achievement for all pupils.

26 (e) Restorative justice or restorative practices are a set of  
27 principles and practices grounded in the values of showing respect,  
28 taking responsibility, and strengthening relationships. When harm  
29 occurs at a schoolsite, restorative justice focuses on repair of harm  
30 and prevention of reoccurrence. Restorative practice, which builds  
31 upon restorative justice and applies in the school context, is used  
32 to build a sense of school community and resolve conflict by  
33 repairing harm and restoring positive relationships through the use  
34 of regular restorative circles where pupils and educators work  
35 together to set academic goals, develop core values for the  
36 classroom community, and resolve conflicts. Practices such as  
37 peacemaking circles and restorative conferences are designed to  
38 help pupils take responsibility for their actions and repair the harm  
39 they may have caused. Through this process, pupils learn how to  
40 interact and manage their relationships. A restorative justice

1 approach enables school personnel to intervene more effectively,  
2 increasing support without compromising accountability. At  
3 Richmond High School in West Contra Costa Unified School  
4 District, a 2011 restorative school discipline program cut the  
5 school's nearly 500 suspensions by January 2011 by one-half by  
6 January 2012.

7 (f) Trauma-informed practices are strategies and professional  
8 development for school staff integrated into a multitier intervention  
9 and prevention framework to help increase school staff's  
10 understanding regarding the impact that trauma has on pupil  
11 behavior and provide tools to address such behavior in a manner  
12 that does not retraumatize the pupil, and to develop a multilevel  
13 school-based prevention and intervention program for pupils with  
14 the highest trauma needs. At El Dorado Elementary School, where  
15 UCSF HEARTS — Healthy Environments and Response to  
16 Trauma in Schools, a trauma-informed practices model, has been  
17 in operation for four years and where the school consistently  
18 tracked office discipline referral data, staff reported a 32-percent  
19 decrease in such referrals and a 42-percent decrease in violent  
20 pupil incidents after the first year.

21 (g) Social and emotional learning (SEL), which is a process that  
22 occurs through teaching in the classroom and reinforcement  
23 throughout the schoolday to help pupils acquire and effectively  
24 apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to recognize  
25 and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make  
26 responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle  
27 challenging situations capably, has shown similar success. A  
28 meta-analysis of 213 rigorous studies of SEL found that the  
29 academic achievement scores of pupils receiving quality SEL  
30 instruction were an average of 11 percentile points higher than  
31 pupils who did not receive SEL instruction. In 2007–2008 in the  
32 Los Angeles Unified School District, 58 percent of the model SEL  
33 schools showed 43 percent fewer discipline referrals, a 45-percent  
34 reduction in physically aggressive behavior, a 64-percent reduction  
35 in disruptive behavior, and at least 30 points of growth in academic  
36 performance. An in-depth study found that pupils who received  
37 SEL instruction had more positive attitudes about school and  
38 improved an average of 11 percentile points on standardized  
39 achievement tests compared to pupils who did not receive that  
40 instruction. Secondary benefits of SEL include improved

1 graduation rates, reduced violence, and lowered substance abuse.  
2 SEL is a tier one universal SW-PBIS strategy for all pupils.

3 (h) In order to ensure that all pupils flourish academically,  
4 school districts must establish equitable discipline practices and  
5 behavioral interventions that promote positive social-emotional  
6 development and that prevent and respond to negative behaviors  
7 in order to reengage disconnected pupils. School psychologists,  
8 social workers, and mental health counselors play a critical role  
9 in implementing school-based educationally related counseling  
10 services and positive behavior systems and supports that create  
11 and reinforce positive school cultures of achievement for all pupils,  
12 including those at risk of academic failure.

13 (i) The local control funding formula has been passed in an  
14 effort to reform school finance and to direct funding directly to  
15 at-risk pupil populations as outlined in Section 42238.07 of the  
16 Education Code. This section states that the regulations shall  
17 require a school district “to increase or improve services for  
18 unduplicated pupils.” Research shows that efforts to improve  
19 school climate, safety, and learning are not separate endeavors.  
20 They must be designed, funded, and implemented as a  
21 comprehensive schoolwide approach. School districts must work  
22 to ensure through their local control and accountability plans that  
23 pupils have access to universal, targeted, and individualized  
24 psychological, behavioral, and counseling services and support  
25 that will increase their chances for academic improvement.

26 (j) SW-PBIS, restorative justice, trauma-informed practices,  
27 and SEL can support the local control and accountability plan  
28 priority areas of school climate and pupil engagement by providing  
29 local schools and school districts in hard-to-serve areas with the  
30 research-based framework and strategies to produce targeted pupil  
31 behavioral and academic outcomes.

32 (k) Restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, and social  
33 and emotional learning can be incorporated into the tiered  
34 framework of SW-PBIS to help pupils gain critical social and  
35 emotional skills, receive support to help transform trauma-related  
36 responses, and create places where pupils can understand the  
37 impact of their actions and develop meaningful consequences for  
38 repairing harm to the school community.

1 SEC. 2. Chapter 18.5 (commencing with Section 53320) is  
2 added to Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code,  
3 to read:

4  
5 CHAPTER 18.5. SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS TRAIN THE  
6 TRAINER PROGRAM  
7

8 53320. (a) To the extent that one-time funding is made  
9 available in the Budget Act of 2015, the department shall apportion  
10 funds to a designated county office of education to be the fiduciary  
11 agent for the Safe and Supportive Schools Train the Trainer  
12 Program. The designated county office of education shall be chosen  
13 by the Superintendent from county offices that apply for  
14 designation under this chapter. The designated county office of  
15 education shall be in charge of establishing specific professional  
16 development activities that will lead to statewide professional  
17 development support structures and a network of trainers allowing  
18 for the development and expansion of the Schoolwide Positive  
19 Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS) programs,  
20 restorative justice, social and emotional learning (SEL),  
21 trauma-informed practice, and cultural competency professional  
22 development in each region of the state, with a specific focus on  
23 those regions that are underserved and do not have access to  
24 trainers in these research-based approaches.

25 (b) The designated county office of education shall consult with  
26 the Regional K-12 Student Mental Health Initiative, the National  
27 Alliance on Mental Illness, the California Technical Assistance  
28 Center on SW-PBIS, the California County Superintendents  
29 Educational Services Association, the California Mental Health  
30 Directors Association, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and  
31 Emotional Learning (CASEL), UCSF Healthy Environments and  
32 Response to Trauma in Schools (HEARTS) project, Restorative  
33 Justice for Oakland Youth, the International Institute for  
34 Restorative Practices, and other nonprofit and public agencies to  
35 effectively implement these strategies throughout the state and  
36 nationally. The designated county office of education shall also  
37 select an advisory committee made up of stakeholders and  
38 professionals who have participated in the development and  
39 expansion of these programs to assist in the planning and  
40 implementation of this program.

1 (c) Within the context of a state-level plan, funding shall be  
2 targeted to all of the following critical activities:

3 (1) Explaining the importance of linking research-based  
4 strategies with local control funding formula planning and local  
5 control and accountability plans, specifically with respect to the  
6 school climate and pupil engagement state priority areas.

7 (2) Creating regional conferences and workshops on  
8 implementation that would provide free training for school and  
9 school district teams.

10 (3) Establishing stipends for release time for school personnel  
11 attending these conferences.

12 (4) Developing best practices of current district level systems  
13 and ensuring that these best practices are widely disseminated.

14 (5) Establishing a cohort of free or low-cost trainers and coaches  
15 who can be available to work directly with local school districts  
16 in hard-to-serve areas that are seeking to implement research-based  
17 strategies.

18 (6) Developing a network of educators who are effectively  
19 implementing these practices and willing to provide coaching and  
20 training to other schools and school districts, particularly in  
21 hard-to-serve areas.

22 (7) Developing statewide methods for collecting and  
23 disseminating best practices in implementing research-based  
24 strategies.

25 (8) Developing evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of  
26 research-based strategies.

27 (9) Developing specific professional development and  
28 professional learning communities for teachers utilizing these  
29 practices in their classes.

30 (d) The Legislative Analyst's Office shall review the impacts  
31 of this professional development effort and shall report to the  
32 Governor and the Legislature on or before June 30, 2019, on the  
33 breadth and best practices of the training and any pupil outcomes  
34 impacted by this training effort.

35 (e) Any funding allocated for this program shall be expended  
36 on or before January 1, 2019.