

## Legislation to Support Community Schools

Across the country, the community schools approach (aka full service community schools) is gaining momentum as key to addressing the complex roots of our persistent achievement gap. In a community school, the school staff and their partners (local government, community agencies) work together to identify and address the various needs of children and their families. This team connects children and families to academic, health, social service and other resources that help *remove barriers to learning and support academic success*. When a school has a way of helping kids get what they need so that they can come to school ready to learn, then teachers are free to teach, families can be better engaged, and school and community outcomes improve.

A community school is not a program. It's a way of doing business – a collaborative approach to supporting student success. While most of the work happens at the local level, there are ways that the state can help. The following pieces of legislation put forward policy that can support community schools development at the local level:

- AB 760 – (Assm. Gordon) Makes improvements to the Healthy Start program, a school-community collaborative grant program to support academic success by integrating services for children, youths and families. The bill would not re-fund the program but would lay important groundwork for when funding is again available. (Partnership for Children and Youth and California School Health Centers Association sponsoring)
- AB 823 – (Assm. Dickinson) Establishes a Children's Cabinet to include the heads of state agencies that administer programs for children with the collective goal of coordinating services, developing a common set of outcomes, and implementing plans to foster the well-being of young people. (Children Now sponsoring)
- SCR 18 – (Sen. Liu) This resolution would state the intent of the Legislature to pursue every means necessary to ensure that the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (CAL-SCHLS – AKA “California Healthy Kids Survey”) continues through federal funding, grants, or other sources to ensure that school districts receive the necessary funding to support the CAL-SCHLS. (Children Now sponsoring)
- AB 1368 – (Assm. Pan) States that California will support use of school climate / health surveys in the state through development of a school climate index uniform reporting mechanism. (Superintendent of Public Instruction sponsoring)
- AJR 10 – Resolution on School-Based Health Centers – (Assm. Brownley) Affirms the support of the Legislature for the school-based health center program authorized by the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and for an appropriation by the United States Congress to fund that program. Also states the support of the Legislature for policies that include school-based health centers as a partner in creating a medical home for all children and for the inclusion of school-based health centers in the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act as an important strategy for ensuring that students are physically and mentally healthy and therefore ready to learn. (California School Health Centers Association sponsoring)