

SB 1357 (STEINBERG / ALQUIST)

Chronic Absence: California's Early Warning System

SUMMARY

SB 1357 helps California schools identify students who are most at risk of academic failure or dropping out, before it's too late. The bill enables the collection of new data on student absenteeism and combines that data with other predictive indicators already collected by our education data system. These combined indicators will become the foundation of an "early warning system," so that critical education, health, and community supports can be strategically targeted before students abandon school.

BACKGROUND

Earlier efforts to build an early warning system have stalled for lack of funds. SB 1357 renews the effort at a time when federal funds are available to invest in improving state data systems to identify students with the greatest needs.

Chronic absence from school, even in the primary grades, is one of the most accurate predictors of later high school dropout. Our education data system, however, is not equipped to collect data on absenteeism. California must do more to support districts and make sure that individual students, and schools, are identified when they show clear signs of distress. Once identified, districts, parents, schools and communities can do a better job of providing the supports needed to address the problem.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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THIS BILL

Contingent upon the receipt of federal funding for this purpose, **SB 1357** requires the California Department of Education to include data on student absences in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS).

The bill declares the intent of the Legislature to support the development of an early warning system to identify and support individual students who are at risk of academic failure or of dropping out of school. It further ensures that districts that report attendance data would be able to obtain an early warning report, up to four times each school year, that would identify individual students who are most likely to face difficulty on the path toward a diploma.

SB 1357 would also revise the Annual Report on Dropouts in California to include chronic absence rates, and would establish the intent of the Legislature that the report be used to foster the development of effective supports and interventions to keep students on track to graduation.

SUPPORT

Bay Area Council
California Family Resource Association
California Federation of Teachers
California School Health Centers Assn.
California School Nurses Association
California State PTA
Children Now
The Education Trust-West
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California
Junior Leagues of California
League of Women Voters of California
Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of San Francisco District Attorney
Kamala Harris
Partnership for Children and Youth
PICO California
Public Advocates