

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



® Incorporated in California

California Chapter 2 - Kern | Los Angeles | Riverside | San Bernardino
San Luis Obispo | Santa Barbara | Ventura

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The Honorable Anthony J. Portantino
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Re: SB 387 (Portantino) Pupil Health: School Employee and Pupil Training: Youth Mental and Behavioral Health – SUPPORT

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) California Chapter 2, which represents over 1,000 pediatricians, is in full support of SB 387 (Portantino), which would require the California Department of Education to ensure that 75 percent of classified and certified employees on school campuses complete an evidence-based behavioral health training program.

In October 2021, the AAP declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the recent years. The pandemic brings this mental health crisis in children front and center as children experience losses of school support, peer support, and even loved ones. The time to act is now.

SB 387 will provide educators who interact with students daily the necessary tools and resources to identify students with mental health needs and make timely referrals. This bill is needed to fight the ongoing child and adolescent mental health crisis.

Sincerely,

Hsiang-Fen Frances Su, MD
Behavioral Health Committee Member
AAP-CA2