

May 1, 2017

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
State Capitol Building, Room #3086
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUPPORT– SB 328 (Portantino): School Start Time
April 26, 2017 version

Dear Senator Portantino,

The California State PTA has taken a *support* position on SB 328, as amended April 26, 2017.

This bill would require middle schools and high schools to begin their school day no earlier than 8:30 am. Based on the research on the impact of sleep deprivation on adolescents, we support this change in school start time to improve the health, safety and academic success of students.

The American Academy of Pediatrics addresses this health issue directly and recommends that middle and high schools delay the start of class to 8:30 a.m. or later.

“Doing so will align school schedules to the biological sleep rhythms of adolescents, whose sleep-wake cycles begin to shift up to two hours later at the start of puberty.”

“Chronic sleep loss in children and adolescents is one of the most common – and easily fixable – public health issues in the U.S. today,” said pediatrician Judith Owens, MD, FAAP, lead author of the policy statement, “School Start Times for Adolescents,” published in the September 2014 issue of Pediatrics.

“The research is clear that adolescents who get enough sleep have a reduced risk of being overweight or suffering depression, are less likely to be involved in automobile accidents, and have better grades, higher standardized test scores and an overall better quality of life,” Dr. Owens said. “Studies have shown that delaying early school start times is one key factor that can help adolescents get the sleep they need to grow and learn.”

We understand that a further amendment to the bill will be provided in the next committee to encourage an information campaign to inform school communities about the research on sleep deprivation and the benefits of a later school start time and as well as strategies to successfully implement this later school start time. We think it is critical that school communities understand why this change is being made and have some “best practices” for implementation.

Thank you for addressing this important issue and incorporating our recommendations.

Sincerely,



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