



March 23, 2022

The Honorable Wendy Carrillo
California State Assembly
1021 O St., Ste. 5730
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 748 (Carrillo) Pupil mental health: mental health assistance posters - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Carrillo,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write in support of your AB 748, which ensures that middle and high school students are provided vital information about mental health resources available to them by requiring schools to display posters detailing school site services.

According to the most recent California Healthy Kids Survey, administered biannually by the California Department of Education and the California Department of Health Care Services, a long-term rise in chronic sadness and hopelessness reported among young people in past surveys has continued. Young people need every intervention opportunity possible to better ensure that they end up seeking support. In one study, only a third of 15 and 16-year-olds with problematic mental health symptoms sought help, illustrating the reality that often adolescents do not seek support when they need it.

Additionally, the American Academy of Pediatrics highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened existing mental health challenges in adolescence. Along with statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, research shows that approximately 4,600 lives are lost each year due to mental health struggles and suicide—and that suicide among teens and young adults has nearly tripled since the 1940s.

AB 748 aims to help students recognize signs of mental health decline, have a plan in the event of a mental health crisis, learn about positive coping strategies, and become informed about school site emotional and social resources by requiring schools to post informative mental health posters and materials. All of these resources must be made readily available to students in the easiest way possible by posting them on school campuses. As schools are reopening, the posters can also be distributed digitally.

The first step in combatting our mental health crisis should be providing critical information that can help students seek out resources for mental health support. AB 748 ensures that

students have the knowledge necessary to save lives. For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support AB 748 and would like to thank you for your authorship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Yoder", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Chair & Members, Senate Education Committee

CC: Chair & Members, Senate Appropriations Committee