



health, safety and equity in education

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Sleep-deprived Students Learning to Lobby Lawmakers

***"Start School Later Sacramento" high school students to attend professional lobbying training...
in an effort to pass legislation regarding later school start times***

SACRAMENTO, CA – A group of eight high school freshmen who are charter members of the Sacramento chapter of Start School Later will be attending two days of professional lobbying training, hosted by Capitol Seminars at McGeorge School of Law and Policy on April 12 and 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.

Students will be available for questions/interviews at 2 p.m. on April 12, following their first day of lobbying training in Classroom B at the McGeorge School, 3200 Fifth Avenue in Sacramento.

The students, all members of CIVITAS, a 4-year civics learning academy at Rio Americano High School in the San Juan Unified School District, have become interested in Senate Bill 328 – the Healthy School Start Times Bill. This bill was put before the legislature last year by Senator Anthony Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge) and co-authored by Senator Richard Pan (D-Sacramento). The bill would require California middle and high schools to begin first period no earlier than 8:30 a.m. and would not go into effect, if passed, until 2020. Last year, the Bill passed the Senate, both the Senate and Assembly Education Committees and both Appropriations Committees, but failed to pass the Assembly when 23 members did not vote. The bill may be brought back before the Assembly later this year...and the students have an opinion on the way the Assembly members should vote.

"California needs to prioritize sleep," says Kira Givans, a student member of Start School Later Sacramento. "We know we do better when we're rested. We have a book that's an inch thick with scientific data about how later school start times can help us be healthier, happier, safer and smarter. Who wouldn't want that for teenagers?"

In the next six weeks, the students are planning to meet with experts in the fields of sleep health, law and education...all before lobbying the State Assembly members.

"We've been presenting Capitol Seminars courses for 10 years, and this is the first time we've had high school students attend. I think it's great that young people are aware that they can influence legislation and are interested in learning how they can be effective at doing so." says Ray LeBov, founder and moderator of Capitol Seminars.

The media is invited to attend the lobbying seminars.

Start School Later is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to ensure school start times compatible with health, safety, education, and equity. Visit their website at: <http://www.startschoollater.net>

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