

September 4, 2019

SB 328 (Portantino) Healthy School Start Times

SUPPORT

Dear Members of the California Legislature and Governor Gavin Newsom:

As experts in scientific research, public health, medicine, sleep medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, adolescent psychiatry, and preventive medicine, we urge you to support SB 328 (Portantino), the healthy school start times bill.

The volume, breadth, consistency, and strength of the peer-reviewed scientific research supporting this legislation are unequivocal, and they exceed the high standards for public health and education policy.

The evidence is clear: Because brain changes that occur at puberty cause most teenagers to naturally stay awake later at night, early school start times prevent most adolescents from obtaining the quantity and quality of sleep they need. Adolescent sleep loss increases risks for many serious illnesses, suicide, car crashes, and lower academic performance. Early school start times are the primary and modifiable public policy cause of the adolescent sleep loss epidemic. Starting secondary schools at 8:30 a.m. or later results in more sleep on average for kids, and it is the essential public policy countermeasure to combat the public health epidemic of adolescent sleep deprivation.

The level of research consensus on this matter is overwhelming, and it underscores the urgent need to protect California's adolescent children from the public health risk of developmentally inappropriate school start times. Please prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of California's 6 million public school children by passing and signing SB 328 into law.

Thank you,

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