



January 25, 2022

## ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT

### AB 552 (Quirk-Silva) Integrated School-Based Behavioral Health Partnership Program. - SUPPORT

The County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California, the California Alliance of Child and Family Services, the Dr. Beatriz Maria Solis Policy Institute, the California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives, the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions, the California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals, the California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network, the California Psychological Association, National Alliance on Mental Illness of California, SEIU California and the Steinberg Institute are in strong support of AB 552 (Quirk-Silva).

AB 552 would create the Integrated School-Based Behavioral Health Services Partnership Program (Partnership Program) encouraging local educational agencies (LEAs), county behavioral health agencies, and community-based agencies to collaborate on providing school-based services to students at the earliest onset of a behavioral health condition. In the schools participating in the Partnership Programs, a county behavioral health agency and its contracted network of community-

based providers will place trained professionals on school campuses to serve any student appropriately referred by school personnel, including Medi-Cal beneficiaries, privately insured and uninsured students. On campus, students will receive brief initial intervention services intended to prevent a behavioral health condition from worsening. The behavioral health professionals will ensure privately insured students access a private plan provider, if available. If the private plan cannot provide an appropriate provider within state mandated timely access timeframes, the county behavioral health agency will initiate services as appropriate and consistent with professionally recognized standards of practice. In these instances, the private plan will reimburse the county at the published Medi-Cal rate for the same service.

More than 50% of mental illness cases begin by age 14. For children whose mental health concerns go unnoticed or untreated, especially those between the ages of 12 and 17, rates of substance abuse, depression, and lower school achievement increase leading to other health-related problems and a lower quality of life. Addressing behavioral health conditions as early as possible, is critical in promoting the health and well-being of students. By providing early intervention services at schools, behavioral health conditions can be identified at the earliest onset and treated immediately.

This bill is needed to address the growing behavioral health needs of California's children and youth and to ensure access to behavioral health services for all students in Partnership Programs. We strongly support AB 552 (Quirk-Silva) and urge your AYE vote on this important legislation.