CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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California Department of Education
Official Letter
January 3, 2019

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

Comprehensive School Safety Plan Reminder, Legislative Update, and School Safety Resources

First and foremost, I wish to acknowledge the courage, resilience, and dedication of educators, first responders, and community support providers who, in the midst of experiencing their own devastating losses, continue to support, nurture, and strive to revitalize students, staff, and school communities impacted by the recent California fires.

During these times of devastating wildfires and unprecedented gun violence in our state and nation, it is more critical than ever to ensure that comprehensive school safety plans (CSSPs) are updated and approved and that procedures are practiced regularly by staff and students.

The California Department of Education (CDE) is committed to continuing to assist you and your schools to become as prepared as possible for emergencies and to maintain safe and secure school environments throughout the year.

Schools, districts, and counties must comply with California *Education Code (EC)* sections 32280–32289. It is your responsibility to ensure ongoing compliance with these requirements, including the development, revision, and updating of CCSPs through a collaborative process, and that plans be approved annually by the school district or county office of education by March 1. CDE Safe Schools Planning resources are available on the CDE Safe Schools Planning web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/safeschlplanning.asp.

Legislative Update

Effective January 1, 2019, Assembly Bill 1747 (Rodriguez), School Safety Plans, became law. This bill requires that during the writing and development of the comprehensive school safety plan (CSSP), the school site council or safety committee consult with a fire department and other first responder entities in addition to currently required entities. It requires the CSSP and any updates made to the plan to be shared with the law enforcement agency, the fire department, and the other first responder entities.

This bill requires the CSSP to also include procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents. AB 1747 may be accessed in its entirety by visiting the California Legislative Information web page at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1747.

In compliance with this bill, the CDE provided general direction to school districts and county offices of education (COEs) on what to include in the school building disaster plan. The February 1, 2018, Annual School Safety Plan Update Guidance letter can be viewed at https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr18ltr0201.asp. An updated School Safety Plan Compliance Checklist for developing a CSSP will be posted on the CDE website soon.

Also effective January 1, 2019, AB 2291 (Chiu), School Safety: Bullying, became law. This bill requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to adopt, on or before December 31, 2019, procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. AB 2291 can be accessed in its entirety by visiting the California Legislative Information web page at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2291.

In compliance with this bill, the CDE has developed and posted an online training module related to bullying and bullying prevention, including cyberbullying. The Bullying Module—School Safety document can be accessed at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/se/documents/bullymodule1.docx.

The bill requires schools operated by a school district or COE and charter schools to annually make available this online training module to certificated school site employees and all other school site employees who have regular interaction with pupils.

Mandated Reporter Online Training

The California Department of Social Services (DSS) has updated Mandated Reporter Online Training for School Personnel. To access the Mandated Reporter Online Training for School Personnel, please visit the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter website at https://mandatedreporterca.com/. DSS will be translating this training into Spanish and additional threshold languages in the future.

Senate Bill 1178 (Vidak) was passed by the California Legislature in August 2016 and authorized the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to design a poster that notifies children of the appropriate number to call to report child abuse or neglect. The poster is required to incorporate specified elements and be produced in five different languages. The legislature encourages school districts, charter schools, and private schools to post the appropriate version or versions of the poster in an area of the school where pupils frequently congregate.

A small group of California public school students, ranging from ages twelve through fourteen, collaborated to design several posters for this legislation. At the culmination of the project, the students presented the posters to the CDE administration for selection.The Child Abuse Prevention posters are in five languages in addition to English. To view these posters, please visit the CDE Child Abuse Prevention web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/ap/.

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Training in 2019

The CDE will be sponsoring two statewide trainings provided by Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students). The train-the-trainer full day session, titled Developing Emergency Operations Plans K–12 101, will be hosted by Marin COE on March 11, 2019, with registration information available soon. The San Diego COE training date will be announced at a later date.

Protecting Youth from Sexual Misconduct

The CDE hosted a pre-conference session titled “Protecting Our Youth from Sexual Misconduct, Assault, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation” at the Ninth Annual School Safety Conference in Orange County. The session featured experts from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, San Mateo COE, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, California Interscholastic Federation, and CDE. Topics included federal and local educator perspectives on preventing trafficking, assault, and exploitation in schools; commercial sexual exploitation of youth; and protecting young athletes. Materials from the session are available below:

> National Center on Safety Supportive Learning Environments:
> https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools;
> US Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign:
> https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/bc-inf-ed101-ht-101-for-school-administrators-staff.pdf;
> Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center:
> https://rems.ed.gov/docs/Sextortion_Fact_Sheet_Draft_for_Compliance_508C.pdf

I encourage your participation in the July 17–19, 2019, Safe Schools Conference in Orange County. More information regarding the Safe Schools Conference can be found on the Safe Schools Conference website at http://safeschoolsconference.com/.

For additional emergency services resources for schools and educators, please visit the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services Resources for Schools and Educators web page at http://www.caloes.ca.gov/for-schools-educators.

Thank you for your dedication and service to the safety, security, and well-being of all California students, education teams, and school communities.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Nancy Zarenda, Education Policy Consultant, at 916-445-8441 or nzarenda@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson