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## AB-347 Pupil instruction: animal dissection. (2025-2026)

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AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 18, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

### ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 347

Introduced by Assembly Member Kalra

January 29, 2025

An act *to amend Section 33315 of, to ~~amend~~ amend, repeal, and add* Sections 32255, 32255.1, 32255.3, 32255.4, ~~32255.5, and 33315~~ *and 32255.5* of, and to add Section 32255.7 to, the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 347, as amended, Kalra. Pupil instruction: animal dissection.

Existing law authorizes a pupil with a moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying an animal to refrain from participation in an educational project that involves the harmful or destructive use of animals. Existing law authorizes, if the pupil chooses to refrain and a teacher believes that an adequate alternative education project is possible, the teacher to work with the pupil to develop and agree upon an alternative education project in order to obtain the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question. Existing law requires each teacher teaching a course that ~~utilizes~~ *uses* live or dead animals or animal parts to inform the pupils of their rights pursuant to these provisions. Existing law applies these provisions to all levels of instruction in all public schools operating programs in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish and implement a system of complaint processing, known as the Uniform Complaint Procedures, for specified educational programs.

This bill, *commencing July 1, 2026*, if a pupil chooses to refrain from participation in an ~~assessment, education project, or test assignment or assessment~~ involving the dissection of animals, would require a teacher to provide an alternative ~~assessment, education project, or test assignment or assessment~~. The bill would prohibit a pupil's grades from being impacted as a means of penalizing the pupil for exercising their rights concerning *the* dissection of animals. The bill would require a teacher to provide, at a pupil's request, any sourcing information provided by the vendor or provider of the animals and information about the chemicals used to preserve the animals for dissection to which the pupil may be exposed. The bill would require a teacher, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, to provide written notice of the pupils' rights that includes specified information, including, among other things, the above-described rights and the complaint procedures described below. The bill would require, by ~~November 1, 2026~~, *the start of the 2026–27 school year*, the State Department of Education to develop a template that a teacher, or a public

school on behalf of the teacher, would be authorized to use to provide this written notice and to make the template available on its internet website. *The bill would apply the above-described provisions to all public schools operating programs in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, including, but not limited to, public schools operated by school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, or state special schools, to the extent that the public school chooses to offer a course of study that uses live or dead animals or animal parts for purposes of dissection.* The bill would encourage, by July 1, 2028, public schools to explore using effective alternative methods in lieu of ~~utilizing~~ *using* live or dead animals or animal parts for dissection in a course of study, except as provided. The bill would ~~require~~ *require, commencing July 1, 2026,* the Uniform Complaint Procedures to apply to pupils' rights to refrain from participation in an ~~assessment, education project, or test~~ *assignment or assessment* involving the dissection of animals and to choose an alternative ~~assessment, education project, or test.~~ *By imposing additional duties on public schools, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program: assignment or assessment.* ~~The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.~~

~~This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.~~

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: ~~yes~~ *no*

## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

~~SECTION 1. Section 32255 of the Education Code is amended to read:~~

~~32255. As used in this chapter:~~

~~(a) "Animal" means any living organism of the kingdom animalia, beings that typically differ from plants in capacity for spontaneous movement and rapid motor response to stimulation by a usually greater mobility with some degree of voluntary locomotor ability and by greater irritability commonly mediated through a more or less centralized nervous system, beings that are characterized by a requirement for complex organic nutrients including proteins or their constituents that are usually digested in an internal cavity before assimilation into the body proper, and beings that are distinguished from typical plants by lack of chlorophyll, by an inability to perform photosynthesis, by cells that lack cellulose walls, and by the frequent presence of discrete complex sense organs.~~

~~(b) "Alternative assessment," "alternative education project," or "alternative test" includes, but is not limited to, the use of video recordings, three dimensional models, films, books, interactive simulation software and computers, and assessments of knowledge that would provide an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question.~~

~~(c) "Dissection" means the viewing of the, or act of, cutting into the body of an animal cadaver to study its anatomical structure. "Dissection" does not include fixed histological samples of any species, including, but not limited to, plain or stained microscope slides, owl pellets, human autopsy viewing, and plastinated human organs.~~

~~(d) "Pupil" means a person under 18 years of age who is matriculated in a course of instruction in an educational institution within the scope of Section 32255.5. For the purpose of asserting the pupil's rights and receiving any notice or response pursuant to this chapter, "pupil" also includes the matriculated minor's parent or guardian.~~

~~SEC. 2. Section 32255.1 of the Education Code is amended to read:~~

~~32255.1. (a) Except as otherwise provided in Section 32255.6, a pupil with a moral objection to the dissection of animals shall notify the pupil's teacher regarding this objection, upon notification by the school of the pupil's rights pursuant to Section 32255.4.~~

~~(b) If a pupil chooses to refrain from participation in an assessment, education project, or test involving the dissection of animals, the teacher shall provide the pupil with an alternative assessment, education project, or test for the purpose of providing the pupil an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question.~~

~~(c) The alternative assessment, education project, or test shall require a comparable time and effort investment by the pupil. It shall not, as a means of penalizing the pupil, be more arduous than the original assessment, education project, or test.~~

~~(d) A pupil shall not be discriminated against based upon their decision to exercise their rights pursuant to this chapter.~~

~~(e) A pupil's grades shall not be impacted as a means of penalizing the pupil for exercising their rights pursuant to this chapter.~~

~~(f) A pupil's objection to participating in an assessment, education project, or test pursuant to this section shall be substantiated by a note from the pupil's parent or guardian.~~

~~(g) The teacher shall provide, at a pupil's request, any sourcing information provided by the vendor or provider of the animals and~~

information about the chemicals used to preserve the animals for dissection to which the pupil may be exposed:

~~SEC. 3. Section 32255.3 of the Education Code is amended to read:~~

~~32255.3. Nothing in this chapter shall prevent a pupil from pursuing the grievance procedures in existing law.~~

~~SEC. 4. Section 32255.4 of the Education Code is amended to read:~~

~~32255.4. (a) Each teacher teaching a course that utilizes live or dead animals or animal parts for purposes of dissection, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, shall provide written notice to each pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian of the pupil's rights pursuant to this chapter, including all of the following information:~~

~~(1) A pupil's right to refrain from participating in an assessment, education project, or test involving the dissection of animals pursuant to Section 32255.1.~~

~~(2) The prohibition of impact on a pupil's grades as a means of penalizing the pupil for exercising their rights pursuant to Section 32255.1.~~

~~(3) A pupil's right to request, pursuant to Section 32255.1, any sourcing information provided by the vendor or provider of the animals and information about the chemicals used to preserve the animals for dissection to which the pupil may be exposed.~~

~~(4) The complaint procedures described in Section 33315.~~

~~(b) By November 1, 2026, the department shall develop a template that a teacher, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, may use to provide written notice pursuant to subdivision (a) and make the template available on its internet website.~~

~~SEC. 5. Section 32255.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:~~

~~32255.5. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, this chapter applies to all levels of instruction in all public schools operating programs from kindergarten through grades 1 to 12, inclusive, including, but not limited to, public schools operated by school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, or state special schools.~~

**SECTION 1.** *Section 32255 of the Education Code is amended to read:*

**32255.** As used in this chapter:

(a) "Animal" means any living organism of the kingdom animalia, beings that typically differ from plants in capacity for spontaneous movement and rapid motor response to stimulation by a usually greater mobility with some degree of voluntary locomotor ability and by greater irritability commonly mediated through a more or less centralized nervous system, beings that are characterized by a requirement for complex organic nutrients including proteins or their constituents that are usually digested in an internal cavity before assimilation into the body proper, and beings that are distinguished from typical plants by lack of chlorophyll, by an inability to perform photosynthesis, by cells that lack cellulose walls, and by the frequent presence of discrete complex sense organs.

(b) "Alternative education project" includes, but is not limited to, the use of video recordings, models, films, books, and computers, which would provide an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question. "Alternative education project" also includes "alternative test."

(c) "Pupil" means a person under 18 years of age who is matriculated in a course of instruction in an educational institution within the scope of Section 32255.5. For the purpose of asserting the pupil's rights and receiving any notice or response pursuant to this chapter, "pupil" also includes the parents of the matriculated minor.

*(d) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2026, and, as of January 1, 2027, is repealed.*

**SEC. 2.** *Section 32255 is added to the Education Code, to read:*

**32255.** *For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:*

*(a) "Animal" means any living organism of the kingdom animalia, beings that typically differ from plants in capacity for spontaneous movement and rapid motor response to stimulation by a usually greater mobility with some degree of voluntary locomotor ability and by greater irritability commonly mediated through a more or less centralized nervous system, beings that are characterized by a requirement for complex organic nutrients including proteins or their constituents that are usually digested in an internal cavity before assimilation into the body proper, and beings that are distinguished from typical plants by lack of chlorophyll, by an inability to perform photosynthesis, by cells that lack cellulose walls, and by the frequent presence of discrete complex sense organs.*

*(b) "Alternative assignment or assessment" includes, but is not limited to, the use of video recordings, three-dimensional models, films, books, interactive simulation software and computers, and assessments of knowledge that would provide an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question.*

*(c) "Dissection" means the viewing of the, or act of, cutting into the body of an animal cadaver to study its anatomical structure. "Dissection" does not include fixed histological samples of any species, including, but not limited to, plain or stained microscope slides, owl pellets, human autopsy viewing, and plastinated human organs.*

*(d) "Pupil" means a person under 18 years of age who is enrolled in a course of study in an educational institution within the scope of Section 32255.5. For the purpose of asserting the pupil's rights and receiving any notice or response pursuant to this chapter, "pupil" also includes the enrolled minor's parent or guardian.*

*(e) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2026.*

**SEC. 3.** *Section 32255.1 of the Education Code is amended to read:*

**32255.1.** (a) Except as otherwise provided in Section 32255.6, any pupil with a moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying animals, or any parts thereof, shall notify ~~his or her~~ *the pupil's* teacher regarding this objection, upon notification by the school of ~~his or her~~ *the pupil's* rights pursuant to Section 32255.4.

(b) If the pupil chooses to refrain from participation in an education project involving the harmful or destructive use of animals, and if the teacher believes that an adequate alternative education project is possible, the teacher may work with the pupil to develop and agree upon an alternate education project for the purpose of providing the pupil an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question.

(c) The alternative education project shall require a comparable time and effort investment by the pupil. It shall not, as a means of penalizing the pupil, be more arduous than the original education project.

(d) The pupil shall not be discriminated against based upon ~~his or her~~ *their* decision to exercise ~~his or her~~ *their* rights pursuant to this chapter.

(e) Pupils choosing an alternative educational project shall pass all examinations of the respective course of study in order to receive credit for that course of study. However, if tests require the harmful or destructive use of animals, a pupil may, similarly, seek alternative tests pursuant to this chapter.

(f) A pupil's objection to participating in an educational project pursuant to this section shall be substantiated by a note from ~~his or her~~ *the pupil's* parent or guardian.

*(g) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2026, and, as of January 1, 2027, is repealed.*

**SEC. 4.** *Section 32255.1 is added to the Education Code, to read:*

**32255.1.** (a) *Except as otherwise provided in Section 32255.6, a pupil who is enrolled in a course of study that uses live or dead animals or animal parts for purposes of dissection and has a moral objection to the dissection of animals shall notify the pupil's teacher regarding this objection, upon notification by the school of the pupil's rights pursuant to Section 32255.4.*

*(b) If a pupil chooses to refrain from participation in an assignment or assessment involving the dissection of animals, the teacher shall provide the pupil with an alternative assignment or assessment for the purpose of providing the pupil an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question.*

*(c) The alternative assignment or assessment shall require a comparable time and effort investment by the pupil. It shall not, as a means of penalizing the pupil, be more arduous than the original assignment or assessment.*

*(d) A pupil shall not be discriminated against based upon their decision to exercise their rights pursuant to this chapter.*

*(e) A pupil's grades shall not be impacted as a means of penalizing the pupil for exercising their rights pursuant to this chapter.*

*(f) A pupil's objection to participating in an assignment or assessment pursuant to this section shall be substantiated by a note from the pupil's parent or guardian.*

*(g) The teacher shall provide, at a pupil's request, any sourcing information provided by the vendor or provider of the animals and information about the chemicals used to preserve the animals for dissection to which the pupil may be exposed.*

*(h) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2026.*

**SEC. 5.** *Section 32255.3 of the Education Code is amended to read:*

**32255.3.** (a) A teacher's decision in determining if a pupil may pursue an alternative educational project or be excused from the project shall not be arbitrary or capricious.

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall prevent any pupil from pursuing the grievance procedures in existing law.

*(c) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2026, and, as of January 1, 2027, is repealed.*

**SEC. 6.** *Section 32255.3 is added to the Education Code, to read:*

**32255.3.** (a) *Nothing in this chapter shall prevent a pupil from pursuing the grievance procedures in existing law.*

*(b) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2026.*

**SEC. 7.** *Section 32255.4 of the Education Code is amended to read:*

**32255.4.** (a) Each teacher teaching a course that ~~utilizes~~ *uses* live or dead animals or animal parts shall also inform the pupils of their rights pursuant to this chapter.

*(b) By the start of the 2026–27 school year, the department shall develop a template that a teacher, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, may use to provide written notice pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 32255.4, as added by Section 8 of Assembly Bill 347 of the 2025–26 Regular Session, and make the template available on its internet website.*

*(c) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2026, and, as of January 1, 2027, is repealed.*

**SEC. 8.** *Section 32255.4 is added to the Education Code, to read:*

**32255.4.** (a) *Each teacher teaching a course of study that uses live or dead animals or animal parts for purposes of dissection, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, shall provide written notice to each pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian of the pupil's rights pursuant to this chapter, including all of the following information:*

*(1) A pupil's right to refrain from participating in an assignment or assessment involving the dissection of animals pursuant to Section 32255.1.*

*(2) The prohibition of impact on a pupil's grades as a means of penalizing the pupil for exercising their rights pursuant to Section 32255.1.*

*(3) A pupil's right to request, pursuant to Section 32255.1, any sourcing information provided by the vendor or provider of the animals and information about the chemicals used to preserve the animals for dissection to which the pupil may be exposed.*

*(4) The complaint procedures described in Section 33315.*

*(b) By the start of the 2026–27 school year, the department shall develop a template that a teacher, or a public school on behalf of the teacher, may use to provide written notice pursuant to subdivision (a) and make the template available on its internet website.*

*(c) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2026.*

**SEC. 9.** *Section 32255.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:*

**32255.5.** (a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, this chapter applies to all levels of instruction in all public schools operating programs from kindergarten through grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

*(b) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2026, and, as of January 1, 2027, is repealed.*

**SEC. 10.** *Section 32255.5 is added to the Education Code, to read:*

**32255.5.** (a) *Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, this chapter applies to all levels of instruction in all public schools operating programs in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, including, but not limited to, public schools operated by school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, or state special schools, to the extent that the public school chooses to offer a course of study that uses live or dead animals or animal parts for purposes of dissection.*

*(b) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2026.*

**SEC. 6.**~~SEC. 11.~~ Section 32255.7 is added to the Education Code, to read:

**32255.7.** Public schools are encouraged, except as provided in Section 32255.6, to explore using effective alternative methods in lieu of ~~utilizing~~ *using* live or dead animals or animal parts for dissection in a course of study, by July 1, 2028.

**SEC. 7.**~~SEC. 12.~~ Section 33315 of the Education Code is amended to read:

**33315.** (a) The Superintendent shall establish and implement a system of complaint processing, known as the Uniform Complaint Procedures, for educational programs specified in paragraph (1). The department shall review the regulations set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations pertaining to uniform complaint procedures and, on or before March 31, 2019, shall commence rulemaking proceedings to revise those regulations, as necessary, to conform to all of the following:

(1) The Uniform Complaint Procedures shall apply to all of the following:

(A) Adult education programs established pursuant to Sections 8500 to 8538, inclusive, and Sections 52500 to 52617, inclusive.

(B) Consolidated categorical aid programs as listed in subdivision (a) of Section 64000.

(C) Migrant child education established pursuant to Sections 54440 to 54445, inclusive.

(D) Career technical and technical education and career technical and technical training programs established pursuant to Sections 52300 to 52462, inclusive.

(E) Childcare and development programs established pursuant to Sections 8200 to 8498, inclusive.

(F) The filing of complaints that allege unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group as identified under Sections 200 and 220 and Section 11135 of the Government Code, including any actual or perceived characteristic as set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution, as defined in Section 210.3, that is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from, any state financial assistance.

(G) Lactation accommodations pursuant to Section 222.

(H) Educational rights of foster youth pursuant to Sections 48853, 48853.5, and 49069.5, and graduation requirements for foster youth, homeless youth, and other youth pursuant to Section 51225.1.

(I) Pupil fees pursuant to Sections 49010 to 49013, inclusive.

(J) Courses of study pursuant to Section 51228.3.

(K) Instructional minutes for physical education pursuant to Section 51223.

(L) Local control and accountability plans pursuant to Section 52075.

(M) Juvenile court schools pursuant to Section 48645.7.

(N) School safety plans pursuant to Section 32289.

(O) Deficiencies related to preschool health and safety issues for a California state preschool program pursuant to Section 8212.

(P) School or athletic team names, mascots, or nicknames pursuant to Section 221.3.

(Q) ~~Pupils' Commencing July 1, 2026, pupils'~~ rights to refrain from participation in an ~~assessment, education project, or test assignment or assessment~~ involving the dissection of animals and to choose an alternative ~~assessment, education project, or test assignment or assessment~~ pursuant to Section 32255.1.

(R) Any other state or federal educational program the Superintendent deems appropriate.

(2) As it pertains to child nutrition programs and established pursuant to Sections 49490 to 49570, inclusive, and special education programs established pursuant to Sections 56000 to 56865, inclusive, and Sections 59000 to 59300, inclusive, the

Uniform Complaint Procedures shall expressly reference the federal provisions that govern complaints relative to these programs, as well as any additional applicable rules included within Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

(3) The department shall develop a pamphlet for parents that will explain the Uniform Complaint Procedures in a user-friendly manner and post this pamphlet on the department's internet website.

(4) Except for cases of complaints related to paragraph (2), a complainant who appeals a decision of a local educational agency under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations to the department shall receive a written appeal decision within 60 days of the department's receipt of the appeal, unless extended by written agreement with the complainant or the department documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

(5) Except for cases of complaints related to paragraph (2), for those complaints that are filed directly with the department under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and the department determines merit direct intervention, the department shall complete an investigation and provide a written decision to the complainant within 60 days of receipt of the complaint, unless the parties have agreed to extend the timeline or the department documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

(6) If a local educational agency finds merit in a complaint, or the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal, filed under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, the local educational agency shall take corrective actions consistent with the requirements of existing law that will provide a remedy to the affected pupil, or, in the case of complaints related to subparagraphs (I), (J), (K), and (L) of paragraph (1), to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians. For corrective actions related to subparagraph (I), remedies shall, where applicable, include reasonable efforts by the public school to ensure full reimbursement.

(7) Information regarding the requirements of this section shall be included in the annual notification distributed to pupils, parents and guardians, employees, and other interested parties pursuant to Section 4622 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

(b) The department may adopt emergency regulations pursuant to Section 11346.1 of the Government Code to satisfy the requirements of this section. The adoption of emergency regulations shall be deemed an emergency and necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, or general welfare.

(c) Nothing in this section or those regulations adopted pursuant to this section shall prevent a local educational agency from using its local uniform complaint procedure to address complaints not listed in this section or those regulations.

(d) For purposes of this section, "local educational agency" has the same meaning as in Section 4600 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

~~SEC. 8. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.~~