



AB-1005 Drowning prevention: public schools: informational materials. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 1005

CHAPTER 387

An act to amend Section 51140 of, and to add Sections 51139, 51141, and 51900.1 to, the Education Code, and to add Section 116036 to, and to add Chapter 4.6 (commencing with Section 131359) to Part 1 of Division 112 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to drowning prevention.

[Approved by Governor October 06, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 06, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1005, Davies. Drowning prevention: public schools: informational materials.

(1) Existing law authorizes specified drowning or injury prevention organizations (DIP organization) to provide informational materials, in electronic or hardcopy form, to a public school regarding specified topics relating to drowning prevention. Existing law requires a DIP organization that chooses to provide informational materials to provide, upon request by a public school, the informational materials in the 3 most commonly spoken languages associated with the population attending the school.

This bill would instead require a DIP organization that chooses to provide informational materials to provide, upon request by a public school, the informational materials in English and would encourage the DIP organization to provide informational materials in the other most commonly spoken languages associated with the population attending the school. The bill would require a DIP organization that chooses to provide informational materials to a public school to provide those materials at no cost to the public school, allow the school to offer copies of the materials to pupils and parents, and provide written evidence to a school administrator that demonstrates that the informational materials provided by the DIP organization align with the drowning, drowning prevention, water safety, rescue, and swim skills lesson information found on the drowning prevention web page of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as provided. The bill also would require the State Department of Education, in consultation with the State Department of Developmental Services and the State Department of Public Health, to gather and make available on its internet website school-based water safety and drowning prevention education resources and curriculum, as provided. The bill would authorize public schools to provide to their pupils those water safety informational materials identified by the department and provided by a DIP organization, as provided.

(2) Existing law requires the State Department of Public Health to adopt and enforce regulations relating to public swimming pools, as defined.

This bill would expressly authorize the State Department of Public Health to review and evaluate existing statutes and regulations under its jurisdiction recommended by the California Unintentional Injury Prevention Strategic Plan Project to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with current public health practices, as provided, and would authorize the department to recommend to the Legislature updates or nonsubstantive technical corrections to support effective implementation and regulatory compliance.

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

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

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) In California, drowning is the leading cause of death for children 1 to 4 years of age, inclusive, the second leading cause of death for children 5 to 14 years of age, inclusive, and the third leading cause of death for teenagers and youth 15 to 24 years of age, inclusive.

(b) Drowning can be prevented by increasing the knowledge of parents, caregivers, and pupils regarding water safety and competency in swimming skills. National and international research shows that water safety and swimming skills are up to 88 percent effective in preventing drowning.

(c) A critical step in the statewide strategic plan to make drowning a rare and survivable event is to increase access to swim lessons to achieve an end goal of making everyone in California a swimmer and knowledgeable about drowning, drowning prevention, and water safety.

(d) Partnering California's public schools with the state's many local, state, and national swim lesson programs and drowning prevention organizations provides a cost-effective means of reaching all California parents, guardians, caregivers, and children with lifesaving drowning prevention and water safety knowledge.

(e) Drowning prevention classes, including swim lessons with certified instructors, increase swim skills and water competency. The development of swim skills and water competency is well established through evidence-based research to have an impact of reducing drowning and is declared an essential component of California's actions toward preventing drowning for all ages of children and adults.

SEC. 2. Section 51139 is added to the Education Code, immediately preceding Section 51140, to read:

51139. For purposes of this article, all of the following definitions apply:

(a) "Public school" means a school operated by a school district, county office of education, or a charter school.

(b) "Water safety" means age-appropriate education intended (1) to promote safety in, on, and around bodies of water, including residential and public pools and spas, home water sources such as bathtubs, and open bodies of water such as lakes, rivers, canals, and the ocean, and (2) to reduce the risk of injury or drowning.

SEC. 3. Section 51140 of the Education Code is amended to read:

51140. (a) (1) A drowning or injury prevention organization may provide informational materials, in electronic or hardcopy form, to a public school that serves pupils in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, in accordance with the requirements of this article, regarding all of the following topics:

(A) The role that water safety education courses and swim lessons play in drowning prevention and saving lives.

(B) Local water safety and swimming skills programs in the county and communities served by the public school, including free or reduced-price programs, and how to access information about age-appropriate public or private water safety courses and swimming skills programs that result in a certificate indicating successful completion.

(C) Contact information of the organization to receive further water safety education information.

(2) The informational materials shall not be used to solicit funding or donations for the organization.

(3) It is the intent of the Legislature that public schools that receive information pursuant to paragraph (1) facilitate the sharing of that information with the parents, caregivers, or guardians of pupils.

(b) (1) Upon receipt of the informational materials described in subdivision (a), a public school is authorized to provide the informational materials to parents, legal guardians, or caregivers of pupils at the time the pupil enrolls at the public school and at the beginning of each school year, and are encouraged to provide the materials described in subdivision (a) during the first week of May in the year that the informational materials were provided.

(2) In recognition of the importance of drowning as a public health issue impacting the lives of many pupils, public schools are authorized to, and are encouraged to, provide to their pupils water safety informational materials through multiple means, including, but not limited to, school assemblies, classroom instruction, or library programs. These informational materials shall meet the following criteria:

(A) Be age and grade appropriate.

(B) Be aligned with the information from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 51141, and identified by the department pursuant to Section 51900.1.

(C) Be provided for free by drowning prevention or children safety organizations.

(c) Upon request by a public school, a drowning or injury prevention organization that elects to provide informational materials shall provide the informational materials in English and is encouraged to provide informational materials in the other most commonly spoken languages associated with the population attending the school based on available data from the department.

SEC. 4. Section 51141 is added to the Education Code, immediately following Section 51140, to read:

51141. (a) A drowning or injury prevention organization that provides informational materials to a public school pursuant to this article shall adhere to both of the following:

(1) Provide written evidence, in the form of a letter or document, either of which shall be no longer than one page, to a school administrator that demonstrates that the informational materials provided by the drowning or injury prevention organization align with the drowning, drowning prevention, water safety, rescue, and swim skills lesson information found on the drowning prevention web page of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which includes evidence-based water safety and drowning prevention information vetted through such authorities on drowning and drowning prevention as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Red Cross, among other sources.

(2) Provide informational materials at no cost to the public school and allow the school to offer copies of the materials to pupils and parents and decide how the materials are made available.

(b) A school administrator or school entity authorized by the school district or school, which also may include the school's parent-teacher association or an equivalent association, that engages with a drowning or injury prevention organization pursuant to this article shall not be responsible for confirming the drowning or injury prevention organization's compliance with paragraph (1) of subdivision (a).

SEC. 5. Section 51900.1 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51900.1. The department, in consultation with the State Department of Developmental Services and the State Department of Public Health, shall gather and make available on its internet website school-based water safety and drowning prevention education resources and curriculum that are age appropriate to pupils of different grade levels and adaptable for public school use. The department is encouraged to refer to the existing, freely accessible, age- and grade-appropriate curriculum that has been identified by relevant water safety and drowning prevention stakeholder organizations and that can be used in school settings.

SEC. 6. Section 116036 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

116036. The Legislature finds and declares both of the following:

(a) In California, drowning is the leading cause of death for children 4 years of age and younger, the second leading cause of death for children 5 to 14 years of age, inclusive, and the third leading cause of death for teenagers and youth 15 to 24 years of age, inclusive.

(b) Swim instruction provided by persons who are qualified and certified pursuant to Section 116033 increases swim skills and water competency, the development of which is both well established through evidence-based research to have an impact on reducing drowning and is declared an essential component of California's actions toward preventing drowning for all ages of children and adults.

SEC. 7. Chapter 4.6 (commencing with Section 131359) is added to Part 1 of Division 112 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

CHAPTER 4.6. Regulatory Review

131359. To further drowning prevention and as a component of California's drowning prevention strategic plans, the State Department of Public Health may review and evaluate existing statutes and regulations under its jurisdiction recommended by the California Unintentional Injury Prevention Strategic Plan Project to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with current public health practices. The review may include provisions adopted between 2010 and 2025, including those within Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, to determine whether updates are warranted for effective implementation and compliance. The

department may recommend to the Legislature, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code, updates or nonsubstantive technical corrections to support effective implementation and regulatory compliance.