



American Academy of Sleep Medicine

August 23, 2017

Governor Jerry Brown
Attn: Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary
California State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
SENT VIA EMAIL: Jennifer.johnson@gov.ca.gov

RE: SB 328 (Portantino) – School Start Time – SUPPORT

Dear Ms. Johnson:

On behalf of the board of directors of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill No. 328 (SB 328), “Pupil attendance: school start time,” which will require California school districts to start their middle and high school days no earlier than 8:30 a.m. As the leader in the field of sleep medicine, the AASM represents a combined membership of 10,000 accredited member sleep centers and individual health care professionals, including 558 members who reside in California.

The AASM recommends that teenagers 13 to 18 years of age should sleep 8 to 10 hours on a regular basis to promote optimal health. However, CDC data show that nearly 73 percent of high school students report sleeping fewer than 8 hours on school nights. Early middle school and high school start times work contrary to adolescent circadian physiology and truncate students’ sleep opportunity, resulting in chronic sleep loss.

Studies show that short sleep in adolescents is associated with poor school performance, obesity, increased depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation and risk-taking behaviors. Insufficient sleep also is associated with an increased risk of motor vehicle accidents, which account for 35 percent of all deaths and 73 percent of deaths from unintentional injury in teenagers. Research suggests that later school start times are associated with longer weekday sleep durations, reduced vehicular accident rates, and reduced subjective daytime sleepiness.

The AASM recently published a position statement encouraging primary academic institutions, school boards, parents, and policy makers to raise public awareness to promote a national standard of middle school and high school start times of 8:30 a.m. or later, which is directly in line with what SB 328 seeks to accomplish in California. (See attachment.) Starting school at 8:30 a.m. or later will help ensure that middle school and high school students begin the day awake, alert, and ready to learn.

Sincerely,
Ilene M. Rosen, MD, MS, AASM President

Attachment (1)

cc: Steve Van Hout, AASM Executive Director
Tara McGee, Office of Senator Anthony Portantino

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