



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**

**TONY THURMOND**  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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September 21, 2021

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and School Principals:

**Assembly Bill 856: Pupil Health: COVID-19 Youth Health Information Act**

As schools bring students back for in-person learning, it is important to ensure a safe return to classrooms. Assembly Bill (AB) 856, Pupil Health: COVID-19 Youth Health Information Act, chaptered on July 23, 2021, encourages schools and school districts to provide information to our youth and their families on how to safely return to exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19. AB 856 is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has guidelines regarding returning to exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19.

The Pupil Health: COVID-19 Youth Health Information Act requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to do the following:

- Post information related to the safe return of pupils to exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19, including current AAP guidelines for (1) a preparticipation physical evaluation with a special emphasis on cardiac symptoms, with a licensed health care provider to evaluate health and heart risks associated with COVID-19, and (2) “gradual return to play” protocols, according to whether the pupil’s COVID-19 was mild, moderate, or severe.
- Post AAP guidelines for pupils to obtain medical clearance before returning to exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19, and the gradual return to play protocols relative to the severity of symptoms.
- Monitor best practices and evolving guidelines on the safe return of pupils to physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for COVID-19 and update its internet website in response to new information.
- Encourage schools and school districts to give pupils and their parents and guardians ready access to the information regarding a safe return of pupils to

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exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19.

School districts and schools are encouraged to give pupils and their parents and guardians ready access to the information related to the safe return of students to exercise and physical activity after exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or testing positive for, COVID-19 by posting it on their internet websites and actively distributing this information via postal mail, email, newsletter, meetings, in registration and sports clearance packets, or in person.

Information regarding AB 856, including the full text of the legislation, relevant AAP guidelines, and links to organizations that offer materials and resources, is available on the CDE COVID-19 Youth Health Information Act web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/pe/covidyouthhealthact.asp> and the CDE Physical Education Frequently Asked Questions web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/pe/physeducfaq.asp>.

If you have any questions regarding the Pupil Health: COVID-19 Youth Health Information Act, please contact the Professional Learning Support and Monitoring Office by email at [PLSMO@cde.ca.gov](mailto:PLSMO@cde.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Thurmond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tony" being more prominent than the last name "Thurmond".

Tony Thurmond  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

TT:eo  
2021-02080