

# The California Healthy Youth Act & Charter Schools

AB 2601 (2018) amended the California Healthy Youth Act to require that charter schools in California provide students with inclusive and comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education (Education Code §§ 51930-51939).

## Prior Law

The California Healthy Youth Act (AB 329, Weber) was passed in 2015 and went into effect in 2016. The California Healthy Youth Act mandates California public school districts to deliver comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education (as specified under EC §§ 51930-51939) to all students in grades 7 to 12, at least once in middle school and at least once in high school. The law additionally requires instruction be inclusive of all genders, sexual orientations, abilities, races, and cultural backgrounds and present medically accurate and unbiased information. This instruction may also be provided in elementary school.

## AB 2601—What’s Changed?

Prior to the passage of AB 2601, the California Healthy Youth Act did not apply to charter schools, leaving a significant number of the state’s most underserved students without assured access to comprehensive sexual health education. By adding “charter schools” to the list in EC § 51931 of the educational entities to which the California Healthy Youth Act applies, AB 2601 extended the law to charter schools.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, all charter middle and high schools must provide students with comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education that meets the requirements of the California Healthy Youth Act. A primary purpose of the law is to promote understanding of sexuality as a normal part of human development. Required topics include healthy relationships, prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, gender and sexual orientation, sexual assault and human trafficking, pregnancy, and local health resources. Schools maintain their independence to decide on specific curricula, grades for instruction, and other instructional elements. *For more detail about the law, see other fact sheets at the link below.*

## What Schools Are Now Included?

Every charter school in California, including virtual charter schools and independent study programs administered by charter schools, must comply with the California Healthy Youth Act.