

LEGAL ALERT

January 15, 2026

Compliance Checklist: Referral Protocols for Addressing Student Behavioral Health Concerns (Education Code §4948.2)

What the New Law Means for Your School

California Senate Bill 153, passed in June 2024, added Education Code section 49428.2. This new Code section requires all LEAs (including charter schools) serving students in grades 7-12 to adopt a student behavioral health referral policy by January 31, 2026.

The policy must address:

Procedures relating to referrals to behavioral health professionals and support services,
The needs of certain high-risk student groups (e.g., pupils bereaved by death or loss of a close family member or friend, pupils experiencing homelessness, and more), and
Required training for teachers of students in grades 7-12 on pupil behavioral health.

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Support for Implementation

YM&C has developed a customizable template policy to help your school distinguish between legally required provisions and CDE-recommended best practices, and can guide your school to appropriately tailor the policy to fit your school's program and student population.

To request a sample policy and/or for guidance on tailoring the policy to your school, please contact Mariam Babayan (mbabayan@ymclegal.com) or Cassandra Bridge (cbridge@ymclegal.com), or call 916.646.1400.

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