



## AB 65 – The Pregnancy Leave for Educators Act

### SUMMARY

California law does not guarantee pregnancy leave for pregnant educators, which puts them at a financial disadvantage and worsens California's teacher retention crisis. Assembly Bill 65 would codify a pregnant person's right to pregnancy leave in California state law and grant public school employees up to 14 weeks of leave with full pay for pregnancies and pregnancy-related health issues.

### BACKGROUND

Under current California law, pregnant educators are not guaranteed pregnancy leave and receive no more than six weeks of maternity leave. Those experiencing pregnancy-related complications—such as miscarriages, internal bleeding, or infections—must use their accrued sick leave to cover any extended absences beyond the standard six weeks. A 2019 study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research found that paid maternity leave reduces the need for public assistance and helps women stay in the workforce. Yet, under existing law, educators who require additional leave due to pregnancy or related complications must first exhaust their sick leave. After that, they face a 50% pay cut through differential pay—their salary minus the cost of a substitute—for up to five months to cover pregnancy-related disabilities.

### PROBLEM

Pregnant educators do not earn paid pregnancy leave and the current system forces them to deplete their sick leave and pay for their own substitute. When educators are forced to use up their sick leave for pregnancy leave, they return to the classroom with no remaining leave, which encourages them to return to school sick which endangers students, colleagues, and parents. When an educator retires, CalSTRS converts unused sick leave into additional service credit. On average, women educators

earn nearly \$100,000 less in retirement than male educators because they deplete sick leave during pregnancy.

### THIS BILL

AB 65 will promote greater equity in the education workforce by requiring schools and community college districts to provide 14 weeks of fully paid pregnancy disability leave. This bill aligns with the International Labor Organization's recommendation of 14 weeks for maternity leave. Additionally, this bill supports the goals set by the Paid Family Leave Task Force convened by Gov. Newsom in 2019. This bill will give educators the necessary time off to care for themselves and their families without sacrificing their financial security, the health of their families, or the well-being of their school communities.

### SUPPORT

California Teachers Association (Co-Sponsor)  
California Federation of Teachers (Co-Sponsor)  
California School Employees Association (Co-Sponsor)  
California State Treasurer Fiona Ma (Co-Sponsor)  
California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond (Co-Sponsor)  
AFSCME California  
Alhambra Teachers Association  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO  
Anaheim Elementary Education Association  
Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association  
Asociación de Maestros Unidos  
Associated Pomona Teachers  
Association of Carmel Teachers  
Association of Colton Educators  
Buellton Education Association  
CA Work and Families Coalition



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California Federation of Labor Unions  
California Retired Teachers Association  
California State Teachers Retirement System  
California Virtual Educators United  
Campbell Elementary Teachers Association  
Children Now  
Corona-Norco Teachers Association

Tustin Educators Association  
Twin Rivers United Educators  
United Teachers of Richmond  
Vacaville Teachers Association  
Walnut Creek Teachers Association  
Walnut Valley Educators Association  
Woodland Education Association

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Covina Unified Education Association  
El Monte Elementary Teachers Association  
Elk Grove Teachers Association  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Hacienda La Puente Teachers Association  
Health Access California  
Lammersville Teachers Association  
Livermore Education Association  
Merced College Faculty Association  
Moreno Valley Educators Association  
Natomas Teachers' Association  
NEA Jurupa  
Nevada Joint Union High School Teachers Association  
Oak Grove Educators Association  
Oxnard Educators Association  
Portola Valley Teachers Association  
Redlands Teachers Association Santa Maria Elementary  
Education Association  
Rocklin Teachers Professional Association  
Roseville Teachers Association  
Sacramento City Teachers Association  
San Benito Joint Union High School District Teachers  
Association  
San Jose Teachers Association  
Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association  
Santa Rosa Teachers Association  
SEIU California  
Special Educators of Amador County  
Tahoe Truckee Education Association  
Teach Plus  
Teachers Association of Long Beach  
Temecula Valley Educators Association