



September 6, 2018

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Governor Edmund G. Brown
c/o Diana Dooley, Executive Secretary
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
SENT VIA EMAIL: Diana.Dooley@gov.ca.gov

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the board of directors of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), and more than 600 AASM members and 123 accredited sleep facilities in California, I urge you to sign into law Senate Bill No. 328 (SB 328), "Pupil attendance: school start time," which would require the school day for middle schools and high schools to begin no earlier than 8:30 a.m. by July 1, 2021.

In puberty a natural shift occurs in the timing of the body's internal "circadian" clock, causing most teens to experience a biological drive for a late-night bedtime. Therefore, early middle school and high school start times make it difficult for students to get the 8 to 10 hours of nightly sleep that the AASM recommends for optimal teen health. As a result, nearly 73 percent of high school students report getting fewer than 8 hours of sleep on an average school night, increasing their risk of depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation and motor vehicle accidents.

It is the position of the AASM that middle school and high school start times should be 8:30 a.m. or later to promote teen health, well-being, safety and learning. Research suggests that later school start times are associated with longer weekday sleep durations, reduced vehicular accident rates, and improved alertness.

By passing SB 328, California legislators have set an example for the rest of the nation. Please demonstrate the importance of prioritizing student health by signing this bill into law.

Sincerely,

Douglas B. Kirsch, MD
President

cc: Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Education K-12
Donna Campbell, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Health
Camille Wagner, Legislative Affairs Secretary
Steve Van Hout, AASM Executive Director