



PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AND DEVELOPING
YOUTH LEADERS

April 21, 2015

State Capitol, Room 5097
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 651-4925

RE: SB 527 Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund Education Grant Program

Dear Senator Liu:

On behalf of Youth ALIVE!, an Oakland-based violence prevention and youth leadership organization, I write to express support for Senate Bill 527.

Youth ALIVE! works with high school students and young people who have been impacted by violence. We understand the toll that exposure to trauma can have on a young person and how it can negatively impact their ability to focus and engage at school. School-age youth who are depressed, have experienced a traumatic or violent event, and other significant home-life stresses are more likely to be suspended or expelled. Psychologists have found that disciplinary exclusion policies can increase alienation and breaking of healthy adult bonds, thereby worsening negative outcomes for young people.

SB 527 provides additional specificity in the education code regarding the awarding of the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools grant funds. The bill targets the funding for the California Department of Education grants toward local education agencies who have developed three plans in their Local Control Accountability Plans (or otherwise) to develop research-based, school-wide approaches to addressing social, emotional, and behavior issues.

This bill also requires a data collection process to track the effectiveness of the use of the funds and mandates public submissions of outcomes based data for evaluation. Funds must be utilized to further implementation and to supplement, not supplant, existing LEA funding allocations to meet the requirements of the state priority areas and target populations in their Local Control Accountability Plan.

Youth ALIVE! encourages the cultivation of safe schools that provide opportunities for students to find the support they need to be successful. We support Senate Bill 527: Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund Education Grant Program.

Sincerely,

Anne Marks
Executive Director

Youth ALIVE is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID is 94-3143254.

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