

# California just voted to ban schools from starting before 8:30 a.m. so kids can sleep in

Abigail Hess | @AbigailJHess | 2:11 PM ET Tue, 4 Sept 2018



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On August 31st, California lawmakers voted to ban middle schools and high schools from starting before 8:30 a.m. The goal? Getting students to sleep in.

According to the [Associated Press](#) (AP), the bill, known as [SB328](#), was narrowly passed by the state legislature ahead of a midnight deadline and is expected to be signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown. Once the bill is finalized, schools have three years to comply.

Experts argue that later school times could improve student health, boost graduation rates and save the school system billions of dollars.



Some of the most successful people in the world stress that sleep is crucial to performing your best. Leaders like [Bill Gates](#), [Jeff Bezos](#) and [Sheryl Sandberg](#) all say that getting enough rest has helped them get ahead in their careers.

For kids, sleep is even more important. Research from [Harvard Medical School](#) and other institutions indicates that inadequate sleep can lead to obesity, behavioral and developmental problems and depression in kids and young adults. But due to the increased prevalence of technology such as cell phones, tablets and computers, and an increased emphasis on time-consuming extracurricular activities, [students today are staying up later](#).

To make matters worse, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) reports that nearly [80 percent](#) of California middle and high schools start before 8:30 a.m. Some studies suggest that as few as [20 percent](#) of adolescents ages 11 to 17 get enough sleep on school nights.



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California legislators believe that this combination of late bedtimes and early school hours is putting students at a disadvantage. Advocates of the bill tell [the AP](#) that regulating school start times could help with student health and student outcomes. "This is the single most cost-effective thing we can do to improve high school graduation rates," says Assemblyman Jay Obernolte.

"That delayed school start time could have a big impact on middle school children and adolescents," sleep expert Dr. Carol Ash [tells CBS](#). "When they don't get the sleep they need, it can cause poor academic performance, drowsy driving depression, loneliness, social isolation, addictive behaviors and weight gain, obesity and hypertension. So it has a significant health and mental impact on your children."

Beyond these health benefits, Ash says that later school starts also have the potential to save schools billions of dollars. "The cost of sleep loss is astronomical. It's costing billions of dollars," she says. "Poor academic performance, absenteeism at school. And federally funded dollars are attached to the absenteeism rate. So if kids are not showing up in school, they're gonna get less dollars."