

# Assembly Bill 2228- ADA Funding: Wildfire Mitigation

## Assemblymember Jim Wood

### EXISTING LAW

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Existing law allows Local Education Agencies (LEA) to reclaim lost average daily attendance (ADA) and instructional time credit for days on which schools were forced to close, or days when schools were open but attendance is reduced as a result of emergency conditions. Generally, this authority to reclaim lost ADA does not extend past the current fiscal year that the emergency conditions occurred.

### BACKGROUND

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The wildfires that raged through California in late 2017 caused historic levels of damage and devastation. This quick and sudden firestorm led the Governor to declare a state of emergency in several counties. In total, wildfires burned over 1.2 million acres of land, damaging or destroying over 32,000 homes, 4,300 businesses, and killing 46 people.

While 652 schools serving over 290,000 students were closed for some period during the fires, most were re-opened after minimal disruption. However some areas saw substantial loss of homes and businesses.

In Sonoma County alone, over 70,000 students experienced extended school closures due to the North Bay fires. According to the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE), nearly 1,450 students and 250 teachers were left without homes. With a vacancy rate in the county of less than 2% prior to the fires, there are concerns that many students and staff will not return to their school of origin.

Under the Federal McKinney-Vento Act, students who have been displaced are allowed to stay in their original school district regardless of where the family is currently living, and enroll in a new school without having to provide their proof of

residence. Additionally, this act requires school districts to provide transportation to school for these displaced students. After a natural disaster, it is common for a LEA's transportation obligations to rise, thereby creating unforeseen costs.

To date, since California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) annual "information day", which provides demographic data on students and school districts, it is estimated that Santa Rosa City Unified Schools are down several hundred students since the fires began.

A significant reduction in funding can cause significant cuts in programs and loss of personnel despite an expectation that many of those children will return after a 3-year reconstruction period. Funding is needed to protect educational quality and meet unforeseen costs in the interim.

### BILL SUMMARY

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AB 2228 will allow LEA's in the areas subject to the Governor's 2017 Wildfire Disaster Declaration, and who have experienced dislocation of pupils' families, to receive supplemental apportionment funding based on their average daily attendance prior to the wildfires. This supplemental apportionment is based on a percentage of the lost ADA, with a return to actual ADA levels by the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

### SUPPORT

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California School Board Association  
Santa Rosa City Schools

### STATUS

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Assembly Education

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