



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEWS RELEASE

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State Superintendent Tony Thurmond Announces Free Project Cal-STOP School Safety and Mental Health Crisis Trainings

SACRAMENTO—State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond yesterday participated via video conference in a live seminar hosted by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools to encourage middle and high school local educational agencies (LEAs) throughout the state to take advantage of free school safety and mental health trainings available through the Project Cal-STOP training initiative, a three-year, \$1 million grant funded under the federal STOP School Violence Act.

“Students are returning to the classroom this month and should feel safe stepping onto a school campus,” said Thurmond. “These trainings will provide administrators, teachers, students, and the entire school community with violence prevention strategies that could stop a school shooting before it takes place and intervention tools to identify and respond to students who are dealing with a mental health crisis. Schools should be a place where students learn, not a place that students fear.”

Sandy Hook Promise (SHP), a national nonprofit led by family members who lost loved ones in the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, is partnering with the California Department of Education (CDE) to implement the Project Cal-STOP trainings. Along with State Superintendent Thurmond and California Department of Education staff, SHP California Region Manager Ilana Israel Samuels participated in the seminar. Samuels said that through a devastating tragedy, SHP has been able to transform schools and communities throughout the country.

The Project Cal-STOP trainings will consist of two parts:

1. School violence prevention training modules, part of the *Know the Signs* programs in partnership with SHP, for staff and students.
2. Expansion of current CDE Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training workshops for district and support staff to better assist students dealing with mental health issues.

“There should be no mystery on why mental health and violence prevention trainings are being offered,” said Thurmond. “This is just the first of many conversations regarding school safety and the need to get resources that can help students and keep them safe directly to our school communities.”

Participation in the trainings is voluntary and available to nearly 200 LEAs throughout the state on a first-come, first-served basis. Due to limited resources, Project Cal-STOP may not be able to accommodate all training requests. To request a training, LEAs can fill out the [Project Cal-STOP response form](#) on the CDE website.

For more information about the SHP trainings, visit the [SHP](#) website. Visit the CDE website for information about [YMHFA](#).

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The California Department of Education is a state agency led by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. For more information, please visit the [California Department of Education's website](#). You may also follow Superintendent Thurmond on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).