



**California
Catholic
Conference**

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March 30, 2026

The Honorable Darshana Patel, Chair
Assembly Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 126
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2158 (Hoover) Pupil instruction: outdoor learning - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Patel and Honorable Members of the Assembly Education Committee,

The California Catholic Conference is pleased to express its support for **AB 2158**, as introduced on 2/18/26, which encourages the integration of outdoor learning into California's public education system.

The bishops of California have consistently affirmed the importance of educational choice and diverse learning environments that allow every student to thrive. Students learn in different ways, and expanding opportunities for outdoor learning offers a valuable pathway to engage students more deeply academically, socially, and emotionally, especially for those who may not flourish in traditional classroom settings.

AB 2158 promotes innovative approaches to education that support student engagement, environmental literacy, and overall well-being, while prioritizing access for historically underserved communities. By encouraging schools to incorporate outdoor learning and providing statewide guidance and pilot opportunities, this bill helps broaden the range of effective instructional models available to students across California.

Catholic teaching reminds us that each child is created in the image and likeness of God, with unique gifts and potential. Education should nurture the whole person, mind, body, and spirit, while also fostering a sense of responsibility for creation. Outdoor learning reflects this vision by connecting students to the natural world, promoting stewardship, and cultivating habits of reflection, curiosity, and care for the common good.

For these reasons, as the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in California, we urge you to vote "AYE" on AB 2158. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact Samara Palko, Director of Education, at 916-477-0631 or spalko@cacatholic.org.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Domingo".

Kathleen Domingo
Executive Director

KBD:SP:mip