

HOUSE No. 494

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Ryan M. Hamilton

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act providing for mental health professionals in public schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Ryan M. Hamilton</i>	<i>15th Essex</i>	<i>1/19/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 494

By Representative Hamilton of Methuen, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 494) of Ryan M. Hamilton relative to providing for mental health professionals in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act providing for mental health professionals in public schools.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 53A the
2 following section:-

3 Section 53A½. (a) Each school district shall appoint 1 or more full time school
4 psychologists and 1 or more full time school social workers to provide mental health services to
5 all students attending a public school, grades K-12, in the district.

6 (b) Mental health services provided by a full time school psychologist in K-12 public
7 schools shall include, but not limited to:

8 (i) evaluations, screenings and assessments designed to determine the mental health and
9 the well-being status of a student;

10 (ii) to inform parents or other persons in parental relation to the student, pupils and
11 teachers of the individual student's mental health condition;

- 12 (iii) to address identified mental health needs of a student;
- 13 (iv) to instruct the school personnel in interventions, techniques and behavioral
14 approaches to respond to the mental health needs of a student;
- 15 (v) to provide such interventions, approaches and services as necessary to address the
16 mental health needs of a student; and
- 17 (vi) to make necessary recommendations concerning the mental health aspects of the
18 school environment and the provision of mental health information.

19 (c) Mental health services provided by a full time school social worker in K-12 public
20 schools shall include, but not limited to:

21 (i) assessments, evaluations and psychosocial intervention plans designed to prevent and
22 intervene to address mental, social, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive
23 disorders, conditions and disabilities of the psychosocial aspect of illness and injuries
24 experienced by a student;

25 (ii) diagnosis of mental, emotional, behavioral and developmental disorders and
26 disabilities and the psychosocial aspects of illness, injury, disability and impairment undertaken
27 within a psychosocial framework;

28 (iii) administration and interpretation of tests and measures of psychosocial functioning;

29 (iv) development and implementation of appropriate assessment based treatment plans;

30 (v) the provision of crisis and lethality assessments and short term and long term
31 psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic treatment to students for the purpose of preventing,
32 assessing, treating, ameliorating and resolving psychosocial dysfunction with the goal of
33 maintaining and enhancing the mental, emotional, behavioral and social functioning and
34 well-being of a student;

35 (vi) to work as a liaison between parent, child, school and community;

36 (vii) to instruct school personnel regarding interventions, technique and behavioral
37 approaches;

38 (viii) to respond to the mental health needs of a student; and

39 (ix) to make necessary recommendations concerning the mental health aspects of the
40 school environment and the provision of mental health information.

41 (d) The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate rules or
42 regulations necessary to carry out this section.