

SENATE No. 346

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Rebecca L. Rausch

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 ensuring access to mental health supports in K-12 schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Lydia Edwards</i>	<i>Third Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/14/2023</i>

SENATE No. 346

By Ms. Rausch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 346) of Rebecca L. Rausch, Lydia Edwards and James B. Eldridge for legislation to ensuring access to mental health supports in K-12 schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act ensuring access to mental health supports in K-12 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 Section 1P of Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (g) the following subsection:-

3 (h) As used in this section, the term “school mental health professional” shall mean a
4 school counselor, a school psychologist, or a school social worker. The department of elementary
5 and secondary education shall provide school mental health professionals at a ratio of at least 1
6 per 250 students, with a minimum of 1 school mental health professional at each elementary and
7 each secondary school in the commonwealth. Consistent with applicable scopes of practice,
8 school mental health professionals may, without limitation, provide mental health services to
9 students; offer training and resources to school faculty and administrators; provide the school
10 with culturally competent and linguistically diverse resources to develop and improve the social
11 and emotional health of students; provide direct social and emotional skill building; assist
12 students and their families with applying for and obtaining necessary public benefits for which

13 each student and the student's family is eligible; provide services and supports to students who
14 have an individualized education program; consult and coordinate with other school
15 professionals on behalf of students and support families accessing community-based resources as
16 needed and appropriate; and identify food insecurity, homelessness, and other issues affecting
17 students and make referrals to services with the community, bringing those services into the
18 school where possible.