

**SENATE . . . . . No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*John C. Velis*

*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 establishing media literacy education in schools.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:

*John C. Velis*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Hampden and Hampshire*

**SENATE . . . . . No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court  
(2025-2026)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act establishing media literacy education in 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 1. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
2 Section 99 the following section:-

3 Section 100. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context  
4 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

5 “Department”, the department of elementary and secondary education.

6 “Digital citizenship”, the ability to use technology safely, effectively, responsibly, and  
7 respectfully.

8 “Media”, the sources used by large numbers of people to receive, communicate, and  
9 share information, including but not limited to television, radio, newspapers, internet, social  
10 media platforms.

11 “Media literacy” the ability to critically analyze information presented in the mass media  
12 and to determine its accuracy and credibility. For the purpose of this section, “Media literacy”  
13 also encompasses “social media literacy” and “digital citizenship” as defined below.

14 “School”, any public school located in Massachusetts that provides full-time education  
15 programs for any grade from kindergarten to 12th.

16 “Social media”, a web-based or mobile technology that allows users to: (i) connect and  
17 interact socially with each other by creating a profile, sharing social connections, and posting  
18 content viewable by other users; and (ii) a platform where users can construct a public profile,  
19 populate a list of connections, and create content for others to see.

20 “Social media literacy”, skills to prevent mental and physical health consequences that  
21 arise from online social interactions.

22 “Student”, an individual currently enrolled or registered at a public school as defined  
23 under this section.

24 (b) The department shall integrate media literacy skills in all health and core curricular  
25 content for grades kindergarten through 12.

26 The department shall, in consultation with the department of public health, as well as  
27 technology researchers and technology ethicists to develop K-12 curriculum guidelines on how  
28 to teach students the skills to critically analyze media content and assess how media affects the  
29 world around them, as well as their own physical, physiological, emotional, and cognitive  
30 development.

31 Guidelines shall provide for a sequential course of study for each of the grades from  
32 kindergarten through 12, and shall include, at a minimum, the ability to: (i) access relevant and  
33 accurate information through media in a variety of forms; (ii) critically analyze media content  
34 and the influences of different forms of media; (iii) evaluate the comprehensiveness, relevance,  
35 credibility, authority, and accuracy of information; (iv) recognize limitations of social media as a  
36 news source, such as the absence of journalistic protocols and conventions of sourcing and fact  
37 checking; (v) make educated decisions based on information obtained from media and digital  
38 sources; (vi) operate various forms of technology and digital tools; (vii) reflect on how the use of  
39 media and technology may affect private and public life; (viii) assess how media affects the  
40 consumption of information and how it triggers emotions and behaviors; (ix) protect oneself  
41 from online content that presents a clear risk to health and safety, including child sexual abuse  
42 material and content promoting illegal drugs, self-harm, or eating disorders; (x) ensure safe,  
43 responsible, ethical use of social media platforms and other communication technologies and  
44 platforms; (xi) create and share media content using principles of social and civic responsibility  
45 and with awareness of the legal and ethical issues involved; and (xii) participate in the political,  
46 economic, social, and cultural aspects of life related to technology, communications, and the  
47 digital world by consuming and creating digital content, including media.

48 The department shall provide an online site with a list of approved media literacy  
49 curricula that meet the guidelines put forth by the department.

50 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 2026.