



Safe and Supportive Schools Commission – Tenth Annual Report

This report provides updates and recommendations related to safe and supportive schools. The report is submitted pursuant to Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014, An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence. This Act was signed into law by the Governor on August 13, 2014 (House Bill 4376). Provisions within this Act relating to safe and supportive schools are codified as Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, Section 1P (G.L. c. 69, § 1P).

April 2026

This report was prepared with assistance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education staff. Please note that this report does not reflect the policy recommendations of DESE or the Executive Office of Education, though staff members serve on the Commission and provide technical support to the Commission as well.

This document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Executive Summary and Introduction

The Safe and Supportive Schools Commission (Commission) respectfully submits this Report to the Governor and Legislature: *Safe and Supportive Schools Commission Tenth Annual Report*. This report is part of the [Commission's responsibilities](#), pursuant to Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014, [An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence](#), which was signed into law by the Governor on August 13, 2014. Provisions within this Act relating to safe and supportive schools are codified as Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, section 1P (G.L. c. 69, § 1P), the [Safe and Supportive Schools Framework](#) law.

"..The commission shall prepare and submit an annual progress report concerning the commission's activities with appropriate recommendations, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such recommendations, if any, not later than December 31. The commission shall submit such annual report to the governor and the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, who shall forward the same to the chairs of the joint committee on education, the chairs of the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, and the house and senate committees on ways and means..."¹

This report includes recommendations to the Legislature (*Recommendations* section) informed by Commission discussions during 2024 and prior years, as well as an overview of Commission activities during 2024 (*Commission Activities Undertaken in 2024* section), and highlights from Department Activities in 2024 related to the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework law and associated state-funded grant program (*Department Activities* section). Furthermore, the Commission Activities section includes highlights from Commission analysis of Safe and Supportive Schools grantee action plans informed by work done by the Collaborative for Educational Services through a Department contract. The work of the Commission can help advance the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department, or DESE) *Educational Vision* ([EdVision](#)) which describes DESE's vision for elementary and secondary public education and adult basic education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The vision states, in part, the following: *"All students in Massachusetts, particularly students from historically underserved groups and communities, will have equitable opportunities to excel in all content areas across all grades. Culturally and linguistically sustaining classroom and school practices will support students to thrive by creating affirmative environments where students have a sense of belonging, engage in deeper learning, and are held to high expectations with targeted support."*

¹ The full legislative charge and links to the full text of the statute can be found in Appendix B of this report.

For example, Strategic Objective 1 of DESE’s EdVision is aligned with the charge of the Commission by focusing on the whole student. This objective highlights the partnership that DESE has with districts, schools, and other entities “to cultivate systems to support the whole student and foster joyful, healthy, and supportive learning environments so that all students feel valued, connected, nourished, and ready to learn.”² It is critical to have this alignment with the state, local school districts, and other agencies and professional organizations. It is also important to have coherence throughout each school district, beginning with District Improvement Plans and Student Opportunity Act Plans aligning with each School Improvement Plan that includes safe and supportive schools action plans. To best build capacity within a school district and in each school, professional educators should align their professional practice and/or student learning goals to their school and district improvement plans. To that end, one of the recommendations (#3) to the legislature in this report emphasizes suggested changes to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, section 1P (G.L. c. 69, § 1P), and other related laws to improve that coherence.

Leadership transitions at local, state, and federal levels can bring changes in funding, policy, and practice, as well as a range of differing emotions including but not limited to hopes, fears, and uncertainty for students, families, and the educational workforce. Throughout these transitions, it is critical for state and local educational leaders to focus time, energy, and resources on addressing the mental health and well-being of students and adults in our public schools³ across the Commonwealth. Furthermore, it is imperative to find ways to eliminate the opportunity gaps and inequities associated with race/ethnicity, income level, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other marginalized identities and backgrounds that have resulted in many students facing food insecurities, homelessness, substance abuse, bullying, harassment, suicidal ideation, grief, and other traumatic experiences. Now more than ever, it is essential to realize the DESE *EdVision* where DESE, districts, schools, educators, and other entities work in coherence and collaboration “to promote teaching and learning that is antiracist, inclusive, multilingual, and multicultural; that values and affirms each and every student and their families; and that creates equitable opportunities and experiences for all students, particularly those who have been historically underserved.”

Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool: One of the key resources used by school districts to create equitable opportunities and experiences for all students is the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool. First developed and piloted during the 2008-2011 Behavioral Health and Public Schools Task Force, the most recently updated version of the framework and tool⁴ was completed in 2021. The Department’s Safe and Supportive Schools grantees (see *Department Activities*

² See <https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/vision-supports.pdf>, page 5.

³ When schools and districts are referenced in this report, generally this includes charter schools, regional schools, career technical education schools, educational collaboratives, and virtual schools.

⁴ The online Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Tool are available through <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/safety/> and through <http://www.sassma.org/>.

section for more details) are required to use the tool with participating schools, and the online resources are available for use voluntarily by all school districts. The goal of the framework is to provide a structure and a guiding resource to help each school develop school-wide action plans (either through, or aligned with, their school improvement plans), that help efficiently align and integrate initiatives in a way that fits with the school's (and district's) own culture and locally identified priorities. The framework's topic areas, known as [implementation levers](#), address school operations: *leadership and culture; family engagement; professional learning opportunities; access to resources and services; teaching and learning that fosters safe and supportive environments; and policies and procedures.*

Aligned with the framework, the tool is designed to prompt collaborative reflection and actions between and among educators, parents, students, and community partners. These efforts can help create supportive school-wide environments that avoid the use of punitive approaches while recognizing the inextricable connections between students' social, emotional, and educational needs. The tool is also organized by the aforementioned implementation levers, and can help prompt schools to identify and address urgent local, district, and/or school-wide priorities related to creating safe and supportive school cultures.⁵ To date, the tool (all versions combined) has been used by approximately 370 schools in 156 districts in the past 13.5 years, since June 2010. This number includes FY2014-FY2025 Safe and Supportive Schools grantees, close to 77% of Gateway Cities districts,⁶ five demonstration schools that work on trauma sensitivity through the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative,⁷ and others. In the past 3.5 years (since January 2021), approximately 104 schools in 60 districts have used the current version of the tool.

The Commission will continue to learn from the work of schools that have utilized the prior and current versions of the tool. In addition, data provided by grantees, along with other statewide data and presentations will inform future recommendations to the Legislature.

Recommendations

Through the tenth annual report, the Commission respectfully offers three recommendations to members of the Massachusetts Legislature and state policymakers

⁵ Per G.L. c. 69, § 1P(d), "The self-assessment tool created by the department consistent with the recommendations of the behavioral health and public school task force created under said section 19 of said chapter 321 shall be organized according to the elements of the framework established under subsection (b), and [if adopted pursuant to c. 69§1P(c)] shall be used by schools to: (i) assess the school's capacity to create and sustain safe and supportive school environments for all students; (ii) identify areas where additional school-based action, efforts, guidance and support are needed to create and maintain safe and supportive school environments; and (iii) create action plans to address the areas of need identified by the assessment."

⁶ Forman, Ben; Bourvier, Sonia, and Citino, Christina (September 2015). "[Building Community-Wide Social and Emotional Support Systems in Massachusetts Gateway Cities: Assessing Progress from the Perspective of Local Educators](#)," MassInc and the UMass Donahue Institute.

⁷ The Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative is a collaboration between Massachusetts Advocates for Children and Harvard Law School. <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>.

more broadly. These recommendations highlight what areas are currently furthering the work of safe and supportive schools in the Commonwealth and ideas for areas that can be strengthened. As currently defined in the statute (emphasis added):

Safe and supportive schools (per G.L. c. 69, § 1P, with emphasis added) “**foster a safe, positive, healthy and inclusive whole-school learning environment** that:

- enables students to develop **positive relationships** with adults and peers, **regulate their emotions and behavior**, achieve **academic and non-academic success** in school and maintain **physical and psychological health and well-being**; and
- (ii) **integrates services and aligns initiatives** that promote students' behavioral health, including social and emotional learning, bullying prevention, trauma sensitivity, dropout prevention, truancy reduction, children's mental health, foster care and homeless youth education, inclusion of students with disabilities, positive behavioral approaches that reduce suspensions and expulsions and other similar initiatives.”

The legislature’s vision of the Safe and Supportive Schools Statute was to help schools create safe and supportive whole-school cultures where all students feel a sense of safety, connection, and belonging so all students can learn and achieve at high levels. The recommendations presented in this 10th Annual Report focus on the following to continue to strive towards that vision:

- 1) **State budget funding through DESE to local communities and districts to advance Safe and Supportive Schools work;**
- 2) **State budget funding that supports student engagement and attendance, and in particular, related to strengthened collaboration with families and access to effective services; and**
- 3) **Consideration of legislative changes that can help advance Safe and Supportive Schools goals.**

The recommendations presented below are designed to inform efforts in Massachusetts for the upcoming fiscal year and beyond that can help schools become safer and more supportive. The content is grounded in Commission meeting discussions and includes examples of ways the Legislature and policymakers can consider supporting the recommendation goals. Examples of Department initiatives related to these topics, many of which have been discussed with the Commission over time, are included in the Department Activities section of the report.

Commission Recommendation 1: Continue to Support Efforts Funded through the Safe and Supportive Schools Line Item and other Complementary Line Items to Advance the Work

Recommendation #1 Summary:

The Safe and Supportive Schools Commission (Commission) recommends continuing to support efforts funded by the Safe and Supportive Schools line item ([7061-9612](#)) and other complementary line items through the fiscal year 2026 (FY2026) budget. It will be important for funds to continue to support efforts with at least the current funding level for line item 7061-9612, as well as through other available and appropriate funding sources.

Recommendation #1 context:

As outlined in more detail on the prior page, the legislature’s vision (defined in G.L. c. 69, s. 1P) of the Safe and Supportive Schools Statute was to help schools create safe and supportive whole-school cultures where all students feel a sense of safety, connection, and belonging and can learn and achieve at high levels. To that end, the Commission is appreciative that Governor Healey has included Safe and Supportive Schools initiative efforts and related funding in her budget proposals, and for the Legislature’s continued support for more than a decade (since FY2014).

The 7061-9612 line item and other related line items can help further efforts that strengthen safe and supportive learning environments and available services, through the type of work described in the *Department Activities* section of this report and can help further goals associated with all three Commission recommendations.

Furthermore, work supported by the Safe and Supportive Schools line item 7061-9612 and other related line items can help advance the DESE’s [EdVision](#). For example, the Department’s “Whole Student” strategic objective focus areas aim to:

- Promote students’ physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces;
- Implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development; and
- Develop authentic partnerships with students and families that elevate their voices and leadership in decision-making and connect them to their communities.

These focus areas are aligned with the Safe and Supportive Schools [Essential Elements](#) that undergird work supported by the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection tool. These Essential Elements include: **Supporting All Students; Deepening Understanding, Advancing Equity, Exemplifying Cultural Responsiveness; and**

Reflecting and Adapting.

The ongoing funding and support from the Legislature will continue to advance initiatives related to Safe and Supportive Schools, Early Learning, Rethinking Discipline, Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health and Wellness, MTSS, Social Emotional and Behavioral Supports and Interventions, Student Voice, and Family Engagement initiatives.

Recommendation #1 examples for the Legislature's consideration:

Examples of Efforts Made Possible Through Legislative Support of Safe and Supportive Schools and Complementary Initiatives Include the Following:

- Grant opportunities for school districts and collaboratives to advance safe and supportive schools initiatives including, but not limited to, using the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool **to create and implement action plans and mentor other communities** across the Commonwealth.
- Safe and Supportive Schools Grant program **evaluation** efforts.
- Safe and Supportive Schools grant program, professional development (PD), and Commission **coordination and administrative support**.
- Content updates and other **improvements to the online Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool**.
- **Select Additional Department Efforts:** The Department is engaged in a wide array of initiatives beyond those noted above that also help to strengthen safe and supportive learning environments that include funding, professional development, guidance, posted resources, and more. Examples of complementary Department efforts can be found on the Commission web page, and include for instance efforts to help advance implementation of the Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Framework, to share guidance on Emergency Management Planning, to offer funding and professional development that supports students' social emotional learning and mental health and wellness, to run MTSS Academies, and to facilitate student leadership councils (the Statewide Student Advisory Council and the Statewide GSA Student Leadership Council).

Commission Recommendation 2: Support Student Engagement and Attendance by Promoting Efforts that Enhance Collaboration Between Schools and Families and Strengthen Schools' Ability to Access and Deliver Services that are Clinically, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate

Recommendation #2 Summary:

The Commission recommends policymakers support efforts that increase student engagement and student attendance statewide through evidence-based initiatives geared at improving *family engagement and access to services*. Specifically, the Commission recommends building the capacity at the state and local levels to help schools more actively and effectively engage families and community partners in ways that are meaningful to students and families, and that are grounded in antiracist and equity-focused practices.

Furthermore, an increase in student engagement and attendance can be bolstered by supporting efforts to *increase schools' access to clinically, culturally, and linguistically appropriate services*. It is important that these services are part of implementing a comprehensive, integrated, multi-tiered system of support ([MTSS](#)) framework, with culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining efforts that promote student health, wellness, and success.

By focusing on creating Safe and Supportive learning environments/school cultures that intentionally and explicitly foster a welcoming school community, we can improve student engagement and attendance. Such school communities are characterized by each and every student and family experiencing a strong sense of belonging, and as a school where varied and multiple opportunities for students to meaningfully engage in all the school has to offer are provided to all students.

Moreover, by engaging and elevating student voice, schools can provide students with a sense of agency and help them feel that they are valued members of the school community. As they participate in problem-solving and decision-making along with educators, students can bring their unique perspective and creativity to co-create a safe and supportive school culture that is inclusive and culturally responsive.

These endeavors can help improve experiences and outcomes for students - including but not limited to students of color; students with disabilities; students who are multilingual English learners; and students who identify as LGBTQ.

Recommendation #2 context:

In the 2023-2024 school year, nearly 1 in 5 students (19.7 percent) in Massachusetts were chronically absent (*missing at least 10 percent of school days for which a student is*

enrolled that year)⁸, compared to the pre-pandemic rate of 13 percent. Thanks to efforts from students, families, and school districts across the state, this is down from the pandemic high of 27.7 percent. While there is important progress to appreciate, the rates are still problematically high and impacting virtually all student groups in Massachusetts and nationally, with continued disparities causing even greater concern. For example, the following racial and ethnic student groups experienced chronic absenteeism at rates higher than the 19.7 percent all-student rate: Hispanic or Latino students (experienced a chronic absenteeism rate of 31.3 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native (28.5 percent), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (24.3 percent), and African American / Black (22.5 percent). For more chronic absenteeism information related to this recommendation, see the [Commission](#) webpage.

Providing every Massachusetts student with a joyful, healthy, and supportive learning environment where they feel known, connected, and valued (as outlined in DESE's EdVision)⁹ is critical to reducing chronic absenteeism. However, chronic absenteeism is complex. It involves external and internal school factors and often requires a multipronged approach. **A key to this work, particularly at the local school and district level, is a strong and cyclical use of data systems, practices (specifically those geared at authentic relationship building with students and families), and root cause analysis.** It is important for the results of this work to inform local approaches to this work. As outlined in this [DESE overview](#), the data analysis may point to the need and benefit to strengthen efforts in areas such as ***proactive family partnership and outreach; holistic student support systems*** (e.g., assessing and actively tracking and adjusting universal supports and intervention across domains of academics as well as physical, mental, social, and emotional health and wellbeing); ***positive school culture and belonging***; and ***culturally and linguistically sustaining and engaging instruction***. The Commission's overall work relates to needed improvement efforts in all these aforementioned areas, and *this report's recommendation #2 most closely relates to helpful efforts in the first two areas (proactive family partnership and outreach, and holistic student support systems).*

Recommendation #2 examples for the Legislature's consideration:

SCHOOL-FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS:

The Commission recommends that the Legislature provide additional funding, guidance, and initiatives that can help strengthen engagement and attendance through culturally sustaining and authentic **school-family partnerships**, that are in alignment with state resources such as the following:

- DESE's EdVision and strategic objectives, including this key part of this *Whole Student Strategic Objective: Develop trusting and authentic partnerships with*

⁸ In most school districts, based on 180 student days, a student who is chronically absent would have been absent from school 18 or more days.

⁹ See <https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/vision-supports.pdf>, page 5

students and families that elevate their voices and leadership in decision-making and work in collaboration with communities and partners to support student success.

- Additionally, as part of the DESE EdVision’s *Diverse and Effective Workforce* Strategic Objective, priority strategies for districts, schools, and programs to consider for building capacity in this realm include the following:
 - Enhanced Pathways to Increase Educator Diversity: Develop or enhance pathways designed to intentionally attract a diverse pool of candidates (e.g., education-specific pathways for local high school students, “grow your own” teacher preparation programs, and paraprofessional pipelines)
 - Pathways for Professional Growth and Leadership: Create specific roles and/or structures that offer staff professional growth and leadership development (e.g., leaders-in-training programs, coaching roles, etc.):
- The cross-agency statewide [Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement Framework for Massachusetts](#) and the aligned [Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals Self-Assessment Version 2.0](#) and the associated [Better Together: Massachusetts Family School Partnership Fundamentals](#) e-learning module.
- The [Family Communication Toolkit](#) and [Family Communication Tip Sheet](#). – that can help schools build more inclusive, effective, and meaningful communication with families from diverse backgrounds.
- Ongoing professional development and school-family partnership initiatives for communities across the state, such as:
 - A yearlong **professional development series**, including an annual Better Together Family School Partnership Summit, focused on strengthening school family partnerships, which in 2023 included nearly 730 educators, family members, students, and community partners.
 - **Family Institutes for Student Success (FISS)** –a capacity building institute that offers a portfolio of workshops to parents, caregivers, school staff, and community based providers to facilitate common knowledge, shared mindsets, and collective intentional action by all stakeholders influencing the growth of children and youth, and in support of their life-long success.¹⁰
 - **Family School Partnerships Initiative** – that provides space, time, and guided support district teams can use to reflect on family engagement efforts, learn about effective strategies, and work in a more intentional and focused way to enhance family engagement efforts.

¹⁰ FISS is an evidence-based family engagement institute anchored in the Dual Capacity Building Framework for Family and School Partnership (Mapp, K. and Kuttner, P; U.S. Department of Education, 2013, and Mapp, K. L. and Bergman, E. 2019).

- **La Respuesta** (part of a 2023-2024 DESE family engagement grant) – an initiative run through a contract with the Equity Imperative that enhances the partnership between schools, students, and families. Envisioned as part of a career development pipeline program, family members are hired as part-time hall monitors, to mentor family members to increase their presence through additional roles within a school setting over time.
- Additional initiatives such as those described on DESE’s Student and Family Support [family engagement](#) page.

ACCESS TO SERVICES:

The Commission also recommends that the Legislature provide additional funding, guidance, and initiatives that can help strengthen engagement and attendance through increased **access to services** that are a part of culturally and linguistically sustaining comprehensive systems of support and delivered by in-district staff as well as through community partnerships, such as through the following examples. Note that many of the examples below may be only or most effective when done in combination, e.g., it is essential for clinical supervision to be provided in a way that values and supports students’ identities (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, etc.).

It is also important to emphasize that simply adding staffing will not alone strengthen engagement and attendance through increased access to services. A multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) approach with culturally and linguistically sustaining practices is necessary through appropriate clinical supervision and leadership to build systems of support that are sustainable for the long-term success of our students.

- Help contribute to comprehensive efforts to increase student attendance and engagement, and to better manage students’ chronic or acute mental, behavioral and physical health challenges that may be contributing to barriers to attendance - further support efforts to expand and diversify school and district health and wellness staff (e.g., Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, or SISP)¹¹ in alignment with DESE’s EdVision strategic objective to have a *diverse and effective workforce* that implements culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.
- Support funding and guidance efforts to **provide professional development, training, and networking opportunities that help strengthen practices at individual, team, and systemic levels** that help all staff, including but not limited to SISP¹¹ staff and all staff participating in a student support team or attendance focused team, to deepen their understanding and skills related to [culturally and linguistically sustaining practices](#), as well as mental and behavioral and social-

¹¹ Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) staff, also referred to as Professional Support Personnel include but may not be limited to staff licensed as school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, and school social workers and adjustment counselors.

emotional learning and physical health and wellness, to better "support students to thrive by creating affirming environments where students have a sense of belonging, engage in deeper learning, and are held to high expectations with targeted support" in alignment with DESE's EdVision.

- Support efforts that incentivize and provide funding to districts to help make it possible for **all SISP¹¹ staff to receive appropriate and qualified clinical supervision from a licensed DESE Administrator or Supervisor Director** who holds the same DESE license and has experience in the role that they are supervising.⁹ Consider prioritizing funding for this increased capacity for supervision in districts that have a specific minimum number of SISP¹¹ staff. As a complement to those efforts, support efforts to utilize community partners to provide clinical supervision across districts for the smallest districts and/or where in-district leadership and supervision is not yet possible. Also, consider whether any additional funds could help provide professional development and training for other school administrators who may be currently supervising SISPs.¹¹
- Provide support through funding and guidance to help **enable all school districts to utilize staffing ratios for critical health and wellness (including mental, behavioral, and physical health) staff in a school** in accordance with guidance from professional organizations. According to a [research brief](#) created by the Behavioral Health Integrated Resources for Children Project (BIRCh Project), when compared to the staff to student ratios recommended by each of the professional fields, Massachusetts public schools are currently under resourced in the specializations of School Social Worker¹²/Adjustment Counselor, School Counselor¹³, and School Psychologist¹⁴. Moreover, school nurse¹⁵ ratios in a school/district need to align with the number and degree of health issues in that school/district including students on health plans, students with disabilities, and students on 504 plans. It is important to note that to be effective, workload needs to be kept in mind as much as caseload, as some students may need more time-

¹² According to the School Social Work Association of America, the recommended ratio of [school social worker to student](#) is 1 to 250. In [Massachusetts, the ratio](#) in 2022 is 1 to 1,522.

¹³ According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the recommended ratio of [students to school counselors](#) is 250 to 1 ratio.

¹⁴ According to the National Association of School Psychologists, the recommended ratio of [school psychologists to students](#) is 1:500. In [Massachusetts, the ratio](#) in 2022 was 1:825.

¹⁵ The 1998 legislative report Options for Developing School Health Services in Massachusetts recommended the school nurse to student ratio be 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) professional school nurse (RN) in each building with 250 to 500 students. In buildings with more than 500 students, an additional 0.1 FTE is recommended for each additional 50 students. For buildings with fewer than 250 students, the recommended ratio is 0.1 FTE: 25 students. In addition to these guidelines, the [MA Department of Public Health School Health Services Unit recommends](#) that a needs assessment be completed with attention paid to those children with special health care needs, as well as emergency response time for each building. If an application indicates that the nurse to student ratios for any building are greater than 1:750, a letter will be emailed to the school/district noting that the ratios are above recommended levels, and the MDPH SHU reserves the right to deny the application for medication delegation. Note: Any school building with less than 1 FTE RN that intends to delegate medications must have an RN on-call via telephone while school is in session and the nurse is not physically present.)

intensive supports e.g., 1:1 nursing, and student needs can vary not only from student to student, but from school to school as well.

- Support funding to help build on recent [professional learning](#) efforts to further **advance the implementation of the 2023 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Frameworks**.
- Support efforts that **increase and more effectively incorporate student and family voice and engagement** into decisions that impact student school experiences, including informing students' access to effective services that are clinically, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.
- Help ensure opportunities are available for **all school staff to participate in mental health promotion and prevention training**, for example through Youth Mental Health First Aid Training. These trainings could be offered for all licensed educators in the Commonwealth and through either initial licensure or for renewing a license. A train-the-trainer model and a combination of state and local funding could be leveraged so that districts can train staff in-house.
- Support **expansion of researched-based universal mental health screeners** at key developmental points in a student's K-12 education continuum. Consider lessons learned through the pilot work that is a part of DESE's [SEL and Mental Health](#) grant program and support efforts that ensure screenings are conducted to identify tier I, II, and/or III supports (from universal to supplemental, small group, and more intensive) that are matched with strategic supports, evidence-based, and create policies and protocols that are embedded in school culture and climate practices for sustainability and scalability efforts.

Commission Recommendation 3: Strengthen Safe and Supportive Schools Work through Legislative Changes

Recommendation #3 Summary:

The Commission recommends that policymakers continue to help advance efforts to make schools safer and more supportive, by considering ways to strengthen current statutes related to safe and supportive schools to reflect specific inclusion of student groups, a greater emphasis on mental and behavioral health services, and furthering equity, equitable practices, and social justice. Moreover, we respectfully recommend that the Legislature consider examining other statutes related to school improvement plans, district improvement plans, and Student Opportunity Act (SOA) plans to strengthen their relationship with each other in advancing goals related to safe and supportive schools. This recommendation is consistent with the third recommendation in last year's 9th Annual Report, to reinforce the value seen by the Commission in the content's goals and substance.

Recommendation #3 context:

The Commission applauds the work that the Legislature in coordination with the Governor's office has done since 2014 in advancing safe and supportive schools work in our schools and districts. Through the *Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence, Safe and Supportive Schools Framework Law, Mental Health Law, Student Opportunity Act*, and other related statutes, Massachusetts is a leader in the country in advancing this important work. As a critical next step, the Commission is recommending consideration of changes to current statutes to reflect the work that has happened in the last 10 years in this area and to better prepare our students for success in and beyond school.

We respectfully submit that the changes could be realized through considering legislative amendments to update, strengthen, and advance the safe and supportive schools work that is currently underway in our public schools and school districts, including charter schools and career technical education schools, and educational collaboratives. These changes could help make our schools safer and more supportive for *all students*.

The Commission acknowledges and appreciates that many efforts are already underway in schools and districts across the Commonwealth to help advance safe and supportive school goals and experiences for students, families, staff, and community partners. School and district leaders can advance equitable, safe, and supportive school goals – for example, by coordinating school and district plans and strategies that help further antiracist and LGBTQ inclusive teaching and learning environments. These recommended changes for consideration are intended to help fortify and make explicit expectations related to advancing equitable, safe, and supportive learning environments, and to increase coherence and integrate strategic planning efforts with whole school and whole district approaches in mind.

Recommendation #3 examples for the Legislature's consideration:**Under [MGL Chapter 69, Section 1P](#) (Safe and Supportive Schools Framework Law)**

- Strengthen the language of the law to more explicitly include groups of students such as BIPOC students, students with disabilities, English Learners (EL), LGBTQ students, homeless students, economically disadvantaged students, any student who requires additional academic and/or social emotional support, and other students who have been historically underserved.
- Increase the emphasis on the integration of services and initiatives that contribute to safe and supportive learning environments. Examples of such services and initiatives include, but are not limited to efforts that promote:
 - Students' academic success, behavioral and mental health, and physical health;
 - Social-emotional learning, equity and social justice, bullying prevention, conflict resolution, relationship building, trauma sensitivity, dropout prevention, truancy reduction, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and restorative justice

- and other alternatives to exclusionary practice; and
- Inclusion of students with disabilities and students who require other accommodations, and supports for EL students, students in foster care, and students with housing instability.
- Expand the definition of safe and supportive schools to explicitly include equity, equitable practices, and social justice.
- Connect the Safe and Supportive Schools law ([MGL Chapter 69 Section 1P](#)) with the School Council law ([Chapter 71, Section 59C](#)) and District Improvement Plan/Student Opportunity Act laws (MGL Chapter 69, [Section 1S](#) and [Section 1I](#)) to align the action planning process in the Safe and Supportive Schools law with school improvement plans, district improvement plans, and Student Opportunity Act plans.
- Expand examples of indicators of success related to evaluating the effectiveness of strategies outlined in school and district improvement plans, so that examples include ones related to student and staff school climate and safety data.
- Strengthen reference to clinically appropriate services to explicitly include mental health and behavioral health services.
- Expand the charge of the Commission to include identifying and recommending best practices to increase student voice and engagement in schools, to explicitly support current and future Commission work in this realm. This could include, but is not limited to, increasing the number of students on the Commission.

Under [MGL Chapter 71, Section 59C](#): School Councils: members, meetings, duties

- Strengthen the role of school councils to assist in the behavioral and social-emotional needs of students, by explicitly noting that the school council shall assist with the identification of needs and associated recommendations related to students' behavioral and social-emotional needs (in addition to their educational needs). Reference the Safe and Supportive Schools law and definition to make a purposeful connection and make clear that school improvement plans are expected to include components that further goals that help schools be more safe and supportive, as defined by the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework law.

Under [MGL Chapter 69, Section 1I](#): Performances of public school districts and individual public schools; evaluation system; assessment instruments; reports

- Reference the Safe and Supportive Schools law and definition to make a purposeful connection and make clear that district improvement plans are expected to include a description of how the district is implementing goals related to safe and supportive schools as defined in the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework law.

For specific recommendations, the Legislature may wish to consult with the leadership of organizations represented on the Commission.

Please note that as is customary, the DESE Commission Co-Chair (the DESE Commissioner's designee), as well as the Secretary of Education's member designee,¹⁶ abstained from voting on Recommendation 3, to remain neutral on proposed changes to state law in this context.

Commission Activities Undertaken in 2024

In 2024, the Commission focused primarily on 1) emphasizing the connection between safe and supportive schools and increasing attendance and engagement and 2) analyzing school-wide action plans consistent with the [7061-9612](#)¹⁷ FY24 budget line item. These focus areas were woven in throughout meetings and topics as well as its connection to the two responsibilities shown below, *as well as consultation with others and the drafting of this annual report outlining Commission Activities and appropriate recommendations.*

- Propose steps for improving schools' access to clinically, culturally, and linguistically appropriate services; and
- Develop recommendations on best practices for collaboration with families, including families of children with behavioral health needs.

Below is a summary of activities conducted during this tenth year of the Commission. **Five Commission meetings were convened in 2024.** Note that an originally scheduled meeting in October was not held due to the lack of a quorum. All meetings occurred virtually per the [extension to the open meeting law](#). Each meeting covered topics related to at least one of the aforementioned areas of focus. Each meeting included one or two spotlight presentations from school staff or students, Commission members, Department staff, or others with insight into the topics at hand. Meetings also generally included time for brief Department updates; as well as time for discussion in small groups to help inform annual recommendations, and for members and participants to share about reactions to the presentations as well as related challenges and successes and available

¹⁶ NOTE: The Secretary's designee planned to abstain from this vote, for reasons noted above. However, unavoidably she was not present during the part of the meeting when this vote was taken, so technically did not vote.

¹⁷ The Safe and Supportive Schools line item 7061-9612 reads in part: "...provided further, that schools receiving continuation grants to implement schoolwide action plans shall incorporate such action plans into their school improvement plans developed under [section 1I of said chapter 69](#); provided further, that the safe and supportive schools commission shall conduct an analysis of such school-wide action plans and school improvement plans, which the department shall provide to the commission, and shall include in its annual report the results of such analysis and any recommendations, including any recommendations related to improving the framework or the self-assessment tool..." See <https://budget.digital.mass.gov/summary/fy25/enacted/education/education-k-12/70619612/> for full text.

resources. Below is a list of spotlight presentations and discussions.

- **February 6, 2024:** 1) Context Setting and Commission 2024 focus areas, *with Co-chair, John Doherty*. 2) High School Student Panel and Discussion: Informing mental health and wellness policies and initiatives in high schools, with student representatives of Methuen’s *Mental Health Parent & Student Advisory Council*, moderated by John Crocker, Methuen’s Director of School Mental Health & Behavioral Services *and founder of the MA School MH Consortium*.
- **March 19, 2024:** 1) Presentation & discussion on Absenteeism: A Massachusetts Landscape Analysis, *with DESE’s College and Career Readiness Coordinator, Nyal Fuentes & Drop-Out Prevention and Re-Engagement Specialist, Lisa Harney*. 2) Connections between Attendance, Well-being, and Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for LGBTQ Students – Data and Discussion, *with Commission Member Alex Nugent*.
- **May 9, 2024:** 1) [Students Speak](#) 2024 Legislative Briefing Highlights, *with Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI) and Harvard Law Professor, Michael Gregory*. 2) Update and discussion on the Safe and Supportive Schools (SaSS) Grantee action plan report collection and analysis *with DESE’s Early Learning and Safe and Supportive School’s Program Specialist, Emily Taylor*.
- **Summer Meeting, August 6, 2024:** 1) Safe and Supportive Schools (SaSS) focus area related case study scenarios *with Co-Chair John Doherty*. 2) FY2024 Grant Evaluation (Collaborative for Educational Services (CES)) – A presentation and discussion regarding student voice and a preliminary analysis of alignment between SaSS school-wide action plans and school improvement plans, *with Catherine Brooks and Kate Lytton from CES*. For more details see below.*
- **November 14, 2024:** Discussion, deliberation, and voting on the substance of recommendations to include in the 2024 annual report to the legislature.

***Commission Analysis of Grantee Action Plans:** Safe and Supportive Schools Commission [responsibilities](#) include “examine and recommend model approaches for integrating school action plans, required under subsection (e), with school improvement plans and for using the framework to organize other school and district improvement processes.”¹⁸ Safe and Supportive Schools grantees are required to submit an action plan, developed after completing use of the Safe and Supportive Schools Self-Reflection Tool [fund code (FC) 0335 Option 1]. Additionally, grantees who completed their action plan in the prior year(s) are required to submit an implementation update (FC 0335 Option 2 and FC 0337) which includes updates on the progress toward implementation of previously completed action plans.

¹⁸ <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1P>

Related to the aforementioned Commission charge, the state budget's Safe and Supportive Schools line item [7061-9612](#) states that "... provided further, that the safe and supportive schools commission shall conduct an analysis of such school-wide action plans and school improvement plans, which the department shall provide to the commission, and shall include in its annual report the results of such analysis and any recommendations, including any recommendations related to improving the framework or the self-assessment tool;"¹⁹. During the 2023-2024 school year, the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) reviewed the submitted action plans and implementation updates and summarized their review for the Commission through a presentation and a facilitated discussion at the summer meeting (August 6, 2024). Subsequently, in November, the Department shared with the Commission the CES [final report](#) and an accompanying [two-page summary](#). Some of the major themes that CES found in their review of the grantee reports included that many grantees proposed to or were currently working on grant-funded activities related to:

1. Student behavior (including absenteeism),
2. Family engagement,
3. Social-emotional learning, and
4. Student voice

The CES report suggested several actions and activities for DESE to improve the grant process, including updates to action plan templates and implementation update forms. Additionally, during the August 2024 Commission meeting, CES asked commission members and others in attendance for additional feedback on what would be helpful to improve or change in the grantee required forms and what additional supports might be provided to grantees when they are creating these documents. Informed by the suggestions from CES and the Commission, as well as from conversations with current and former grantees, DESE staff will be providing the grantees with the Action Plan and Implementation Update templates earlier in their grant process with due dates well in advance of the grant closeout dates. These templates will also include additional questions related to sustainability and the continued inclusion of meaningful student and family voice. DESE staff will also offer additional technical assistance related to completing the action plan and provide examples to grantees as needed. These technical assistance sessions may also include SaSS grantees who have previously completed action plans to provide support to newer grantees.

Commission member updates: The Commission welcomed four new members, appointed by the organizations cited in the legislation authorizing the Commission that had vacancies in their member spots.

¹⁹ <https://budget.digital.mass.gov/summary/fy25/enacted/education/education-k-12/70619612/>

Starting in January 2024:

- **Raquel Negron**, Family Support Specialist – appointed by Parent/Professional Advocacy League ([PPAL](#)).

Starting in November 2024:

- **Faith Ambrose**, M.Ed, MPP, Policy Manager, Executive Office of Education - appointed by the Secretary of Education (EOE Designee)
- **Johana Rodriguez**, Program Manager, Statewide/Multicultural Outreach – appointed by Parent/Professional Advocacy League ([PPAL](#)).
- **Jariel Vergne**, Director of Social-Emotional Learning and Equity, Holliston Public Schools appointed as someone with experience implementing the [SaSS Framework](#).

The Department and Commission are **extremely grateful for the generous and helpful contributions of the following five members** and wish them well with their other responsibilities and new endeavors:

- **Ulana Ainsworth**, Fifth Grade Teacher, Roger Clap Elementary, Boston Public Schools, appointed by the Massachusetts American Federation of Teachers ([AFT](#))/Massachusetts Teachers Association ([MTA](#)), who served on the Commission for nearly two years, from July 2022 through September 2024.
- **Edverette Brewster**, Executive Director of Neighborhood House Charter School, Massachusetts School Administrators Association ([MSAA](#)), who served on the Commission for nearly two years, from February 2022 through September 2024.
- **Heidi Gold**, Senior Policy Manager, Massachusetts Executive Office of Education ([EOE](#)), Secretary’s Designee, who served on the Commission for three years, from July 2021 through June 2024. During 2024 she was enrolled in Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government through the Commonwealth’s Bradford Fellowship.
- **Raquel Negron**, Family Support Specialist, appointed by the Parent Professional Advocacy League ([PPAL](#)), served on the Commission for one year from January 2024 through October 2024.
- **Alex Nugent**, Concord-Carlisle High School Class of 2024, and member of the GSA State Student Leadership Council, who served on the Commission from February 2023 through June 2024 is attending their first year of college.

The Commission is thankful to all members for their time, contributions, insights, and dedication to efforts with and beyond the Commission that can help make schools safer and more supportive for all students. See Appendix A for a list of 2024 members.

Commission meetings are open to the public, and the Commission is also thankful to all **participating guests**, for their interest and willingness to attend meetings to learn and to contribute to the Commission's discussion when possible. Attendees who participated in at least three of the five Commission meetings in 2024 included: John Crocker, Anne Eisner, Katherine Houle, and Jariel Vergne.

The Commission appreciates all **Department staff and consultants** who assisted with 2024 Commission efforts. In particular, the Commission thanks Stacy Cabral for co-planning and helping move forward all Commission work. Additional DESE colleagues who helped inform and support 2024 Commission meetings include, but are not limited to, Student and Family Support Office colleagues Chris Pond, Donna Traynham, Emily Taylor, Yi-Juin Liu, Kelly Meehan-Rooney, Kristen McKinnon, Brian Burke, and Samantha Graham; and Office of Planning and Research colleagues Elana McDermott and Kendra Winner. Additionally, the Commission is thankful for the ongoing skilled work and thought partnership of the Collaborative for Educational Services (including but not limited to Catherine Brooks and Kate Lytton), through their DESE Safe and Supportive Schools grant evaluation related contract; and the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students, led by Director Jason Wheeler, a collaborative effort between DESE and the Commission on LGBTQ Youth.

Department Activities Related to G.L. c. 69, § 1P(f)

The statute [G.L. c. 69, § 1P] outlines numerous roles for the Department to play to help further safe and supportive learning environments.²⁰ Many of these are subject to appropriation and include but are not limited to: ***providing administrative support to the Commission and offering grants, professional development, and technical assistance to schools and districts using the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Tool.***

Support to the Commission: Department staff work with Commission Co-Chairs to plan and facilitate Commission meetings, take minutes, maintain the [Commission webpage](#), and draft the annual report.

Grants and Evaluation: Department staff provide grant coordination for the Safe and Supportive Schools Fiscal Year 2025 [Competitive](#) Grant Program, which [awarded](#) \$110,000 to support efforts in 32 communities. The Department also awarded 21 districts more than \$200,000 through [continuation](#) grants. Additionally, the Collaborative for Educational

²⁰ For the entire list of Department responsibilities associated with G.L. c. 69, § 1P, see: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2014/Chapter284>.

Services, through a contract with the Department, provided a [report](#) and a [summary](#) of findings and considerations for the Department and Commission to review. See the *Commission Activities* section for more details.

Professional development and technical assistance: The Department offered a series of professional development in 2024 that included in-person convenings, webinars, and virtual networking meetings for Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Tool users, as well as others working to create safe and supportive learning environments. As a part of this, the Department contracted with the [Equity Imperative](#), using funds that included a portion from the Safe and Supportive Schools line item 7061-9612, to provide a professional development series to more than 200 participants that included two in-person convenings and four virtual offerings.

More details about Department efforts related to Commission work can be found on the [Commission webpage](#).

APPENDIX A: Safe and Supportive Schools Commission Members

Note: Commission members are appointed by entities as outlined in G.L., c.69, §.1P.

Commission Role Represented (alphabetically listed)	2024 Member Name (pronouns)	Title, Organization
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)-MA / MA Teachers Association (MTA)	Ulana Ainsworth <i>(she/ella)</i>	K2 Inclusion, Roger Clap Elementary, Boston Public Schools
Community-based organization (CBO) representative that provides services as part of the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI), and that provides mental health services in schools	Beverly Williams <i>(she/her)</i>	Executive Vice President, Behavioral Health and Community Services, BAMSI (Brockton)
Experience Implementing the Framework	Jariel Vergne	Director of Social-Emotional Learning and Equity, Holliston Public Schools
Former BHPS Taskforce Member and Tool Developer/Evaluator	Melissa Pearrow	Executive Director, Behavioral Health Integrated Resources for Children (BIRCh) Project; Associate Professor in School of Counseling and School Psychology, College of Education and Human Development; and School Psychology Program Director, UMass Boston; and MSPA Past President
MA Administrators for Special Education (ASE)	Kristin Campione <i>(she/her)</i>	Director of Student Services, Ayer-Shirley Regional School District
MA Advocates for Children (MAC)	Marissa del Rosario	Trauma-Sensitive Schools Specialist, Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative
MA Association of School Committees (MASC)	Ellen Holmes <i>(she/her)</i>	MASC Past President; and Former Member of the Ashburnham-Westminster Reg. School Committee

MA Association of School Superintendents (MASS)	John Doherty, Ed.D. <i>(he/him)</i>	Commission Co-Chair (Selected by Commission Members); MASS Professional Development Chair, Retired Superintendent, Reading Public Schools
MA Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers	Margie Daniels <i>(she/her)</i>	Social Worker, and Executive Director, Middlesex Partnerships for Youth
MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)	Rachelle Engler Bennett <i>(she/her)</i>	Commission Co-Chair (DESE Designee); Associate Commissioner, Student and Family Support
MA Organization of Education Collaboratives (MOEC)	Susan Farrell	Central Mass Collaborative Executive Director
MA Recovery High School representative with expertise in adolescent substance use disorders	Michelle Lipinski <i>(she/her/hers)</i>	Principal, Northshore Recovery High School
MA School Administrators Association (MSAA)	Edverette Brewster	Leadership Coach, Lynch Leadership Academy, Boston College; and formerly Oliver W. Holmes PK-5 Innovation School Principal, Boston
MA School Counselors Association (MASCA)	Donna M. Brown	MASCA Immediate Past Executive Director
MA School Nurse Organization (MSNO)	Shanyn A. Toulouse, DNP, MEd, RN, NCSN <i>(she/her/hers)</i>	Northeast Regional School Nurse Consultant at Haverhill Public Schools
MA School Psychologists Association (MSPA)	Andria Amador	Senior Dir., Behavioral Health Services, Boston Public Schools; and MSPA Past President
Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)	Raquel Negron; and then Johana Rodriguez	Family Support Specialist; and Program Manager, Statewide/Multicultural Outreach
Secretary of Education (EOE Designee)	Heidi Gold; and then Faith Ambrose	Senior Policy Manager; and Policy Manager, MA Executive Office of Education (EOE)
State Student Advisory Council (SSAC)	Alex Nugent <i>(she/they)</i>	GSA Student Leadership Council Member, and Concord-Carlisle Regional High School '24

APPENDIX B: Legislative Charge for the Commission

There shall be a safe and supportive schools commission to collaborate with and advise the department on the feasibility of state-wide implementation of the framework. The commission shall consist of 19 members: 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee, who shall serve as co-chair; 1 of whom shall be the secretary of education or a designee; 1 of whom shall be a school superintendent appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a school committee member appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a school principal appointed jointly by the Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association and the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association; 1 of whom shall be a teacher appointed jointly by the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the American Federation of Teachers–Massachusetts; 1 of whom shall be a director of special education or a director of student support services appointed by the Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education; 1 of whom shall be an executive director of an education collaborative appointed by the Massachusetts Organization of Education Collaboratives; 1 of whom shall be a school psychologist appointed by The Massachusetts School Psychologists Association, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a school social worker appointed by the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a school adjustment counselor or guidance counselor appointed by the Massachusetts School Counselors Association, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a school nurse appointed by the Massachusetts School Nurse Organization, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be an advocate with experience in education, behavioral health and the impact of trauma on learning appointed by Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc. appointed by the Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a student appointed by the department of elementary and secondary education's student advisory council; and 4 members to be appointed by the secretary of education: 1 of whom shall have experience implementing the self-assessment tool; 1 of whom shall have experience implementing the framework; 1 of whom shall be a representative of Massachusetts recovery high schools with expertise in adolescent substance use disorders; and 1 of whom shall be a representative from a community-based organization that provides services as part of the children's behavioral health initiative and that provides mental health services in schools. The commission shall select a co-chair from among its appointees.

The commission shall: (i) investigate and make recommendations to the board on updating, improving and refining the framework and the self-assessment tool as appropriate; (ii) identify strategies for increasing schools' capacity to carry out the administrative functions identified by the behavioral health and public schools task force; (iii) propose steps for improving schools' access to clinically, culturally and linguistically appropriate services; (iv) identify and recommend evidenced-based training programs and

professional development for school staff on addressing students' behavioral health and creating safe and supportive learning environments; (v) identify federal funding sources that can be leveraged to support statewide implementation of the framework; (vi) develop recommendations on best practices for collaboration with families, including families of children with behavioral health needs; and (vii) examine and recommend model approaches for integrating school action plans, required under subsection (e), with school improvement plans and for using the framework to organize other school and district improvement processes.

The commission may collect and review data and feedback from schools as the schools complete the self-assessment tool and develop school action plans, and may convene stakeholders to facilitate solutions to challenges as such challenges arise during the implementation process. The commission may request from the department such information and assistance as may be necessary to complete its work.

The commission shall consult with and solicit input from various persons and groups, including, but not limited to: (i) the office of the child advocate; (ii) the department of early education and care; (iii) the department of children and families; (iv) the department of mental health; (v) the department of public health; (vi) the department of youth services; (vii) the department of developmental services; and (viii) any other parties or entities the commission deems appropriate.

The commission shall prepare and submit an annual progress report concerning the commission's activities with appropriate recommendations, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such recommendations, if any, not later than December 31. The commission shall meet not fewer than 4 times annually. The commission shall submit such annual report to the governor and the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, who shall forward the same to the chairs of the joint committee on education, the chairs of the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, and the house and senate committees on ways and means. The first 3 annual reports shall include recommendations regarding: (i) federal funding sources that may support statewide implementation of the safe and supportive schools framework; (ii) training programs and professional development for school staff on creating safe and supportive learning environments; (iii) improving access to clinically, culturally and linguistically appropriate services; and (iv) addressing the administrative functions necessary to carry out the implementation of the safe and supportive schools framework.

NOTE: [Mass. General Laws c.69 § 1P | Mass.gov](#)²¹ includes the current language of the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework Law (G.L. c. 69, § 1P), as shown above, as amended by [St. 2024, c. 140, § 105](#), effective July 1, 2024. This law was originally established as part of *An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence*.

²¹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mass-general-laws-c69-ss-1p>