

SENATE No. 1273

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 relative to the mental health of children in schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>John C. Velis</i>	<i>Hampden and Hampshire</i>	
<i>Mark C. Montigny</i>	<i>Second Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/8/2023</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>2/8/2023</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/14/2023</i>
<i>Shirley B. Arriaga</i>	<i>8th Hampden</i>	<i>2/28/2023</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2023</i>

SENATE No. 1273

By Mr. Velis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1273) of John C. Velis, Mark C. Montigny, James K. Hawkins, Patrick M. O'Connor and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to the mental health of children in schools. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1318 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**
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An Act relative to the mental health of children 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 of chapter 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is
2 hereby amended by inserting after the word “week” the following sentences:-

3 Absences may also be permitted for mental health symptoms; provided further, that said
4 absences shall be excused in the same manner as physical health symptoms; and provided
5 further, that required documentation, from guardians or health professionals, shall be consistent
6 with physical health absences documentation. When documentation is required from a health
7 care professional, a school shall accept documentation from licensed mental health care
8 professionals in the same manner as documentation from other health care professionals. A
9 student with an absence due to mental or behavioral health shall be offered the opportunity to

- 10 meet with a certified school counselor upon return to school but said student shall not be required
- 11 to do so.