

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2109 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY N. NELSON, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, PARKER, HILL-EVANS,
SCHLOSSBERG, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, DALEY, DONAHUE, GREEN AND OTTEN,
MARCH 14, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 14, 2024

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study,
6 providing for student mental health supports.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a
11 section to read:

12 Section 1535. Student Mental Health Supports.--(a)
13 Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, each school entity
14 shall:

15 (1) Adopt a comprehensive student mental health support
16 policy consistent with subsection (c), inform each school entity
17 employe and the parent or legal guardian of each student
18 enrolled in the school entity of the policy and post the policy
19 on the school entity's publicly accessible Internet website. The

1 policy adopted by a school entity under this paragraph may be
2 based upon the model policy developed by the department under
3 subsection (b) (1).

4 (2) Include in the professional development plan submitted
5 by the school entity to the secretary for approval pursuant to
6 section 1205.1 four (4) hours of training in comprehensive
7 student mental health support every five (5) years for
8 professional educators in school buildings serving students in
9 grades six through twelve. The following shall apply:

10 (i) Training under this paragraph may be used to satisfy a
11 professional educator's continuing professional education
12 requirement under section 1205.2.

13 (ii) A school entity may use the materials made available by
14 the department under subsection (b) (2) to conduct the training.

15 (b) The department shall:

16 (1) Develop, in consultation with a youth mental health
17 organization operating in this Commonwealth, a model student
18 mental health support policy which shall be consistent with
19 subsection (c).

20 (2) Compile, develop and post on its publicly accessible
21 Internet website the following, which may include materials
22 already publicly available:

23 (i) Recommended guidelines and educational materials for the
24 training required under subsection (a) (2).

25 (ii) Recommended resources and age-appropriate educational
26 materials on student mental health.

27 (3) Develop a model student mental health curriculum and
28 make the curriculum available to all school entities and, upon
29 request, to nonpublic schools. A school entity may incorporate
30 the curriculum into its existing instructional program pursuant

1 to the school entity's student mental health support policy.

2 (c) The model policy developed by the department under
3 subsection (b) (1) and any policy adopted by a school entity
4 under subsection (a) (1) shall include the following:

5 (1) A guide on student mental health supports available to
6 students.

7 (2) Protocols for administering the student mental health
8 support policy to staff and students.

9 (3) Procedures for identification and referral of students
10 in need of student mental health support.

11 (4) Methods of intervention, including procedures that
12 involve caregivers and staff in addressing student mental health
13 support.

14 (5) Reporting procedures.

15 (6) Recommended resources for student mental health support,
16 including current contact information for such programs.

17 (7) Procedures for identifying students who have experienced
18 trauma or loss and a protocol for providing student mental
19 health support that includes evidence-based programming tailored
20 to trauma or grief.

21 (d) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
22 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
23 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

24 "Department." The Department of Education of the
25 Commonwealth.

26 "Nonpublic school." A nonprofit school, other than a school
27 entity, wherein a resident of this Commonwealth may legally
28 fulfill the compulsory school attendance requirements of this
29 act and which meets the requirements of Title VI of the Civil
30 Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352, 78 Stat. 241).

1 "Professional educator." As defined in section 1205.2(o).

2 "School entity." A school district, joint school district,
3 charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school,
4 intermediate unit or area career and technical school.

5 "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

6 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.