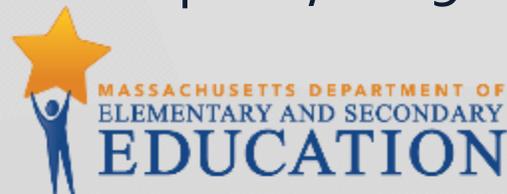




Safe and Supportive Schools Commission

*Community Behavioral Health Promotion and
Prevention Commission Meeting*

April 8, 2019 ~ Boston, MA



Safe & Supportive Schools Commission

- The Safe and Supportive Schools Commission (Commission) was created as part of the [Safe and Supportive Schools Framework Law](#) (Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 69, section 1P), through [An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence](#). Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014 was signed into law on August 13, 2014 (House Bill 4376).
- The Commission's website is <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/safety/?section=commission>.

Safe & Supportive Schools – Defined (per M.G.L., c. 69, s. 1P)

Schools that foster *a safe, positive, healthy & inclusive whole-school learning environment* that:

1. 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
2. **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.



Safe & Supportive Schools Commission Members

19 members including:

- Commissioner (DESE) and Secretary (EOE) or their designees
- Appointments from organizations representing education roles such as superintendent, school committee, teacher, student, principal, nurse, guidance counselor, social worker, school psychologist, special education/student support services director, educational collaboratives, and recovery high schools.
- Two advocacy organizations (MAC & PPAL)
- People with experience developing and evaluating the Behavioral Health and Public Schools (BHPS) Self-Assessment Tool, with implementing the BHPS Framework, with providing CBHI services through a community-based organization that offers mental health services in schools.



Commission Responsibilities

1. Make recommendations to the DESE board on updating, improving and refining the framework and the self-assessment tool;
2. Identify strategies for increasing schools' capacity to carry out the administrative functions identified by the behavioral health and public schools task force;
3. Propose steps for improving schools' access to clinically, culturally and linguistically appropriate services;
4. 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;



Commission Responsibilities

5. Identify federal funding sources that can be leveraged to support statewide implementation of the framework;
6. Develop recommendations on best practices for collaboration with families, including families of children with behavioral health needs; and
7. 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

AND: Consult with others and submit annual report to the legislature.

Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Tool

- The [Safe and Supportive Schools Framework Law](#) also directs the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to develop a safe and supportive schools **framework and self-assessment tool**, consistent with those created by the Behavioral Health and Public Schools (BHPS) Task Force (per section 19 of Chapter 321 in 2008). (See [Behavioral Health and Public Schools Self-Assessment Tool for Schools](#) for the current version of the framework and tool.)
- The Commission is established to collaborate with and advise DESE on the **feasibility of state-wide implementation** of the framework.

Commission Reports and other Documents

- Four Annual Reports (on 2015-2018 activities)
- Board Memo on Principles of Effective Practice for Integrating Student Supports (*Whole School, Whole Child, Mindset, Confidentiality, Collaboration, Coordination, Access to Services, and Partnering with Families*) – Jan. 2018
- Focus Group Summary Documents:
 - Family Engagement (March 2017)
 - Administrative Capacity (March 2017 and Summer 2017)
 - Access to Services (April 2018, with more to come this spring)
 - Student Voice (to come this spring)

Schools' Access to Clinically, Culturally, Linguistically Appropriate Services

Focus group themes to date

- Overwhelming Need / Waitlists
- Workforce Shortfalls
- Clinically-Appropriate Services
- Transition Services
- Linguistically- and Culturally-Appropriate Services
- Geographical Disparities
- Stable Housing

(continued)

- Coordination and Confidentiality
- Undocumented Immigrant Families
- Transportation
- Insurance Barriers
- Prevention (including focused student supports, enrichment activities, after-school and summer programs, and subsidized daycare)



THANK YOU

Rachelle Engler Bennett, Associate Commissioner
Student and Family Support

 781.338.3205

 renglerbennett@doe.mass.edu

 www.doe.mass.edu

 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

