

Testimony of
Cynthia Boyle
Winchester Educator
Before the
Education Committee

Re:

SB 1 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS.

March 21, 2022

Good morning Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

Thank you for holding this public hearing to discuss mental health supports for our students. I support the many provisions in HB 5001 and SB 2 that address the student mental health crisis in our schools, especially those relating to staffing support and ensuring classroom teachers have greater input in resources available to students in crisis.

The proposed legislation enhances the recruitment and staffing of social workers but, for the sake of our students, I want to ensure that these provisions will also apply to school counselors, psychologists, special educators, and other certified specialists.

What You Don't See, but as an educator, I see every day, is the impact that trauma has on my students and my school.

I cannot tell you how much teaching has changed in the last 22 years! Currently there is the saddest situation with students I have ever seen. Since COVID, parents are not supporting teaching and learning nearly at the level they were before the pandemic. Every single one of my students has some form of trauma in their lives. These little ones, grade 3, are dealing with issues that surpass their emotional abilities. Someone needs to help and put that as the focus of their day.

IF NOT OUR GOVERNMENT, THEN WHO? The fact that we are still pushing for academic growth is a travesty of our generation, and soon to be of theirs. Please help these students to be less concerned about academics, parents to be more concerned, and teachers to have the freedom to care for the WHOLE CHILD. Make the brave choice!!

We need as many social workers and counselors as you can possibly give us. Plus, for teachers it feels as if we are being mistreated, we need more planning time than ever, not less. We are shouldering more responsibilities than ever!!

Thank you for addressing these critical issues impacting our students, our educators, and our school communities.