

HOUSE BILL 461

F1

1lr1702

By: **Delegate Washington**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Schools – Student Attendance – Excused Absences for Mental Health**
3 **Needs**

4 FOR the purpose of providing that absences from school for mental health needs are lawful
5 absences under certain circumstances; requiring a county board of education to
6 excuse at least a certain number of absences in each quarter of each school year for
7 a student’s mental health needs; prohibiting a county board from requiring a note
8 from a physician to excuse a certain absence; and generally relating to student
9 attendance in public schools and excused absences.

10 BY adding to
11 Article – Education
12 Section 7–301.3
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Education**

18 **7–301.3.**

19 **(A) A STUDENT’S ABSENCE DUE TO THE STUDENT’S MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**
20 **IS A LAWFUL ABSENCE AS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION.**

21 **(B) (1) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL EXCUSE AT LEAST 1 DAY OF ABSENCE IN**
22 **EACH QUARTER OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR DUE TO A STUDENT’S MENTAL HEALTH**
23 **NEEDS.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(2) A COUNTY BOARD MAY NOT REQUIRE A NOTE FROM A PHYSICIAN**
2 **TO EXCUSE AN ABSENCE UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
4 1, 2021.