

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 411**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
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An Act establishing a grant program for the purpose of expanding learning time and improving student success..

*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. Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section  
2 1G and inserting in place thereof the following new section: -

3 Section 1G.

4 (a) The board shall establish the minimum length for a school day and the minimum  
5 number of days in the school year.

6 (b) There shall be an Expanded Learning Time Grant Program, hereinafter referred to as  
7 “the program”. The program shall be administered by the department and shall have the  
8 following purposes:

9 (1) To expand learning time in the form of longer school days, additional school days or a  
10 combination of longer school days and additional school days;

11 (2) To provide school districts the opportunity to add additional time to the school  
12 schedule in order to redesign their educational program and offer challenging learning  
13 experiences focused on raising student achievement. This additional time shall be designed to:

14 i. provide more instructional opportunities in mathematics, literacy, science and other  
15 core subjects to support academic proficiency;

16 ii. provide educators with increased opportunities to work collaboratively and to  
17 participate in professional development; and

18 iii. provide school districts the opportunity to add or expand programs and curricula such  
19 as arts, music, health and wellness, sports, drama, and other learning opportunities;

20 (3) To provide a framework for sustained state funding for school districts who  
21 voluntarily extend their school day or year;

22 (4) To encourage schools to form partnerships with community-based organizations and  
23 institutions of higher learning to provide additional opportunities to children; and

24 (5) To provide for accountability to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of  
25 expanded learning time in participating districts.

26 (c) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

27 “Accountability plan”, plan developed by a school district to measure and track the  
28 efficiency and effectiveness of expanded learning time schools.

29 “Annual accountability review”, process by which the department will review the  
30 progress of a school district’s implementation of its expanded learning time program.

31 “Department”, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.

32 “Exploratory grant proposal”, application for exploratory grants submitted to the  
33 department by a school district.

34 “Exploratory grant”, grant awarded to a school district for the purpose of exploring and  
35 planning for a longer school day or year.

36 “Implementation proposal”, a proposal developed by a school district to expand the  
37 school day and/or year at selected schools.

38 “Implementation grant”, grant awarded to a school district to expand learning time by  
39 lengthening school days or the school year at selected schools through its implementation  
40 proposal.

41 (d)(1) All school districts shall be eligible for exploratory grants under this program, but  
42 priority shall be given to: (i) districts with more than 25% of students eligible for free and  
43 reduced lunch programs; (ii) districts in the bottom 10% of statewide grade ten MCAS scores;  
44 (iii) districts whose proposals use partnerships with community-based organizations and  
45 institutions of higher education. Not less than 60% of all funds granted under this program shall  
46 be awarded to prioritized districts.

47 (2) In awarding grants, the department shall promote the inclusion of districts not given  
48 such priority in order to demonstrate the efficacy and value of the program across a broad range  
49 of districts and schools relative to the socioeconomic status and achievement levels of the  
50 students they educate.

51 (3) Exploratory grant proposals under this act shall include, but not be limited to:

- 52 i. the process the district will use to create an expanded learning time implementation  
53 proposal;
- 54 ii. a budget necessary to create this proposal;
- 55 iii. a rationale for expanding learning time that describes how the expansion of time will  
56 help the school(s) attain its school improvement goals;
- 57 iv. the anticipated number of schools and students that will be affected; and
- 58 v. identification of individuals who will participate in the planning process, including  
59 representatives of teachers unions, parents, administrators and school partners.

60 (4) The department may issue guidelines for the submission of exploratory grant  
61 proposals in the absence of allocated grant funding.

62 (e) (1) Districts shall be eligible for implementation grants only after submitting an  
63 implementation proposal and having the proposal approved by the department. The  
64 implementation proposals shall include:

- 65 i. no less than 300 additional hours than is standard for the implementing district;
- 66 ii. mandatory additional time for all students in participating schools, provided that  
67 districts may phase in the additional time over a reasonable period of time as determined by the  
68 department and the department may provide for exceptions to this provision in extraordinary  
69 circumstances;
- 70 iii. a comprehensive restructuring of the entire school schedule and educational program  
71 to better utilize the time in school;

72           iv. a comprehensive budget sufficient to fund the approved proposal;  
73           v. evidence of support from any collective bargaining units, and community-based  
74 organizations or higher education institutions involved in implementation;  
75           vi. documentation of leadership capacity to implement the expansion of learning time;  
76 and  
77           vii. identification of formative assessments that will be used periodically through the  
78 school year to assess student achievement.

79           (f) Districts that are already participating in the program shall be eligible for  
80 implementation grants under paragraph (1).

81           (g) The department shall develop guidelines for and a process to annually review the  
82 progress being made by each implementing district. These guidelines shall include, but not be  
83 limited to the requirement for:

84           (1) a school and district accountability plan, using specific measurable goals to annually  
85 and longitudinally assess the implementation and the impact of additional learning time on  
86 student achievement, retention, attendance, higher educational attainment and other relevant  
87 measures. This plan may include, but not be limited to, the collection and reporting to the  
88 department of the following: attendance data; student, teacher, parent and school partner impact  
89 and satisfaction; disciplinary data; standardized test scores; grades; numbers of students  
90 attending the participating schools; and all appropriate comparison data; and

91           (2) Each school and district must participate in any evaluation or accountability process  
92 implemented by or authorized by the department.

93 (3) In the event that the department is not satisfied with the results of the annual review,  
94 the department shall, within a reasonable period of time, notify the district of remedial steps  
95 necessary to be eligible for continued funding under this program. In the event that such remedial  
96 steps are not taken, the department may decline to include that district in its annual budget  
97 recommendation for subsequent years.

98 (h)(1) The department shall issue an annual report, not later than January 31 of each year,  
99 describing and analyzing the implementation of plans in all participating districts. The reports  
100 shall include, but not be limited to: the number of school and school districts participating; the  
101 number of students attending these schools; the nature and type of changes in school learning  
102 time funded through this program by school and school district; a list of outside vendors with  
103 whom the department has contracted to provide technical support services, the amount each  
104 vendor has received, and the results obtained in each instance; the annual assessments of impact  
105 provided by the districts and any other data related to expanded learning time in participating  
106 schools and districts. This report shall be provided to the secretary of administration and finance,  
107 the senate president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate ways and means  
108 committees and the joint committee on education.

109 (2) The department shall also provide not later than February 1st a comprehensive budget  
110 for this program for the next fiscal year, provided that such budget include:

111 i. the number of anticipated participating students, including students enrolled with a  
112 longer school schedule pursuant to a previously approved implementation plan and the number  
113 of students enrolled in newly approved implementation plans;

114 ii. a comprehensive budget for funding subsequent exploratory grants; and

115           iii. a comprehensive budget for funding of implementation plans anticipated to be  
116 approved by the department, including state funding of not less than \$1,400 per student in each  
117 participating school plus an annual inflation index consistent with the provisions of section 2 of  
118 Chapter 70 starting in fiscal year 2011.

119           (3) This recommendation shall be provided to the secretary of education, the senate  
120 president, the speaker of the house of representatives, the chairs of the house and senate ways  
121 and means committees and the joint committee on education.

122           (i)(1) The department may expend funds to administer and evaluate this program. These  
123 expenditures shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (i) creation of an application  
124 process for exploratory grants; (ii) review and approval of qualifying exploratory grant  
125 proposals; (iii) review and approval of implementation proposals submitted by those districts  
126 awarded exploratory grants, (iv) technical assistance to participating schools and districts (v)  
127 compliance monitoring of participating districts and (vi) annual and longitudinal evaluations of  
128 the impact and implementation of the program. These expenditures shall not exceed five percent  
129 of any funds appropriated for the purposes of this program.

130           (2) The department shall, for the purpose of this program, provide technical support to  
131 participating schools and districts that may include, but is not limited to: direct services,  
132 developing documentation of best practices and the creation of a network of implementing  
133 schools and districts. The department may partner or contract with external organizations as  
134 necessary to fulfill its obligations under this section.

135           (3) The department may promulgate appropriate regulations to carry out this section.

136 (j)(1) At the conclusion of the fourth year of the implementation of this program, a  
137 program review commission shall convene to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. The  
138 commission shall be co-chaired by the House and Senate chairs of the Joint Committee on  
139 Education. The commission shall be made up of the president of the senate or her designee and  
140 the speaker of the house or his designee; the president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association  
141 or her designee; the president of the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts or his  
142 designee; a member selected by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; a  
143 member selected by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees; the director of the  
144 Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership or her designee, one representative from an educational  
145 non-profit organization and one member representing the business community both chosen by  
146 the senate president; and one representative from an educational non-profit organization and one  
147 member representing the business community both chosen by the speaker of the house.

148 (2) The commission shall review the program in its entirety and issue a report of its  
149 findings, including an analysis of all relevant data so as to determine the effectiveness of the  
150 program. The report shall include specific legislative recommendations including, but not limited  
151 to, the following:

152 i. whether the current school calendar as defined by the department under subsection (a)  
153 is sufficient to provide an adequate education as defined by the state constitution to all students;

154 ii. whether the program should be expanded, maintained or discontinued;

155 iii. a schedule and method for ongoing accountability of implementation proposals; and

156 iv. a permanent method of calculating the annual minimum state aid for an approved  
157 implementation proposal, on a per pupil basis, and, if appropriate, on a per community basis.



158           (3) This report shall be provided to the secretary of education the senate president, the  
159 speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate ways and means committees and the  
160 joint committee on education.