

HOUSE No. 470

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act Establishing a School Counseling Leadership Pilot Project to Accelerate College and Career Readiness in Massachusetts Public Schools..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 any general or special law to the contrary, the Department of Higher Education (DHE), in
2 partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), shall create a
3 two-year Pilot Project to accelerate college and career readiness, utilizing the new college and
4 career web portal at the school district level through a redistribution of school counselor time
5 allowing them to fully integrate college and career planning throughout the district and
6 community. This Pilot Project will be rigorously evaluated with the goal of producing evidence-
7 based standards for highly effective college and career readiness school counseling programs
8 statewide.

9 The project will be housed at DHE and DHE will partner closely with DESE on the
10 project's structure and oversight.

11 Through a competitive application process managed by the Department of Higher DHE
12 in partnership with the DESE, ten school districts will be selected to participate.

DHE, in partnership with DESE, shall, 60 days after receiving it's appropriation, convene a volunteer committee to review and make recommendations on Pilot Project criteria for the purposes of an RFP. To assure a diverse mix of schools against which to measure impact, selection criteria for Pilot Project districts will be determined by a volunteer committee process managed by DESE and DHE and will include one representative each from the Readiness Project, Leaders for Education coalition, vocational secondary schools, MASCA, The College Board, MEFA, the Massachusetts Principal's Association, the Massachusetts Superintendent's Association, Massachusetts PTA, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Massachusetts Life Science Center, the Massachusetts High Technology Council, and the National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research. The partnership will also oversee the development of an evaluation plan to monitor ongoing activities and generate outcome data to produce evidenced based standards for highly effective college and career readiness school counseling programs

Following upon that timeline, Pilot Project RFPs will be distributed within 30-days with a 60 day turnaround limit.

Selection and notification of Pilot Project school districts will take place within 30 days of RFP deadline.

The project will run for a two-year period with an interim 12-month report and a final 24-month report to be provided to the legislature and the Administration by DHE in partnership with DESE.

Subject to appropriation, participating school districts will be awarded \$20,000/year to participate in the Pilot Project. All funds shall be used to supplement, not supplant, existing funding. DHE shall be granted \$100,000/year to manage the Pilot Project and to hire and

manage a technical assistance team to support participating districts. The evaluation component will require \$100,000. The two year pilot will cost \$700,000. The project will be highly structured with clear benchmarks and deliverables with the ultimate goal being the establishment of evidence-based standards of school counseling that can be replicated throughout the Commonwealth to ensure the highest possible rates of student success and college and career readiness.

Expectations of participating school districts:

School counselors will collaborate with district's academic leadership to integrate college and career readiness into both the curriculum and academic mission of the school to keep pace with 21st century skill and knowledge needs;

School counselors will develop expertise with the state's new College and Career Web Portal (expected Spring 2009 launch) and will promote the Portal broadly within the school and community, and will include parent outreach as a component of adoption of the Portal as a tool;

All school counselors will receive professional development in current trends in college and career planning;

School counselors will actively use school data to advise course enrollment and scheduling and support student achievement;

As a team, school counselors and their principals will attend a two-day summer leadership institute with each district sending school counselors and principals to train and plan as a team;

55 School counselors will lead off-campus outreach activities at the community level with
56 parents and students as early as eighth grade to promote college and career planning and
57 aspirational academic goal-setting as well as financial planning;

58 development of a plan and time-line to implement the Educational Proficiency Plans
59 (EPP) to begin in grade 8 rather than grade 10 so that students may have adequate time to close
60 identified achievement gaps. School counselors will work closely with students and faculty to
61 adapt course selection and student schedules to assure proficiency in grades 9-12;

62 School counselors will have a formal role in the development and implementation of
63 school policies which impact college and career readiness for all students

64 Sites will collaborate fully with formative and summative evaluation processes

65 Adherence to uniform tracking and reporting guidelines for Pilot Project as defined by
66 DHE in partnership with DESE.