

HOUSE No. 4073

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, May 13, 2014.

The committee on Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 510) of Aaron Vega, Kenneth I. Gordon and Michael R. Knapik relative to establishing a public school grant program for expanding learning time and improving student success, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4073) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ALICE HANLON PEISCH.

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In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen

An Act establishing a grant program for 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, as appearing in the 2012 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following
3 section:

4 Section 1G. (a) The board shall establish the minimum length for a school day and the
5 minimum number of days in the school year. The board shall further define instructional hours
6 and scheduled hours in a school day and set the minimum required number of each across a
7 school year.

8 (b) There shall be an expanded learning time allotment. The allotment shall be
9 administered by the department of elementary and secondary education and shall have the
10 following purposes:

11 (1) To expand learning time for all students in a school in the form of longer school days,
12 additional school days or a combination of both;

13 (2) To provide school districts the opportunity to lengthen the school schedule at one,
14 some, or all schools under its authority in order to redesign the educational program and offer
15 learning experiences focused on raising student achievement and providing a well-rounded
16 education. This expanded school day shall be designed: (i) to advance student learning for all
17 students; (ii) for rigorous academic work in core subjects; (iii) for additional academic subjects
18 and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education; (iv) for academic
19 intervention or acceleration, as appropriate for individual students; (v) to recognize academic
20 achievement and reinforce positive behavior; and (vi) for teacher collaboration, common
21 planning; and professional development, including the use of data to improve instruction;

22 (3) To provide a framework for sustained public funding, including state resources, for
23 school districts that voluntarily and effectively expand the school day or year at one, some or all
24 schools, or a combination of both;

25 (4) To encourage schools to form partnerships with organizations to provide additional
26 opportunities to students, including, but not limited to, community-based organizations;
27 institutions of higher learning; and health and mental health providers;

28 (5) To provide for accountability mechanisms to ensure the efficient and effective
29 implementation of expanded learning time in participating districts and schools.

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

31 “Department”, the department of elementary and secondary education

32 “ELT performance agreement”, a plan developed by leadership at a school and school
33 district in collaboration with the department that defines specific, multi-year academic
34 performance and implementation goals for the school. The goals outlined in the performance
35 agreement shall be aligned to the current state education accountability system.

36 “Expanded learning time”, the redesign of the school calendar to include at least 1,440
37 scheduled hours in a school year, including at least 1,260 instructional hours

38 “Expanded learning time allotment”, a program overseen by the department that ensures
39 funding for expanded learning time schools who meet the goals in the ELT Performance
40 Agreements

41 “Implementation proposal”, a proposal developed by a school district to implement a
42 school year consisting of at least 1,440 required annual hours for all students, including at least
43 1,260 instructional hours

44 “Implementation grant”, grant awarded to a school district to fund a school year
45 consisting of at least 1,440 required annual hours, including at least 1,260 instructional hours at a
46 school

47 “Expanded Learning Time Initiative”, state grant program that previously funded
48 expanded learning time schools

49 “Planning grant”, grant awarded to a school district for the purpose of planning for
50 expanded learning time at one or more schools

51 “Planning grant proposal”, application for planning grants submitted to the department by
52 a school district

53 “School District” or “district”, a local education agency

54 (d)(1) All school districts shall be eligible for planning and implementation grants, but
55 priority shall be given to: (i) districts with more than 25 per cent of students eligible for free and
56 reduced lunch programs and (ii) districts in the bottom 10 per cent of statewide grade ten MCAS
57 scores. Not less than 60 per cent of all funds granted under this program shall be awarded to
58 prioritized districts. The department shall promulgate regulations on said prioritization and on
59 selection and funding of implementation proposals outside of the prioritization categories where
60 the need for expanded learning time is highest and the evidence supporting likelihood of
61 effectiveness is strongest.

62 (2) Planning grant proposals under this section shall include, but not be limited to: the
63 process the district and planning school(s) shall use to create an expanded learning time
64 implementation proposal; a budget necessary to develop this proposal; a rationale for expanding
65 learning time that describes how the expanded school calendar will help the school attain its
66 school improvement goals; the anticipated number of schools and students that will be affected;
67 and identification of individuals who will participate in the planning process, including
68 representatives of teachers unions, parents, administrators and community organizations.

69 (e)(1) Districts, and their included schools, shall be eligible for implementation grants
70 after submitting an implementation proposal and having the proposal approved by the
71 department. The implementation proposals shall include: a school plan with a school year that
72 consists of at least 1,440 required annual hours for all students, including at least 1,260
73 instructional hours; a comprehensive restructuring of the entire school schedule and educational
74 program to make better use of school time; a comprehensive budget sufficient to fund the
75 approved school redesign plan; evidence of support from any collective bargaining units, and
76 community organizations involved in implementation; documentation of leadership capacity to
77 implement the expansion of learning time; and identification of suitable formative assessments
78 that will be used periodically during the school year to assess student achievement.

79 (f) Schools already participating in the Expanded Learning Time Initiative that have
80 suitably met the goals of their ELT Performance Agreement at the enactment of this act shall be
81 eligible for implementation grants under subsection (e)(1).

82 (g) The department shall develop guidelines for a review of the progress toward the stated
83 academic performance and implementation goals being made by each implementing district. The
84 reviews shall occur at least once every three years. The department shall promulgate rules for the
85 ELT Performance Agreement regarding renewal and non-renewal of an implementation grant.

86 (h) Subject to appropriation, the allotment shall be funded each fiscal year, provided that
87 the department provides the Administration and Legislature the budget recommendations with
88 the following considerations:

89 (1) funding of implementation plans, including anticipated approved plans, at an
90 additional eight per cent of per pupil expenditure in each district starting in fiscal year 2015; (2)

91 funding of subsequent planning grants; (3) this recommendation shall be reported to the secretary
92 of administration and finance, secretary of education, senate president, speaker of the house of
93 representatives, chairs of the house and senate ways and means committees and the joint
94 committee on education on or before December 1.

95 (i) The department shall issue an annual report, on or before January 31, describing and
96 analyzing the implementation of plans in all participating districts. The reports shall include: the
97 number of schools and school districts participating; the number of students attending these
98 schools; the nature and type of changes in school learning time funded through this allotment by
99 schools and school districts; a list of outside vendors with whom the department has an
100 agreement to provide technical support services, the amount each vendor has received, and the
101 results obtained in each instance; and the annual assessments of impact provided by the districts
102 and any other data related to expanded learning time in participating schools and districts. This
103 report shall be provided to the secretary of education, the senate president, the speaker of the
104 house, the chairs of the house and senate ways and means committees and the joint committee on
105 education, and shall be made available online and on the department's website.

106 (j) The department may expend funds to administer and evaluate the expanded learning
107 time allotment. These expenditures shall include, but not be limited to: (i) creation of an
108 application process for planning grants; (ii) review and approval of qualifying planning grant
109 proposals; (iii) review and approval of implementation proposals submitted by those districts
110 awarded planning grants; (iv) technical assistance to participating schools and districts; (v)
111 compliance monitoring of participating districts; and (vi) annual evaluations of the impact and
112 implementation of expanded learning time, which may include legislative recommendations,
113 including, but not limited to: (1) whether the program should be expanded, and if so, at what
114 rate, maintained or discontinued; and (2) a schedule and method for ongoing accountability of
115 implementation proposals. These expenditures shall not exceed five per cent of any funds
116 appropriated for the purposes of carrying out this section.

117 (k) The department may, for the purpose of ensuring the effective use of funds within the
118 expanded learning time allotment, provide technical support to participating schools and districts
119 that may include: direct services, the development of documentation of best practices and the
120 creation of a network of implementing schools and districts. The department may partner or enter
121 into an agreement with external organizations as necessary to fulfill its obligations under this
122 section.

123 (l) The board may promulgate appropriate regulations to carry out this section.