

HOUSE No. 517

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Martha M. Walz

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to parental involvement in schools.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Martha M. Walz</i> | <i>8th Suffolk</i> | <i>1/7/2013</i> |
| <i>Kay Khan</i> | <i>11th Middlesex</i> | |
| <i>Christopher G. Fallon</i> | <i>33rd Middlesex</i> | |
| <i>Denise Andrews</i> | <i>2nd Franklin</i> | |
| <i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i> | <i>34th Middlesex</i> | |

HOUSE No. 517

By Ms. Walz of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 517) of Martha M. Walz and others relative to parental involvement in schools. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1083 OF 2011-2012.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen
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An Act relative to parental involvement in schools.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to increase parental involvement in schools, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

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

1 Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 37O the
2 following section:-

3 Section 37P. (a) Each school district, commonwealth charter school, approved private
4 day or residential school and education collaborative shall have a written parental involvement
5 policy. The policy shall be developed, and from time to time revised, in consultation with
6 parents and guardians who have a child who attends the school. Parents or guardians shall be
7 notified of the policy in an understandable format and, to the extent practicable, provided a copy
8 of the policy in a language the parents can understand. The policy shall be posted on the website
9 of each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and
10 collaborative school and shall be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of students,
11 parents or guardians and the school.

12 (b) The parental involvement policy shall establish expectations for parent involvement
13 and describe how the school district, commonwealth charter school, approved private day or
14 residential school and education collaborative will:

- 15 (1) involve parents or guardians in the activities of the school;
- 16 (2) provide assistance to parents or guardians, as appropriate, in understanding such
17 topics as state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, state
18 and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators
19 to improve the achievement of their child;
- 20 (3) provide materials and training to help parents or guardians work with their child
21 to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and training on using technology,
22 as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;
- 23 (4) educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the
24 assistance of parents or guardians, in the value and utility of contributions of parents and in how
25 to reach out to and communicate and work with parents or guardians as partners, implement and
26 coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents or guardians and the school;
- 27 (5) coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other
28 community-based programs that encourage and support parents or guardians in more fully
29 participating in the education of their child; and
- 30 (6) conduct, with the involvement of parents or guardians, an annual evaluation of the
31 content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality
32 of the school, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents or guardians in
33 activities authorized by this section with particular attention to parents who are economically
34 disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any
35 racial or ethnic minority background, and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies
36 for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement
37 policy.
- 38 (c) As a component of the parental involvement policy, each school district,
39 commonwealth charter school, approved private day or residential school and education
40 collaborative shall jointly develop with parents or guardians a school-parent compact that
41 outlines how parents or guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share the
42 responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school
43 and parents or guardians will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve. Such
44 compact shall:
- 45 (1) describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and
46 instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the
47 state's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent or guardian
48 will be responsible for supporting their child's learning, such as monitoring attendance,
49 homework completion and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; and

50 participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use
51 of extracurricular time; and

52 (2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents or
53 guardians on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum:

54 (A) parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which
55 the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;

56 (B) frequent reports to parents or guardians on their child's progress; and

57 (C) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their
58 child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

59 (d) The department of elementary and secondary education shall: (i) publish a model
60 compact for school districts and schools to consider when developing a school-parent compact;
61 and (ii) compile a list of resources, programs, best practices and academic-based research on
62 parental involvement that shall be made available to schools.