

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 524**

---

**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 raising the school dropout age.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Martha M. Walz</i>	<i>8th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/15/2013</i>
<i>Ruth B. Balse</i>	<i>12th Middlesex</i>	
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>	
<i>Christopher G. Fallon</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	
<i>Barry R. Finegold</i>	<i>Second Essex and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	
<i>Denise Andrews</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	
<i>Gloria L. Fox</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	
<i>David M. Rogers</i>	<i>24th Middlesex</i>	
<i>Michael R. Knapik</i>	<i>Second Hampden and Hampshire</i>	
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	
<i>Jennifer E. Benson</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	
<i>James J. O'Day</i>	<i>14th Worcester</i>	
<i>Linda Dorcena Forry</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>	
<i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	
<i>Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>	
<i>Gale D. Candaras</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>	



**HOUSE . . . . . No. 524**

---

By Ms. Walz of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 524) of Martha M. Walz and others for legislation to raise the school dropout age. Education.

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act raising the school dropout age.

*Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to increase the number of students in the Commonwealth who graduate from high school, 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 SECTION 1. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “attendance”, in line 113, the  
3 following words:- ; provided, however, that all children under the age of 16 and 6 months shall  
4 be required to attend school if they have not graduated from high school.

5 SECTION 2. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as amended by section 1, is  
6 hereby further amended by striking out the words “16 and 6 months” and inserting in place  
7 thereof the following figure:- 17.

8 SECTION 3. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as amended by section 2, is  
9 hereby further amended by striking out the figure “17” and inserting in place thereof the  
10 following figure:- 18.

11 SECTION 4. Section 18 of chapter 76 of the General Laws, as amended by section 8 of  
12 chapter 222 of the acts of 2012, is hereby further amended by striking out, in line 17, the word  
13 “sixteen” and inserting in place thereof the figure:- 18.

14 SECTION 5. Chapter 741 of the acts of 1965 is hereby repealed.

15 SECTION 6. Section 2 shall become effective on September 1, 2015.

16 SECTION 7. Sections 3 and 4 shall become effective on September 1, 2017.

17 SECTION 8. Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary  
18 education shall develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and  
19 recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average.  
20 The pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community  
21 agencies serving students who reside in these districts. The dropout prevention and recovery  
22 programs shall target high school students who have dropped out of school or are at risk of  
23 dropping out of school using at least 1 of the following methods:

24 (i) Alternative education, which shall mean diploma or general educational  
25 development granting programs that use evidence-based instruction and student support  
26 strategies designed to meet the needs of the target population and prepare them for postsecondary  
27 education or training. These evidence-based instruction and student support strategies may  
28 include, but are not limited to, smaller class size, competency-based learning, project-based  
29 learning, work-based learning, community service learning, graduation coaching, case  
30 management, family engagement, wraparound support, restorative justice and social service  
31 referrals.

32 (ii) Graduation coaches, who shall be professionals with youth development  
33 and academic support expertise who shall provide the target population with graduation plans.  
34 The graduation plans shall include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals.  
35 Graduation coaches shall also provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans,  
36 navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure  
37 appropriate social services.

38 (iii) Dropout outreach and recovery programs, which shall mean targeted  
39 outreach and transition support for students who have dropped out of school. The programs shall,  
40 at a minimum, reach out to students, determine their academic status and personal circumstances,  
41 assist students in enrolling in a high school or general educational development program, provide  
42 transitional support and track students' academic progress.

43 (iv) Expectant and parenting student support, which may include, but is not  
44 limited to, the development and implementation of school policies that set high academic  
45 expectations, establish procedures for maternity and paternity leave, and provide flexible  
46 scheduling; expectant and parenting student liaisons who shall work with students to develop  
47 graduation plans that include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals and who  
48 provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements,  
49 engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services; and,  
50 annual data collection that shall include, but is not limited to, the number of parenting students in  
51 the district, any supports or interventions provided to the parenting students, and parenting  
52 student progress toward and completion of secondary school.

53           The department shall develop guidelines for an annual review of the progress being made  
54 by each district and local community agency participating in the pilot program. Each district and  
55 agency in the pilot program shall participate in any evaluation or accountability process  
56 implemented by or authorized by the department. The department shall prepare and submit an  
57 annual report describing and analyzing the implementation of the pilot program in all  
58 participating districts. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the number of participating  
59 school districts, schools and local community agencies; the number of students served and the  
60 type and duration of those services; the progress made by those students toward attaining a high  
61 school diploma or general educational development; and the number of students served who  
62 have attained a high school diploma or passed the general educational development test. The  
63 department shall file its annual report no later than September 1 of each year by filing the same  
64 with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate who shall forward a copy of the  
65 report to the joint committee on education. The department shall file a final report within 6  
66 months of the conclusion of the 3 year pilot period that shall include an analysis of all relevant  
67 data so as to determine the effectiveness of the program and specific legislative  
68 recommendations, including whether the program should be expanded, maintained or  
69 discontinued, by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate  
70 who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education.