

SENATE No. 283

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James T. Welch

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 interagency collaboration for dropout prevention.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

James T. Welch

Hampden

Michael R. Knapik

Second Hampden and Hampshire

SENATE No. 283

By Mr. Welch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 283) of James T. Welch and Michael R. Knapik for legislation relative to interagency collaboration for dropout prevention. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act relative to interagency collaboration for dropout prevention.

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 inserting after
2 section 36, the following section:

3 Section 37:

4 Section 1. Purpose

5 (1) To unite state agencies and offices with community-based organizations and
6 parents to develop and execute a comprehensive plan to systematically prevent dropouts in
7 school districts with 1,000 or more students and dropout rates higher than twice that of the state
8 average.

9 Section 2. Definitions

10 (1) “At risk youth” when used with respect to a child, youth, or student, means a
11 school aged individual who meets one or more of the following requirements:

- 12 (a) is at-risk of academic failure;
- 13 (b) has come into contact with the juvenile justice system;
- 14 (c) has come into contact with the Department of Children and Families;
- 15 (d) has dropped out of school in the past;

16 (e) has a high rate of absenteeism, which shall be defined by the Council and the
17 definition shall include out-of-school suspensions;

18 (f) or any other indicators that the Council deems appropriate

19 (2) “Council” means the state interagency council established under c. 69 §37-4

20 (3) “District interagency council” means the councils established under c. 69 §37-5

21 (4) “Individualized plan” means a plan for support and/or services created by a
22 collaboration of state agencies, the community, and parents to assist in preventing an at risk
23 youth from dropping out of school that is unique to a particular at risk youth

24 Section 3. STATE INTERAGENCY COUNCIL—COMPOSITION AND DUTIES

25 (1)(a) 60 days from the passage of this chapter, a council shall be convened

26 (b) There is created within state government an interagency Council (hereafter, the
27 Council) composed of:

28 (i) the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or
29 a designee

30 (ii) the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or a designee

31 (iii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services or a designee

32 (iv) the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health or a designee

33 (v) the Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services or a designee

34 (vi) the Secretary of Labor & Workforce Development or a designee

35 (vii) a representative from the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee appointed by the
36 Secretary of Public Safety and Security

37 (viii) a representative from the Office of Special Education Planning & Policy
38 appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

39 (ix) the president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association or a designee

40 (iix) the president of the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts or a
41 designee

42 (iiix) the executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School
43 Superintendents or a designee

44 (xiv) the executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees
45 or a designee

46 (c) The Council members listed in subsection (1)(b)(i) through (xiv) of this section shall
47 appoint to a 3 year term the following members

48 (x) a representative of community-based service organizations

49 (xi) a parent representative from an urban community, as recommended to the Council
50 by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

51 (xii) a parent representative from a suburban community, as recommended to the
52 Council by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

53 (xiii) a parent representative from a rural community, as recommended to the Council
54 by the Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association

55 (2) (a) The Council shall annually elect a chair from its membership

56 (b) Two thirds members of the Council are necessary to constitute a quorum at any
57 meeting

58 (c) The Council shall meet quarterly or more frequently as determined by the chair

59 (3) (a) No member of the Council shall receive additional compensation for
60 participation on the Council, meaning:

61 (i) participation on the Council shall be considered an employment duty of those
62 representatives of state agencies

63 (ii) participation on the Council by individuals who are not government employees
64 shall be considered a pro bono service

65 (4) The Council shall:

66 (a) provide leadership to increase the efficacy of services delivered to at risk youth in
67 the districts identified in section 1

68 (b) create a comprehensive plan for early intervention for at risk youth enrolled in the
69 districts identified in section 1 by:

70 (i) developing a model process by which individual at risk youths are identified
71 beginning in the third grade

72 (ii) developing a model process for the creation and implementation of individualized
73 plans for at risk youth

74 (iii) monitoring and evaluating the creation and implementation of individualized
75 plans specified in subsection (4)(b)(ii) of this section

76 (iv) developing strategies to increase parental involvement in both the creation and
77 execution of individualized plans specified in subsections (4)(b)(ii) and (iii) of this section

78 (c) assist the districts identified in section 1 in establishing district interagency
79 councils to carry out the comprehensive plan

80 (d) develop administrative and governing structures for the operation of district
81 interagency councils

82 (e) ensure equity in the scope, duration, level, and type of services across the
83 identified districts

84 (f) recommend legislative, executive, and judicial policy and procedural changes

85 Section 4. DISTRICT INTERAGENCY COUNCILS—COMPOSITION AND DUTIES

86 (1) School districts shall establish interagency councils to carry out the
87 comprehensive plan developed by the Council for early intervention for at risk youth

88 (a) Each district interagency council shall consist of the Superintendent of the district
89 and a local representative from each the following agencies and groups serving the school
90 district, children and at risk youth, and their families

91 (i) the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, appointed by the
92 Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

93 (ii) the Department of Children and Families, appointed by the Commissioner of the
94 Department of Children and Families

95 (iii) the Department of Health and Human Services, appointed by the Secretary of
96 Health and Human Services

97 (iv) the Department of Mental Health, appointed by the Commissioner of the
98 Department of Mental Health

99 (v) the Department of Youth Services, appointed by the Commissioner of the
100 Department of Youth Services

101 (vi) Labor & Workforce Development, appointed by Secretary of Labor & Workforce
102 Development

103 (vii) a district teacher, appointed by the collective bargaining unit representing teachers
104 in the district

105 (viii) a district special education teacher, appointed by the collective bargaining unit
106 representing teachers in the district

107 (b) The members of the district interagency council specified in subsections (a)(i)
108 through (viii) of this section shall select 3 parents who have children presently enrolled in the
109 school district to serve on the district interagency council

110 (2) The district interagency council members shall

111 (a) serve 3 year terms

112 (b) identify at risk students pursuant to the process specified in section 3, subsection
113 (4)(b)(i) prior to the beginning of the school year

114 (c) develop an individualized plan for each at risk youth identified by the process
115 specified in section 3, subsection (4)(b)(i)

116 (d) provide services to meet the needs of individual at risk youths and their families
117 according to the development of the individualized plan specified in subsection (2)(c) of this
118 section

119 (e) establish and implement a case management system of the individualized plans

120 (f) establish and implement a method by which to involve parents of the at risk youth
121 in the individualized plan

122 (g) provide staff for the implementation of individual plans requiring services from
123 two or more agencies

124 Section 5. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS—REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE
125 COMMITTEES

126 (1) At the end of each fiscal year, each district interagency council shall submit a
127 report to the Council detailing the results of the plans and programs implemented under this
128 chapter.

129 (2) Within 90 days of receipt of the report specified in subsection 1 of this section,
130 the Council shall conduct an independent review of each district interagency council to evaluate
131 the results of the plans and programs implemented under this section

132 (3) (a) The Council shall submit a report on the independent review by the end of the
133 calendar year, detailing the results of the plans and programs implemented under this chapter to
134 the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities and Joint Committee
135 on Education.

136 (b) The report shall include a recommendation to the Legislature as to whether the
137 programs ought to be modified or expanded