

HOUSE No. 4542

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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July 22, 2016.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

Pursuant to Article LVI, as amended by Article XC, Section 3 of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am returning to you for amendment House Bill No. 391, “An Act Relative to School Improvement Plans.”

This bill is intended to amend current law that requires school principals, in consultation with school councils, to develop and submit school improvement plans to district superintendents for their review and approval. This proposal would shift that approval authority to the school committees. I agree that our local elected school officials should be consulted in connection with the development and finalization of these improvement plans. However, it seems equally important to preserve the approval authority of the superintendents in this process so that they are able to conduct the daily operations and management of schools effectively and efficiently.

To strike the proper balance in educational leadership across the Commonwealth’s cities and towns, I recommend that House Bill No. 391 be amended by striking out section 1 and section 2 and inserting in place thereof the following two sections:-

SECTION 1. The eleventh paragraph of section 1I of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the third and fourth sentences and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- Each school improvement plan shall be submitted to the superintendent who shall review and approve the plan, after

consultation with the school committee, not later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented, according to a plan development and review schedule established by the district superintendent.

SECTION 2. Section 59C of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the fifth paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

The principal of each school, in consultation with the school council established pursuant to this section, shall on an annual basis, in conformity with section 1I of chapter 69, develop and submit to the district superintendent a plan for improving student performance. The superintendent shall review and approve the plan, after consultation with the school committee. Plans shall be prepared in a manner and form prescribed by the department of elementary and secondary education and shall conform to any policies and practices of the district consistent therewith. If the superintendent does not approve a plan submitted by the principal, the plan shall be returned to the principal who shall, after consultation with the school council, resubmit the plan to the superintendent who shall review and approve the resubmitted plan, after consultation with the school committee.

Thank you for your prompt consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
Governor