

HOUSE No. 2056

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Alice Hanlon Peisch

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 dropout prevention and recovery.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Alice Hanlon Peisch</i>	<i>14th Norfolk</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>
<i>James M. Cantwell</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>
<i>Daniel J. Hunt</i>	<i>13th Suffolk</i>
<i>Rady Mom</i>	<i>18th Middlesex</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>
<i>Louis L. Kafka</i>	<i>8th Norfolk</i>
<i>Bud Williams</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>
<i>Jeffrey N. Roy</i>	<i>10th Norfolk</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>
<i>Jonathan Hecht</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>
<i>Sheila C. Harrington</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>

James M. Kelcourse

1st Essex

Tricia Farley-Bouvier

3rd Berkshire

James J. O'Day

14th Worcester

HOUSE No. 2056

By Ms. Peisch of Wellesley, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2056) of Alice Hanlon Peisch and others relative to the mandatory school age and the establishment of dropout prevention and recovery pilot programs. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act relative to dropout prevention and recovery.

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 2014
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking lines 117 to 120, inclusive, and inserting in place
3 thereof the following paragraph:-

4 The board shall promulgate regulations establishing the mandatory ages for school
5 attendance, including the minimum and maximum permissible ages for school attendance,
6 provided that each child shall be required to attend an approved kindergarten program in a public
7 or private setting or in a community-based program licensed by the department of early
8 education and care. Said regulations shall include mandatory attendance guidelines necessary for
9 kindergarten completion. Said regulations shall include a process for school districts or
10 Commonwealth charter schools to provide exemptions for advanced students to attend school
11 beginning in first grade. Said regulations shall also address the types of alternative education

12 programs or settings that are suitable for individuals who exceed the maximum permissible age
13 of attendance who do not have a high school diploma or the equivalent.

14 SECTION 2. Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary
15 education shall develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and
16 recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates at or greater than 5 percent. The
17 pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community
18 agencies serving students who reside in these districts. The dropout prevention and recovery
19 programs shall target high school students who have dropped out of school or are at risk of
20 dropping out of school using at least 1 of the following methods:

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

29 (b) Graduation coaches, who shall be professionals with youth development and
30 academic support expertise whose responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to:

31 i. motivating students to focus on a graduation plan or an alternative option, which
32 shall include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals;

33 ii. serving as a representative for students in any disciplinary hearings or actions;

- 34 iii. providing academic as well as social-emotional student supports;
- 35 iv. assisting in the reenrollment of students who have already withdrawn from
- 36 school;
- 37 v. encouraging parent and community involvement in the school setting; and
- 38 vi. identifying and addressing barriers to learning resulting from specific risk factors,
- 39 including trauma.

40 All graduation coaches shall be provided with professional development opportunities
41 and administrative and technical support services. Adults serving in this role shall be trained in
42 trauma-informed practices, cultural responsiveness, and creating and sustaining healthy youth-
43 adult relationships in a school setting. Schools may partner together to provide professional
44 development opportunities and administrative and technical support services.

45 (c) Dropout outreach and recovery programs, which shall mean targeted outreach and
46 transition support for students who have dropped out of school. Such programs shall, at a
47 minimum, reach out to students, determine their academic status and personal circumstances,
48 assist students in enrolling in a high school or general educational development program, provide
49 transitional support and track students' academic progress.

50 (d) Expectant and parenting student support, which may include, but is not limited to,
51 the development and implementation of school policies that set high academic expectations,
52 establish procedures for maternity and paternity leave, and provide flexible scheduling; expectant
53 and parenting student liaisons who shall work with students to develop graduation plans that
54 include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals and who provide follow-up

55 support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families,
56 overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services; and, annual data
57 collection that shall include, but not be limited to, the number of parenting students in the
58 district, any supports or interventions provided to the parenting students, and parenting student
59 progress toward and completion of secondary school.

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