

HOUSE No. 4131

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 22, 2018.

The committee on Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2010) of Ruth B. Balser and others for legislation to require the development of standards for prohibiting or limiting the use of suspension and expulsion in preschools, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4131) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ALICE HANLON PEISCH.

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

An Act supporting healthy development among preschoolers.

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 15D of the General Laws is hereby amended in Section 4A
2 subsection (c) by inserting after the words “best practices” the following:

3 On or before January 1 2019, the Department shall develop performance specification
4 standards for prohibiting or severely limiting the use of suspension and expulsion for use only as
5 a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be
6 reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable program modifications.

7 The standards shall at minimum include: 1) benchmarks and goals for supporting
8 children’s social emotional and behavioral development to include reducing the use of exclusion
9 as a disciplinary tool and for eliminating disparities in the use of suspension and expulsion; 2)
10 engagement steps to be taken with the child and parent or guardian prior to suspension or
11 expulsion; 3) requirements for communicating discipline policies including suspension and
12 expulsion policies to staff, families and community partners; 4) specifications for achieving
13 performance standards which, reward and incentivize programs to access technical assistance to

14 support ongoing development of staff and teacher skills for supporting children's social
15 emotional and behavioral development, reducing disparities and limiting the use of suspension
16 and expulsion; and 5) reporting requirements to the Department from infant and toddler
17 programs