SENATE . . . . . No. 2355

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

SENATE, Monday, March 19, 2018

The committee on Ways and Means to whom was referred the Senate Bill to promote and enhance civic engagement (Senate, No.2306),-- reports, recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment substituting a new draft with the same title (Senate, No. 2355).

For the committee,
Karen E. Spilka

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An Act to promote and enhance civic engagement.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 2YYYY the following section:

Section 2ZZZZ. There shall be a Civics Project Trust Fund. The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall administer the fund. Money deposited in the fund shall be used to implement section 2 of chapter 71 and may include grants or other funding to support professional development in relation to said section 2 of said chapter 71 and the development of the history and social science curriculum framework.

Money deposited in the fund shall consist of: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii) interest earned on such revenues; and (iii) funds from other sources. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

Annually not later than October 1, the commissioner shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means on the fund's activity. The report shall include, but not be limited to, revenue received by the fund, revenue and expenditure projections for the next fiscal year and details of all expenditures from the fund.

SECTION 2. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 2, as appearing in the 2016 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 2. (a) For purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

"Board", the board of elementary and secondary education.

"Department", the department of elementary and secondary education.

"Framework", the history and social science curriculum framework.

"Student-led civics project", a project-based approach that involves a student-led inquiry process and use of interdisciplinary concepts structured around complex questions and engaging tasks and challenges.

(b) The board shall ensure that all public schools provide instruction in American history and civics as required subjects to promote civic service and a greater knowledge thereof and to prepare students, morally and intellectually, for the duties of citizenship. Such education shall include instruction on the constitution of the United States, the bill of rights, the declaration of independence, the constitution of the commonwealth, local history and government and a program relating to the flag of the United States of America including, but not limited to, proper

etiquette and the correct use and display of the flag, the importance of participation in the electoral process and the provisions of 4 U.S.C. 7 to 9, inclusive, and 36 U.S.C. 170 and171.

(c) The department shall ensure that the framework includes: (i) American history; (ii) local history; (iii) the function and composition of the branches of local, state and federal government; (iv) the constitution of the United States, the bill of rights, the declaration of independence and the constitution of the commonwealth; (v) the electoral process; (vi) the roles and responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy; (vii) the development of media literacy skills to access, analyze and evaluate media as it relates to history and civic education; (viii) community diversity and the role it plays in the democratic process; (ix) knowledge of the ways in which civic participation has been restricted throughout history; and (x) opportunities to identify and debate issues relative to power, economic status and the common good in democracy.

(d) The board shall adopt a policy that requires every public school student to have the opportunity to participate in at least 2 student-led civics projects, at least 1 of which shall be completed after the eighth grade and shall be a high school graduation requirement. Student-led projects may be individual, small group, class wide or completed as part of required coursework. Projects may include, but shall not be limited to including, student-centered exploration of the connections between federal, state and local policies and an issue that impacts the student's community.

(e) Subject to sufficient resources in the Civics Project Trust Fund established in section 2ZZZZ of chapter 29, the department may establish regional civics councils to monitor and provide resources for civics education and the implementation of student-led civics projects to public schools.

Regional civics councils shall consist of representatives from: (i) institutions of higher education; (ii) nonprofits; (iii) the business community; (iv) government, which may include elected officials; (v) elementary and secondary institutions, which may include parents, principals, school administrators, teachers and school committee members; and (vi) at least 2 secondary school students who shall be voting members. Regional civics councils shall solicit student input from students in their service areas.

The department may promulgate regulations or guidelines consistent with this subsection to identify the size, membership, service area, selection process and responsibilities for regional civics councils.

(f) The department may establish an annual convention to assess the current state of civic education, to share evidence-based best practices and to make recommendations to the board. The department shall provide outreach to regional civics councils to attend and participate in the convention.

(g) A school committee may designate a student outreach officer who shall be responsible, to the extent possible, for ensuring that a student advisory committee, established under section 38M, for that school committee exists and that the student advisory committee is informed of the agenda of the school committee.

(h) Subject to sufficient resources in the Civics Project Trust Fund, the department shall create tools aligned with the framework to support districts in the implementation of this section. The department may collaborate with institutions of higher education and other stakeholder organizations to assist in evaluating the achievement of objectives outlined in this section.

(i) Subject to sufficient resources in the Civics Project Trust Fund, the department shall establish the Edward Moore Kennedy and Edward William Brooke III civics challenge. The challenge shall be available to all eighth grade students and may include a competitive evaluation of a civics project, which may be a student-led civics project, through a process determined by the department. The challenge may be also provided on a regional or statewide level.

(j) The state secretary shall establish the high school voter challenge. The first 2 full weeks in March and the last 2 full weeks in September shall be high school voter challenge weeks.

During voter challenge weeks, voter outreach coordinators may hold voter registration drives and provide outreach to eligible students to register or preregister to vote on any participating high school campus at locations and times deemed appropriate by the school administrator which shall be reasonably accessible to eligible students. Enrolled student in a high school may serve as voter outreach coordinators. Voter outreach coordinators may be selected by either a school administer or a peer nomination process.

(k) The board shall create a civics endorsement for educators that demonstrates competency in teaching civics to students.

SECTION 3. There shall be within the department of elementary and secondary education shall a special commission to develop a proposal for the establishment of a program of civic education and public service for youths. The commission shall consist of: the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee, who shall serve as chair; 2 members of the senate, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader; 2 members of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader; the commissioner of higher

education or a designee; the president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association or a designee; the president of the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts or a designee; and 9 persons to be appointed by the governor 1 of whom shall be a representative from Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a representative from the Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a representative from the Massachusetts Service Alliance, Inc.; 1 of whom shall be a representative from the Massachusetts National Guard; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Civics Learning Coalition; and 4 of whom shall have demonstrated experience in and a commitment to public service and civic education.

The commission shall investigate and study communities, states and countries that have public service requirements for youths and organizations that promote service in the commonwealth and the United States including, but not limited to, AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps.

The study shall consider: (i) preferred timing and delivery of civics education and engagement in public service; (ii) the recommended agency to administer the program; (iii) recommended funding mechanisms; (iv) ways to ensure quality programming; (v) recommended incentives to encourage participation and success; (vi) whether the service participation should be mandatory; and (vii) other topics deemed fitting by the commission.

The commission shall report its findings and recommendations, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry those recommendations into effect, by filing the same with the chairs of the senate and house committees on ways and means, the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, senate and house chairs of the joint committee on education, the senate and

house chairs of the joint committee on higher education, the secretary of education and the governor not later than January 1, 2019.

SECTION 4. Subsection (h) and (k) of section 2 of chapter 71 of the General Laws shall take effect for the 2020-2021 academic year.

SECTION 5. The requirement that all public high school students complete a student-led civics project as a condition of graduation under subsection (d) of section 2 of chapter 71 of the General Laws shall apply to all public high school students entering high school on or after academic year 2018-2019.

SECTION 6. Subsection (i) of said section 2 of said chapter 71 shall take effect for the 2022-2023 academic year.