HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1797 FILED ON: 1/17/2019

HOUSE . . . . . No. 416

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Antonio F. D. Cabral

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 to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Antonio F. D. Cabral	*13th Bristol*	*1/10/2019*
James K. Hawkins	*2nd Bristol*	*2/1/2019*
David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf	*17th Worcester*	*1/23/2019*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 416

By Mr. Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 416) of Antonio F. D. Cabral, James K. Hawkins and David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf for legislation to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)

An Act to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation.

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. Section 1 of chapter 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016 Official Edition, is hereby amended by—

(a) striking out, in lines 1 to 2, the words "between the minimum and maximum ages established for school attendance by the board of education" and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

"ages of 6 and 18, having completed at least the twelfth grade or whichever comes first".; and

(b) inserting after the word "herewith", in line 58, the following words:-

", provided that no student over the age of 16 shall face criminal penalties for failure to attend school through the mandatory age for school attendance".

11 SECTION 2. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
12 Official Edition is hereby amended by inserting before the period, in line 120, the following
13 words:-

14 “, provided, however, that all children under the age of 18 shall be required to attend
15 school if they have not graduated from high school”.

16 SECTION 3. Chapter 76 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
17 section 21 the following section:-

18 “Section 22. Commission to Study Barriers to High School Graduation.

19 (a) Establishment of Commission. There shall be a special commission, referred to as
20 the ‘High School Graduation Commission’. Said commission shall—

21 (1) investigate and study barriers to high school graduation; and

22 (2) make recommendations regarding the identification of students at risk of dropping
23 out of high school and the targeting of services and programs that will ensure all students can
24 graduate from high school.

25 (b) Members.

26 (1) The commission shall be chaired by the secretary of education or the secretary’s
27 designee.

28 (2) The commissioner of the department of higher education or the commissioner’s
29 designee and the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education or the
30 commissioner’s designee shall each be members.

31 (3) The governor shall appoint 4 members, one of whom shall be nominated by the
32 Massachusetts Teachers Association and one of whom shall be nominated by the American
33 Federation of Teachers of Massachusetts.

34 (4) The speaker of the house shall appoint one member and the senate president shall
35 appoint one member.

36 (c) Reporting Requirements. The commission shall report its findings and any
37 legislation necessary to implement said findings to the governor, the clerks of the senate and
38 house of representatives, the senate and house of representatives committees on ways and means,
39 the senate and house of representatives committees on education by December 31, 2019. The
40 commission report shall include but not be limited to: an analysis of the student populations who
41 are at the highest risk of dropping out, mechanisms to identify students who are at risk of
42 dropping out, barriers to high school graduation and evidence based services that reduce and
43 eliminate barriers to high school graduation. In making its recommendations the commission
44 shall consider among other issues—

45 (1) grades, attendance patterns, disciplinary issues, family and environmental factors,
46 breaks or gaps in education, teen parenthood, limited English proficiency and disabilities that
47 may indicate a student is at risk of not completing high school;

48 (2) mechanisms and information technology that can be used to identify students at
49 risk of dropping out and track students' progress once identified;

50 (3) appropriate benchmarks for periodic review of students' progress;

51 (4) wrap around support services designed to effectively target and alleviate or
52 eliminate barriers for students completing high school;

53 (5) methods to reengage students who have left school;

54 (6) dedicated tutoring and academic services for students who have gaps in education
55 as a result of moving, illness, absences, disciplinary issues or immigration;

56 (7) additional preparation and resources to pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive
57 Assessment System (MCAS) or any successor thereto for students who have not passed
58 examinations required for graduation after two attempts;

59 (8) emotional support services and resources for students at risk of dropping out; and

60 (9) recommendations for mechanisms to emphasize the importance of high school
61 graduation for all students.

62 SECTION 4. Effective Date. Sections 1 to 3 of this Act shall become operative on
63 [August 1, 2022].