

HOUSE No. 551

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 grants for high quality early education.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Alice Hanlon Peisch</i>	<i>14th Norfolk</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>
<i>Alan Silvia</i>	<i>7th Bristol</i>
<i>Michael J. Soter</i>	<i>8th Worcester</i>
<i>Tricia Farley-Bouvier</i>	<i>3rd Berkshire</i>
<i>Carolyn C. Dykema</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>
<i>Angelo L. D'Emilia</i>	<i>8th Plymouth</i>
<i>Kenneth I. Gordon</i>	<i>21st Middlesex</i>
<i>Jay D. Livingstone</i>	<i>8th Suffolk</i>
<i>Tommy Vitolo</i>	<i>15th Norfolk</i>
<i>Shaunna L. O'Connell</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>
<i>James M. Kelcourse</i>	<i>1st Essex</i>
<i>Andres X. Vargas</i>	<i>3rd Essex</i>
<i>Denise C. Garlick</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>
<i>Ann-Margaret Ferrante</i>	<i>5th Essex</i>
<i>Kate Hogan</i>	<i>3rd Middlesex</i>

<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>
<i>Jon Santiago</i>	<i>9th Suffolk</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>

HOUSE No. 551

By Ms. Peisch of Wellesley, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 551) of Alice Hanlon Peisch and others for legislation to authorize a grant program to support the implementation of high quality pre-kindergarten programs. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to grants for high quality early education.

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, as appearing in the 2014 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 13 the following section:-

3 Section 13A. (a) The department of early education and care, in consultation with the
4 department of elementary and secondary education, shall develop and administer the High
5 Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education grant program to support the implementation of high quality
6 pre-kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 2 years and 9 months and the age a
7 child becomes eligible for kindergarten in the district where he or she resides. The grants shall be
8 used to invest in a high quality, mixed delivery early education system in order to reduce the
9 achievement gap and improve third grade reading scores. Eligible grantees shall include
10 individual school districts and collaborations of multiple school districts in a region. Proposals
11 must include partnerships with licensed community-based early learning programs.

12 (b) The departments shall establish requirements for grant applicants which shall include,
13 but not be limited to the following: (1) a tracking system for preschool students in the program
14 using the state student identifier system; (2) a child to instructor ratio of no more than 10 to 1; (3)
15 tactics to engage families in the enrollment process and implementation of the plan required
16 under subsection (c), and methods to ensure a high level of participation by families with 3 and 4
17 year olds; (4) teacher qualifications and evaluation system, and on-going professional
18 development requirements; (5) full school day program in the district; (6) a class size of no more
19 than 20 preschool students; (7) inclusion of children with disabilities; (8) instructional staff
20 salaries and benefits comparable to the corresponding districts salaries and benefits for
21 kindergarten to high school staff; (9) developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction;
22 (10) evidenced based curricula; (11) a learning environment aligned with the state early learning
23 and development standards; (12) evidenced based health and safety standards; (13) a timetable
24 for implementation; (14) program evaluation and data collection systems to ensure continuous
25 improvement; (15) a description of the physical structures for the education of the students; and
26 (16) a vision and initial plan for serving children from birth to age 3, and may include: (1) on-site
27 or access to comprehensive services for children; (2) partnership with, and promotion of,
28 community service providers for families to support children's learning and development; and
29 (3) programs for children from birth to age 3.

30 Grants shall be awarded based readiness and need. Readiness shall be defined as the
31 community having an EEC-approved plan for preschool expansion. Plans must include: (1) a
32 detailed assessment of the local early education and care system, including supply of high-
33 quality preschool classrooms, qualifications of teachers, facilities, and transportation; (2) an
34 estimate of the percent of high-needs children entering kindergarten annually with no prior

35 preschool experience; (3) a profile of family and community needs and assets, including parent
36 perspectives and demand for preschool; (4) a list of local resources such as funding or in-kind
37 support, recent early learning initiatives, strategic plans, professional development strategies, and
38 evidence of collaboration within the mixed-delivery system of early education and care; and (5) a
39 proposed program budget.

40 Need shall be defined by the percent of high-need students, as defined by the Department
41 of Elementary and Secondary Education, enrolled in a grantee's school district. In any given
42 fiscal year, the department shall award implementation grants in order from highest need to
43 lowest need until that fiscal year's grant funds are expired.

44 In awarding grants, preference shall be given to districts designated as underperforming
45 or chronically underperforming pursuant to section 1J of chapter 69.

46 (c) Each recipient of the grant shall establish a plan to implement the requirements set
47 forth in subsection (b) and any other requirements as may be prescribed by the board of early
48 education and care. Each district shall establish a local governing council to implement and
49 oversee all aspects of the plan. Districts shall provide on a quarterly basis reports to the
50 department of early education and care on all aspects of the plan. The district and the local
51 council shall implement the plan as approved within the period of time approved by the
52 department. Failure to satisfactorily implement the plan within the approved period of time shall
53 result in the termination of the plan and reversion of the grant funds to the department.

54 (d) The board of early education and care shall promulgate regulations to implement the
55 provisions of this act within six months of the effective date including guidelines for membership
56 to local governing councils in each recipient district and evaluation criteria required in the

57 quarterly reports. A grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall require that recipients
58 undertake ongoing evaluations of the implementation of the plan and all its aspects.

59 The commissioner of early education and care shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of
60 programs established under this section, including the potential for replicating such programs
61 throughout the commonwealth. The commissioner shall also provide technical assistance to
62 school districts seeking to replicate programs funded under this section.