

HOUSE No. 1366

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Erika Uytterhoeven and Carol A. Doherty

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 establish the grow your own teacher education initiative.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Erika Uytterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 1366

By Representatives Uytterhoeven of Somerville and Doherty of Taunton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1366) of Erika Uytterhoeven and Carol A. Doherty for legislation to establish grow your own teacher preparation programs higher education grants. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)

An Act to establish the grow your own teacher education initiative.

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. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Grow Your Own Teacher
2 Education Act.

3 SECTION 2. Purpose. The Grow Your Own Teacher preparation programs established
4 under this Act shall comprise a major new statewide initiative, known as the Grow Your Own
5 Teacher Education Initiative, to create a statewide pipeline of teachers who are likely to become
6 effective teachers in eligible schools serving a substantial percentage of economically-
7 disadvantaged students. Further, the Initiative shall increase the diversity of the teaching
8 workforce.

9 The Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative shall ensure educational rigor by
10 effectively preparing candidates in accredited bachelor's degree programs in teaching, through
11 which graduates shall meet the requirements to secure a Massachusetts provisional teaching
12 license.

13 SECTION 3. Definitions. In this Act:

14 "Accredited teacher preparation program" means an accredited teacher education
15 program authorized to prepare individuals to fulfill all of the requirements to receive a
16 Massachusetts provisional teaching license.

17 "Cohort" means a group of teacher education candidates who are enrolled in and share
18 experiences in the same program and are linked by their desire to become Massachusetts teachers
19 in eligible schools and by their need for the services and supports offered by the Initiative. A
20 cohort may include a high school student enrolled in a dual enrollment course offered by a
21 participating institution of higher education.

22 "Community organization" means a nonprofit organization that has a demonstrated
23 capacity to train, develop, and organize parents and community leaders into a constituency that
24 will hold the school and the school district accountable for achieving high academic standards; in
25 addition to organizations with a geographic focus, "community organization" includes general
26 parent organizations, organizations of special education or bilingual education parents, and
27 school employee unions.

28 "Developmental classes" means classes in basic skill areas, such as mathematics and
29 language arts that are prerequisite to, but not counted towards, degree requirements of a teacher
30 preparation program.

31 "Dual enrollment course" is a course taken by a student enrolled in a public secondary
32 school at a Massachusetts public institution of higher education.

33 "Eligible school" means a Head Start or Early Head Start Program, or an early
34 intervention program, or a public elementary, middle, or secondary school in the Commonwealth
35 that serves a substantial percentage of economically-disadvantaged students.

36 "Initiative" means the Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative created under this
37 Act.

38 "Para educator" means an individual with a history of demonstrated accomplishments in
39 school staff positions (such as teacher assistants, school-community liaisons, school clerks, and
40 security aides) in schools that meet the definition of an eligible school under this Section.

41 "Parent and community leader" means an individual who has or had a child enrolled in a
42 school or schools that meet the definition of an eligible school under this Section and who has a
43 history of active involvement in the school or who has a history of working to improve schools
44 serving a substantial percentage of economically-disadvantaged students, including membership
45 in a community organization.

46 "Program" means a Grow Your Own Teacher preparation program established by a
47 consortium under this Act.

48 "Schools serving a substantial percentage of economically disadvantaged students"
49 means schools that maintain any of grades pre-kindergarten through 8, in which at least 50% of
50 the students are economically disadvantaged and schools that maintain any of grades 9 through
51 12, in which at least 40% of the students are economically disadvantaged.

52 "Economically disadvantaged" indicates a student's participation in one or more of the
53 following state-administered programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the

54 Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC); the Department of
55 Children and Families' (DCF) foster care program; and MassHealth (Medicaid).

56 SECTION 4. Creation of Initiative. The Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative is
57 created. Grow Your Own Massachusetts shall administer the Initiative as a grant competition to
58 fund consortia that will carry out Grow Your Own Teacher preparation programs.

59 SECTION 5. Selection of grantees. The Board of Higher Education shall allocate funds
60 from the endowment tax in Section 9 of this Act to Grow Your Own Massachusetts for the
61 purpose of administering the program and awarding grants as needed to qualified consortia that
62 reflect the distribution and diversity of eligible schools across this State. In awarding grants,
63 Grow Your Own Massachusetts shall select programs that successfully address Initiative criteria
64 and that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving urban areas, serving rural areas, the
65 nature of the participating institutions of higher education, and the nature of eligible schools on
66 which a program is focused.

67 Grow Your Own Massachusetts shall select, manage, and oversee consortia that meet the
68 following requirements:

69 (1) A consortium shall be composed of at least one 4-year institution of higher education
70 with an approved teacher preparation program, at least one school district or group of schools,
71 and one or more community organizations. The consortium membership may also include a 2-
72 year institution of higher education or a school employee union.

73 (2) The 4-year institution of higher education participating in the consortium shall have
74 past, demonstrated success in preparing teachers for elementary or secondary schools serving a
75 substantial percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

76 (3) The consortium shall focus on a clearly defined set of eligible schools that will
77 participate in the program. The consortium shall articulate the steps that it will carry out in
78 preparing teachers for its participating schools.

79 (4) The consortium shall recruit potential candidates for the program and shall take into
80 consideration when selecting a candidate whether the candidate:

81 (A) holds a high school diploma or its equivalent or is a high school student enrolled in a
82 dual enrollment course offered by a participating institution of higher education;

83 (B) meets either the definition of "parent and community leader" or the definition of
84 "para educator" contained in this Act;

85 (C) exhibits a willingness to be a teacher in an eligible school with the goal of
86 maintaining academic excellence;

87 (D) shows an interest in postsecondary education and may hold an associate's degree, a
88 bachelor's degree, or another postsecondary degree, but a postsecondary education is not
89 required;

90 (E) is a parent, a para educator, a community leader, or any other individual from a
91 community with an eligible school;

92 (F) commits to completing and passing all State standards, including the licensure test to
93 obtain an educator license;

94 (G) shows a willingness to set high standards of performance for himself or herself and
95 students while recognizing the strengths of all students; and

96 (H) demonstrates commitment to the program by:

97 (i) maintaining a cumulative grade point average of at least a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (or the
98 equivalent as determined by the Board of Higher Education);

99 (ii) attending monthly cohort meetings; and

100 (iii) applying for financial aid from multiple other financial aid resources before applying
101 for assistance from the program.

102 (5) The consortium shall employ effective procedures or teaching the skills and
103 knowledge needed to prepare highly competent teachers, including but not limited to on-going
104 direct experience in target schools and evaluation of this experience.

105 (6) The consortium shall offer the program to cohorts of candidates, as defined in this
106 Act, on a schedule that enables candidates to work full time while participating in the program
107 and allows para educators to continue in their current positions.

108 (7) The institutions of higher education participating in the consortium shall document
109 and agree to expend the same amount of funds in implementing the program that these
110 institutions spend per student on similar educational programs. Grants received by the
111 consortium shall supplement and not supplant these amounts.

112 (8) Grow Your Own Massachusetts shall establish and oversee additional criteria for
113 review of proposals, including criteria that address the following issues:

114 (A) Previous experience of the institutions of higher education in preparing racially and
115 ethnically diverse candidates for eligible schools and in working with students with non-
116 traditional backgrounds, such as first-generation college students and working parents.

117 (B) The quality of the implementation plan, including strategies for overcoming
118 institutional barriers to the progress of non-traditional candidates.

119 (C) If a community college is a participant, the nature and extent of existing articulation
120 agreements and guarantees between the community college and the 4-year institution of higher
121 education.

122 (D) The number of candidates to be educated in the planned cohort or cohorts and the
123 capacity of the consortium for adding cohorts in future cycles.

124 (E) Experience of the community organization or organizations in organizing
125 economically, racially, and ethnically diverse parents and community leaders to achieve school
126 improvement and a strong relational school culture.

127 (F) The qualifications of the person or persons designated by the 4-year institution of
128 higher education to be responsible for cohort support and the development of a shared learning
129 and social environment among candidates.

130 (G) The consortium's plan for collective consortium decision-making, involving all
131 consortium members, including mechanisms for candidate input.

132 (H) The consortium's plan for direct impact of the program on the quality of education in
133 the eligible schools.

134 (I) The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of the eligible schools and positions, and
135 the use in curriculum and instructional planning of principles for effective education for adults.

136 (J) The inclusion of curricula that build upon the cultural wealth of racially and ethnically
137 diverse communities, such as ethnic studies.

138 (K) The availability of classes under the program in places and times accessible to the
139 candidates.

140 (L) The flexibility of the program to support candidates with different needs or changing
141 responsibilities at home or work, such as offering a 2, 4, 6, or 8 year schedule for completion; an
142 option to adjust a participant's credit hours up or down in subsequent semesters or planned date
143 of completion; or a reduction in duties at their employing schools for participating para educators
144 to support their success in the program.

145 (M) The plan of the 4-year institution of higher education to ensure that candidates take
146 advantage of existing financial aid resources before using the loan funds described in Section 6
147 of this Act.

148 (N) The availability of supportive services, including, but not limited to, counseling,
149 tutoring, transportation, technology and technology support, and child care.

150 (O) A plan for continued participation of graduates of the program in a program of
151 support for at least 2 years, including mentoring and group meetings.

152 (P) The inclusion in the planned program of strategies derived from community
153 organizing that will help candidates develop tools for working with parents and other community
154 members.

155 (Q) A plan for testing and qualitative evaluation of candidates' teaching skills that ensures
156 that graduates of the program are as prepared for teaching as other individuals completing the
157 institution of higher education's preparation program for the certificate sought.

158 (R) A plan for internal evaluation that provides reports at least yearly on the progress of
159 candidates towards graduation and the impact of the program on the target schools and their
160 communities.

161 (S) A plan for stipends to support participants from grant funds or from contributions
162 from schools, school districts, and other consortia members.

163 (T) Consortium commitment for sustaining the program over time

164 The Board of Higher Education may not adopt rules regarding candidate eligibility that
165 are more restrictive than this Section.

166 SECTION. 6. Expenditures under the Initiative.

167 (a) Every program under the Initiative shall implement a program of forgivable loans to
168 cover any portion of tuition, books, and fees of candidates under the program in excess of the
169 candidates' grants-in-aid. All students admitted to a cohort shall be eligible for a forgivable
170 student loan. Loans shall be fully forgiven if a graduate completes 5 years of service in eligible
171 schools, with partial forgiveness for shorter periods of service. Grow Your Own Massachusetts
172 shall establish standards for the approval of requests for waivers or deferrals from individuals to
173 waive this obligation and shall also define standards for the fiscal management of these loan
174 funds.

175 (b) Grow Your Own Massachusetts shall award grants under the Initiative in such a way
176 as to provide the required support for a cohort of candidates for any fiscal year in which an
177 appropriation for the Initiative is made. Program budgets must show expenditures and needed
178 funds for the entire period that candidates are expected to be enrolled.

179 (c) No funds under the Initiative may be used to supplant the average per-capita
180 expenditures by the institution of higher education for candidates.

181 (d) Where necessary, program budgets shall include the costs of childcare and other
182 indirect expenses, such as transportation, tutoring, technology, and technology support,
183 necessary to permit candidates to maintain their class schedules. Grant funds may be used by any
184 member of a consortium to offset such costs, and the services may be provided by the
185 community organization or organizations, by any other member of the consortium, or by
186 independent contractors.

187 (e) The institution of higher education may expend grant funds to cover the additional
188 costs of offering classes in community settings and for tutoring services.

189 (f) The community organization or organizations may receive a portion of the grant
190 money for the expenses of recruitment, community orientation, and counseling of potential
191 candidates, for providing space in the community, and for working with school personnel to
192 facilitate individual work experiences and support of candidates.

193 (g) The school district or school employee union or both may receive a portion of the
194 grant money for expenses of supporting the work experiences of candidates and providing
195 mentors for graduates. School districts may also use these or other applicable public funds to pay
196 a stipend to participants at all stages of the program and to pay for student teaching required by
197 an accredited teacher preparation program.

198 (h) One or more members of the consortium may expend funds to cover the salary of a
199 site-based cohort coordinator.

200 (i) Grant funds may also be expended to pay directly for required developmental classes
201 for candidates beginning a program.

202 SECTION 7. Implementation of Initiative. Grow Your Own Massachusetts may, if it
203 chooses, award and administer a small number of planning grants during any fiscal year to
204 potential consortia.

205 SECTION 8. Independent program evaluation. The Board of Higher Education shall
206 contract for an independent evaluation of program implementation by each of its participating
207 consortia and of the impact of each program, including the extent of candidate persistence in
208 program enrollment, acceptance as an education major in a 4-year institution of higher education,
209 completion of a bachelor's degree in teaching, obtaining a teaching position in a target school or
210 similar school, subsequent effectiveness as a teacher, and persistence in teaching in a target
211 school or similar school. The evaluation shall assess the Initiative's overall effectiveness
212 and shall identify particular program strategies that are especially effective.

213 SECTION 9. Funding. Funding of the Initiative is provided by an annual 0.25% tax on
214 endowments of institutions of higher education in Massachusetts worth over \$1 billion. This
215 funding will be used for administrative costs, program grants to consortia, and independent
216 program evaluations.

217 SECTION 10. Rules. The Board of Higher Education may adopt any rules necessary to
218 carry out its responsibilities under this Act.

219 SECTION 11. Effective date. This Act takes effect January 1, 2022.