

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(H) demonstrates commitment to the program by:

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

(ii) attending monthly cohort meetings; and

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

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

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

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

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

(A) Previous experience of the institutions of higher education in preparing racially and ethnically diverse candidates for eligible schools and in working with students with non-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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(T) Consortium commitment for sustaining the program over time

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

SECTION. 6. Expenditures under the Initiative.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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