

SENATE No. 316

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Sal N. DiDomenico

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 support healthy development among preschoolers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	<i>3/26/2021</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/26/2021</i>

SENATE No. 316

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 316) of Sal N. DiDomenico, James B. Eldridge, Susannah M. Whipps and Joanne M. Comerford for legislation to support healthy development among preschoolers. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 264 OF 2019-2020.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to support healthy development among preschoolers.

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 2018 Official edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting, after section 12, the following section:-

3 Section 12A. Pursuant to clause (t) of section 2, the department shall develop
4 performance standards for prohibiting or significantly limiting the use of suspension and
5 expulsion in all licensed early education and care programs. The standards shall ensure that
6 expulsion or suspension is only used in extraordinary circumstances where there is a documented
7 assessment that the child's behavior poses of a serious ongoing threat to the safety of others that
8 cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable program modifications.

9 The standards shall include, but not be limited to: (1) benchmarks and goals for
10 supporting children's social, emotional and behavioral development to include reducing the use
11 of exclusion as a disciplinary tool and for eliminating disparities in the use of suspension and
12 expulsion, and facilitating referrals for children with intensive needs; (2) engagement steps to be
13 taken with the child and parent or guardian prior to suspension or expulsion;(3) requirements for
14 communicating disciplinary policies, including suspension and expulsion policies, to staff,
15 families and community partners; (4) pathways for programs to access technical assistance to
16 support ongoing development of staff and teacher skills for supporting children's social,
17 emotional and behavioral development, reducing disparities and limiting the use of suspension
18 and expulsion; and (5) requirements for assessing and documenting a serious ongoing threat to
19 the safety of others (6) infant and toddler program reporting requirements.