

HOUSE No. 4419

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 26, 2024.

The committee on Education, to whom were referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 470) of Mindy Domb relative to climate science education and establishing a climate science education trust fund, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 491) of Kenneth I. Gordon relative to science curriculum standards, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 496) of James K. Hawkins and others relative to implementing elementary and secondary interdisciplinary climate justice education in the Commonwealth, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 504) of Connor Pozzi relative to environmental science in public school curriculums, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 576) of Danillo A. Sena, Simon Cataldo and Sean Garballey relative to implementing an elementary and secondary interdisciplinary climate education curriculum in the public schools, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3887) of James K. Hawkins and Tram T. Nguyen for legislation to include climate education in the elementary and secondary school curriculum, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4419) ought to pass.

For the committee,

DENISE C. GARLICK.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act implementing elementary and secondary interdisciplinary climate literacy education across the Commonwealth.

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 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by adding the following section.

3 Section 2BBBBBB (a). To achieve, promote and support the instruction of climate
4 science education for K-12 public school students in districts across the commonwealth, there
5 shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as
6 the Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Trust Fund. There shall be credited to the fund: (1)
7 revenue from appropriations and other money authorized by the general court and specifically
8 designated to be credited to the fund; (2) funds from public and private sources such as gifts,
9 grants, and donations to further climate science education; and (3) interest earned on money in
10 the fund. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any
11 money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

12 (b) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the
13 Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Council established in section 1U(b) of chapter 69 of the

14 General Laws, shall make expenditures from the fund to support Interdisciplinary Climate
15 Literacy education. In making such expenditures, the commissioner shall prioritize:

16 (1) underserved communities across the commonwealth including those public schools or
17 school districts with high concentrations of economically-disadvantaged students; those public
18 schools or school districts which serve high proportion of students from environmental justice
19 populations, as defined in section 62 of chapter 30; or which are located in environmental justice
20 populations; and

21 (2) communities that have or will in the future experience disproportionate effects of the
22 change in climate.

23 SECTION 2. Section 1D of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
24 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “skills”, in line 38, the following
25 words:-

26 , interdisciplinary climate literacy

27 SECTION 3. Section 1D of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
28 Official edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 1T the following new section:-

29 Section 1U. Elementary and Secondary Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy

30 (a) Each district may implement an Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plan that will
31 provide students with an understanding of the causes of, impacts from, and solutions to
32 anthropogenic climate change. Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy shall include, but not be
33 limited to, an understanding of climate change’s nexus to the fields of science, technology,

34 engineering, arts, history, social sciences, civics, and government, with a focus on climate justice
35 and equitable climate solutions.

36 (b) A school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school or
37 collaborative school may incorporate the climate change standards established pursuant to
38 section 1D and subsection (a) into existing curriculum including, but not limited to, science,
39 history and social sciences, technology or business.

40 (c) The commissioner shall create and engage an Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy
41 Advisory Council. The commissioner, in consultation with the Council, shall provide guidelines
42 on the development and implementation of district-level Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy
43 Plans. The council shall include: youth leaders from a range of communities across the
44 Commonwealth, including representatives of environmental justice neighborhoods;
45 representatives of environmental justice organizations; teachers representing multiple disciplines;
46 educator union representatives with expertise in climate change and climate justice; and experts
47 in climate science and solutions. The Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Council shall seek to
48 ensure that each plan:

49 (1) was created with the involvement and input of youth leaders from the district;

50 (2) was developed in consultation with environmental, civics, and climate justice
51 organizations or professionals; and

52 (3) provides equivalent instruction and opportunities for bilingual students and English
53 language learners.

54 (d) The department may provide additional support and outreach including, but not
55 limited to, statewide and regional training, meetings or conferences, additional staff to support
56 students and teachers, and opportunities for districts and stakeholders to assess and share
57 evidence-based best practices in support of climate change education, and to provide feedback
58 and recommendations to the department.

59 (e) The department shall utilize funding from the Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Trust
60 Fund and may apply for federal, state or other funding.