

HOUSE No. 5098

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Frank A. Moran

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 defining a governing structure for the Lawrence School Board upon the exit of state receivership.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Frank A. Moran</i>	<i>17th Essex</i>	<i>10/31/2024</i>
<i>Pavel Payano</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>10/31/2024</i>
<i>Estela A. Reyes</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>10/31/2024</i>

HOUSE No. 5098

By Representative Moran of Lawrence, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 5098) of Frank A. Moran, Pavel Payano and Estela A. Reyes (with approval of the mayor and city council) relative to defining a governing structure for the Lawrence School Board upon the exit of state receivership. Municipalities and Regional Government. [Local Approval Received.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act defining a governing structure for the Lawrence School Board upon the exit of state receivership.

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. Section 5 of chapter 425 of the acts of 1983 is hereby amended by striking
2 out subsection 5.1 and inserting in its place the following subsection:

3 5.1 Composition; Eligibility; Election and Term of Office.

4 (a) Composition. There shall be a school committee consisting of seven members which
5 shall exercise general management and control of the public schools of the city. Three of these
6 members, to be known as at large members, shall be nominated and elected by and from the
7 voters of the City at large. Three of these members shall be appointed members, and shall be
8 known as the appointed members, and shall be appointed by a vote of the City Council. The
9 mayor shall serve as the seventh member of the school committee and as its chairman with full
10 power to vote.

11 (b) Eligibility. All members, whether at large members or appointed members shall be
12 voters and residents of the city of Lawrence at the time of his or her election or appointment; a
13 member who moves from the city shall be considered to have vacated his or her position, and the
14 vacancy shall be filled in the manner provided in section 5.7. In addition, the appointed members
15 should also have a background or expertise in either finance, the law, or education.

16 (c) Election and Term. The term of office of all members of the school committee
17 provided for in section 1 shall be for two years beginning at 7:00 o'clock in the evening on the
18 first secular day in January following their election or appointment and shall continue until their
19 successors have been chosen and qualified.

20 SECTION 2. Section 5 of chapter 425 of the acts of 1983 is hereby amended by striking
21 out subsection 5.7 and inserting in its place the following subsection:

22 5.7 Filling of Vacancies.

23 (a) At-Large School Committee Member. If a vacancy occurs in the office of an
24 elected school committee member, it shall be filled in the same manner as is provided in section
25 3.9(a) for the filling of a vacancy in the office of a city councilor at large.

26 (b) Appointed School Committee Member. If a vacancy occurs in the office of an
27 appointed school committee member, it shall be filled with a call for candidates by the Lawrence
28 City Council at the next regular meeting of the Council. Said appointee shall be confirmed by an
29 affirmative vote of the majority of the City Council. The Council shall appoint a new member at
30 its first opportunity but in no event shall the completion of this appointment process exceed
31 thirty days from the date that notice of a vacancy is received by the Council.

32 (c) In general, no vacancy which occurs after the first eighteen months of the term for
33 which the member was elected or appointed shall be filled unless failure to fill such vacancy
34 would result in fewer than four persons serving as members of the school committee, in that
35 event, all such vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided above.

36 (d) Whenever a vacancy of an elected member exists on the school committee which
37 is not filled at the time of city election, the person elected at large with the highest vote shall
38 forthwith be sworn in, and shall, in addition to the term for which he or she was elected, serve
39 the balance of the then unexpired term.

40 SECTION 3. Except as specifically amended herein, all other portions of Section 5 of
41 chapter 425 of the acts of 1983 shall remain in full force and effect.

42 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage