HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1821 FILED ON: 1/18/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 175

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Denise C. Garlick

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 providing educational stability for vulnerable children.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Denise C. Garlick	*13th Norfolk*	*1/18/2023*
Patrick Joseph Kearney	*4th Plymouth*	*1/30/2023*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 175

By Representative Garlick of Needham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 175) of Denise C. Garlick and Patrick Joseph Kearney for legislation to provide educational stability for vulnerable children. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act providing educational stability for vulnerable children.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 18B of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 9 the following two sections:-

Section 9A. The commissioner shall appoint an education director to support the department's goal of educational stability and success for all elementary and secondary school students under the care and custody of the department.

The education director's duties shall include, but not be limited to: (i) development, implementation, and oversight of the department's policies on education for children under the care and custody of the department, including policy development and practice guidance; (ii) monitor state and federal laws, programs, and resources that may impact the education of children under the care and custody of the department; (iii) advise the commissioner and all education coordinators on all matters relating to education, strategic education initiatives, policy, and practice management matters; (iv) coordinate efforts with area office based education

coordinators to identify systemic barriers to accessing educational services for children under the care and custody of the department, including issues related to transportation for children in department care or custody to attend their school of origin; (v) coordinate with department area and regional offices on education related issues; and (vi) facilitate best practice training for area office based education coordinators.

The education director shall perform such duties as are described in this chapter and such other duties as may be assigned by the commissioner.

Section 9B. The commissioner, with the advice of the education director and the area director, shall appoint at least one full-time education specialist at each area office. Said education specialist shall be an employee of the area office and devote full time to the duties of the office.

The focus of each education specialist's duties shall include, but not be limited to: (i) implementation and oversight of the area office's work on education for children receiving services from the department, consistent with the policies created by the department's education manager; (ii) monitor student academic progress of children under the care and custody of the area office not less than once per academic quarter; (iii) provide support and assistance to department caseworkers regarding educational needs of children; (iv) provide detailed training to department caseworkers on the best practices to monitor a child's education experiences, recognize unavailability of resources preventing a child from participating in school courses, and develop individual education plans or 504 plan; (v) ensure the timeliness and accuracy of the transfer of education records detailing a child's educational background and needs; and (vi)

maintain contact with appropriate local school districts and education organizations to facilitate enrollment and placement of children into school districts served by the area office.