

SENATE No. 2999

Senate, - Text of the Senate amendment (Senator Payano) to the House Bill defining a governing structure for the Lawrence School Board upon the exit of state receivership (House, No. 5098).

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 1 of chapter 425 of the acts of 1983, as most recently amended by
2 chapter 374 of the acts of 2004, is hereby further amended by striking out subsection 5.1 and
3 inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

4 5.1 Composition; Eligibility; Election and Term of Office.

5 (a) Composition. There shall be a school committee consisting of 7 members that shall
6 exercise general management and control of the public schools of the city. Three members of the
7 school committee, who shall be known as at-large members, shall be nominated and elected by
8 and from the voters of the city at large and 3 members, who shall be known as appointed
9 members, shall be appointed by vote of the city council. The mayor shall serve as the seventh
10 member of the school committee and as its chair with full power to vote.

11 (b) Eligibility. All members of the school committee, whether at-large members or
12 appointed members, shall be voters and residents of the city of Lawrence at the time of their
13 election or appointment; provided, however, that a member who moves from the city shall be
14 considered to have vacated their position and the vacancy shall be filled in the manner provided

15 in subsection 5.7; provided further, that the appointed members should also have a background
16 or expertise in either finance, law or education.

17 (c) Election and Term. All members of the school committee shall serve for 2-year terms
18 beginning at 7:00 P.M. on the first secular day in January following their election or appointment
19 and shall continue until their successors have been chosen and qualified.

20 SECTION 2. Said section 1 of said chapter 425, as so amended, is hereby further
21 amended by striking out subsection 5.7 and inserting in place thereof 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 at-
24 large member, the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as is provided in paragraph (a) of
25 subsection 3.9 for the filling vacancies 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, the vacancy shall be filled with a call for candidates by the
28 city council at the next regular meeting of the city council; provided, however, that an appointee
29 to said vacancy shall be confirmed by an affirmative vote of the majority of the city council. The
30 city council shall appoint a new member at its first opportunity but in no event shall the
31 completion of this appointment process exceed 30 days from the date that notice of a vacancy is
32 received by the city council.

33 (c) In general, no vacancy which occurs after the first 18 months of the term for
34 which the member was elected or appointed shall be filled unless failure to fill such vacancy
35 would result in less than 4 persons serving as members of the school committee; provided,

36 however, that in that event, all such vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided in
37 paragraphs (a) and (b).

38 (d) If a vacancy of an at-large member exists on the school committee which is not
39 filled at the time of the city election, the person elected at-large with the highest number of votes
40 who does not serve on the school committee at the time of the city election shall forthwith be
41 sworn in and shall, in addition to the term for which they were elected, serve the balance of the
42 unexpired term.

43 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.