

SENATE No. 341

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Pavel Payano

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 relative to dropout prevention and student recovery.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Pavel Payano

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Essex

SENATE No. 341

By Mr. Payano, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 341) of Pavel M. Payano for legislation relative to dropout prevention and student recovery. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery.

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 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “attendance”, in line 120, the
3 following words:- ; provided, however, that all children under the age of 18 shall be required to
4 attend school if they have not graduated from high school.

5 SECTION 2. Chapter 741 of the acts of 1965 is hereby repealed.

6 SECTION 3. (a) Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary
7 education shall develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and
8 recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average.
9 The pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community
10 agencies serving students who reside in the districts.

(b) The dropout prevention and recovery programs shall target high school students who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school using at least 1 of the methods described in clauses (i) to (iv), inclusive.

(i) Alternative education, which shall mean diploma or general educational development granting programs that use evidence-based instruction and student support strategies designed to meet the needs of the target population and prepare them for postsecondary education or training. The evidence-based instruction and student support strategies may include, but shall not be limited to: smaller class size, competency-based learning, project-based learning, work-based learning, community service learning, graduation coaching, case management, family engagement, wraparound support, restorative justice and social service referrals;

(ii) Graduation coaches, who shall be professionals with youth development and academic support expertise and shall provide graduation plans to the target population. The graduation plans shall include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals. Graduation coaches shall also provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services.

(iii) Dropout outreach and recovery programs, which shall mean targeted outreach and transition support for students who have dropped out of school. The programs shall, at a minimum: (1) reach out to students; (1) determine their academic status and personal circumstances; (3) assist students in enrolling in a high school or general educational development program; and (4) provide transitional support and track student academic progress.

(iv) Expectant and parenting student support, which may include, but shall not be limited to: (1) the development and implementation of school policies that set high academic expectations, establish procedures for maternity and paternity leave, and provide flexible scheduling; (2) expectant and parenting student liaisons who shall work with students to develop graduation plans that include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals and who provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services; and (3) annual data collection that shall include, but shall not be limited to, the number of parenting students in the district, any supports or interventions provided to the parenting students, and parenting student progress toward and completion of secondary school.

(c) The department shall develop guidelines for an annual review of the progress being made by each district and local community agency participating in the pilot program. Each district and agency in the pilot program shall participate in any evaluation or accountability process implemented by or authorized by the department. The department shall prepare and submit an annual report describing and analyzing the implementation of the pilot program in all participating districts. The report shall include, but shall not be limited to: (i) the number of participating school districts, schools and local community agencies; (ii) the number of students served and the type and duration of those services; (iii) the progress made by those students toward attaining a high school diploma or general educational development; and (iv) the number of students served who have attained a high school diploma or passed the general educational development test. The department shall file its annual report not later than September 1 of each year by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education. The department shall file a final

55 report within 6 months of the conclusion of the 3-year pilot period that shall include an analysis
56 of all relevant data so as to determine the effectiveness of the program and specific legislative
57 recommendations, including whether the program should be expanded, maintained or
58 discontinued, by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate
59 who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education.

60 SECTION 4. Section 1 shall take effect on September 1, 2024.