

HOUSE No. 5174

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 5, 2026.

The committee on Education, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 631) of Kate Lipper-Garabedian and Jessica Ann Giannino for legislation to increase student access to career technical education schools and programs which are aligned with regional labor market needs, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 5174) ought to pass.

For the committee,

KENNETH I. GORDON.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act to increase student access to career technical education schools and programs which are aligned with regional labor market needs.

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 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following
2 6 sections:-

3 Section 37. For the purposes of sections 38 through 42, inclusive, the following terms
4 shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:-

5 “Career technical education”, shall have the same meaning as vocational-technical
6 education pursuant to section 1 of chapter 74.

7 “Office”, shall mean the office of career technical education.

8 Section 38. There shall be established within the department of elementary and secondary
9 education an office of career technical education, which shall be under the supervision and
10 management of the deputy commissioner of career technical education. The deputy
11 commissioner shall be appointed by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education,
12 with the approval of the board. It shall be the duty of said deputy commissioner to improve and

13 maximize career technical education throughout the commonwealth, and to collaborate with the
14 board to promulgate regulations and develop and implement policies to enhance the
15 commonwealth's career technical education programs, including but not limited to the ensuring
16 the enforcement of regulations relative to certificates of occupational proficiency.

17 Section 39. The office shall promote and support with available resources innovative and
18 collaborative career technical education demonstration programs in which students split time
19 between their comprehensive high school and a school offering programs under chapter 74;
20 provided, that under such programs, participating students' daily schedule shall include required
21 academic classes and vocational courses when the equipment is available.

22 Section 40. (a) The office shall develop credentials for students graduating from high
23 quality career technical education programs in applied knowledge, effective relationships, and
24 workplace skills as described in the federal Employability Skills Framework.

25 (b) The office shall ensure instructional ability and competence of career technical
26 education instructors through the utilization of occupational advisory boards and nationally
27 validated teacher competency testing.

28 (c) The office shall utilize both pre- and post-technical assessment in both cognitive and
29 psychomotor domains to determine what students know and are able to do.

30 (d) The office shall collaborate with recognized industry credential providers such as a
31 recognized industry credential provider to develop state-customized credentials to measure
32 career readiness through skill assessments appropriate to each tier of career technical education.

33 (e) The office shall consider the use of the 21st Century Skills for Workplace Success
34 Credential, including but not limited for use in validation of basic competencies prior to
35 participation in externships or school-based enterprises and as a graduation or completion
36 requirement for post-graduate and postsecondary chapter 74 programs.

37 (f) The office shall support the use of Industry Recognized Credentials, known as IRCs,
38 in chapter 74 programs.

39 (g) The office shall support the use of both longitudinal and pre- and post-student
40 assessment as a means of obtaining meaningful data for curricular improvement. Data may be
41 utilized for facilities improvement, equipment investments, mission success, and professional
42 development.

43 (h) The office shall engage in statewide data sharing agreements with credential providers
44 that include a variety of access portals for a variety of levels of personnel, including but not
45 limited to state, local career technical education administration, career technical education
46 teachers, parents, and students, giving access to stakeholders to assess program effectiveness.

47 (i) The office shall encourage and work to increase the use of articulation agreements
48 with community colleges and public universities and other dual credit programs to allow career
49 technical education students to earn credit and stacked credentials that lead to an associate's
50 degree.

51 (j) The office shall implement and promote efforts, including those related to student
52 outreach and retention, to ensure that career technical education programs are accessible to all
53 students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and student populations
54 traditionally underrepresented in career technical education programs.

55 Section 41. The office shall work with the Regional Workforce Boards on an annual basis
56 to determine the labor market needs in their region and, using that information, shall actively
57 promote and facilitate the introduction of career technical education programs that align with
58 regional demand. The office shall work with the regional workforce boards to assure curricular
59 alignment to both local employers’ need and expected national standards for labor market needs.

60 Section 42. Any comprehensive high school shall have access to a minimum of 1 career
61 technical education course or an approved career technical education internship to increase all
62 students’ exposure to career technical education fields, enabling students to have the knowledge
63 to access both college and careers.

64 SECTION 2. Section 3A of Chapter 70B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
65 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking the number “17” and inserting “19” in place
66 thereof, and further by inserting, after “Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts, Inc.” the
67 following:-

68 “, Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, Inc., Alliance for Vocational
69 Technical Education Coalition,”

70 SECTION 3. Subsection (c) of section 14B of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so
71 appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the third sentence and inserting in place thereof the
72 following 2 sentences:-

73 “Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a city or town may
74 simultaneously be a member of a vocational regional school district and any other type of
75 regional school district. A city or town that belongs to a regional vocational school district may
76 offer a vocational technical education program in its municipal high school; provided, however,

77 that the program is approved under section 2 of chapter 74 of the General Laws; provided,
78 further, that a vocational regional school district and any other type of regional school district
79 serving the same town shall collaborate through the office of career technical education in
80 offering reciprocal non-competitive programs under chapter 74 of the General Laws; provided,
81 further, that there is demonstrated student and labor market demand for said program as
82 determined by the Regional Labor Market Blueprint and the regional vocational-technical school
83 district is unable or unwilling to meet said demand.”

84 SECTION 4. Subsection (q) of section 16 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so
85 appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the word “five” and inserting in place thereof the
86 number “25”.

87 SECTION 5. The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish and
88 administer a pilot program to incentivize collaboration between high school faculty and guidance
89 counselors of schools offering chapter 74 programs and those that do not to utilize resources
90 developed by career technical education to provide access to skill-training and career options for
91 all students. The pilot program shall be administered for 2 years from the date the program is
92 initiated. At the end of said 2-year period, the department shall submit a report on the effects of
93 the program and the feasibility of continuing such program to the clerks of the house of
94 representatives and the senate, and to the house and senate co-chairs of the joint committee on
95 education.