

HOUSE No. 669

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Alice Hanlon Peisch

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 teacher preparation and student literacy.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Alice Hanlon Peisch</i>	<i>14th Norfolk</i>	<i>1/17/2025</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>9/23/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 669

By Representative Peisch of Wellesley, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 669) of Alice Hanlon Peisch relative to teacher preparation and student literacy. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to teacher preparation and student literacy.

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 38G of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 283, the word “student” and replacing
3 it with the following word: candidate.

4 SECTION 2. Section 38G of said chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby further
5 amended by striking out, in lines 286-288, the words, “The college or university or school
6 district or other institution shall also provide the commissioner with a transcript of the student’s
7 record,” and replacing it with the following:-

8 The approved program shall be evaluated by the commissioner on a regular basis to
9 ensure that candidates are well prepared to meet the needs of all students in the commonwealth.
10 Through this review, the commissioner of education shall meaningfully differentiate the
11 performance of individual program providers based in part on program quality and outcomes of
12 candidates once they are employed. The review shall include, but not be limited to, program

implementation of evidence-based preparation in the five research-based areas in reading instruction, i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluence, vocabulary, and comprehension, and the extent to which new teachers' effectiveness addresses persistent disparities in achievement. The commissioner shall annually publish data on these programs, including the current approval status, enrollment, demographics of candidates, areas of licensure being pursued and employment rate of graduates.

SECTION 3. Section 38G of said chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby further amended by inserting after the word "record" in line 288, the following paragraph:-

All applications for reviewing and approving preparation programs under this section shall be accompanied by a fee to be determined annually by the secretary of administration and finance under the provisions of section 3B of chapter 7. These fees shall be sufficient to allow the department to carry out the responsibilities outlined in this section.

SECTION 4. Section 57A of chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following sentence:-

The commissioner shall annually publish data on which screening instruments are employed by each school district in the Commonwealth, including but not limited to grades Pre-K-3 literacy screening assessments and whether the screening instruments are approved by the department of elementary and secondary education.

SECTION 5. Said chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 57A the following section:-

33 Section 57B. The department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation
34 with the department of early education and care, shall issue guidelines to districts requiring
35 screening protocols for reading for all students in grades K-3 using evidence-based screeners.
36 “Evidence-based screeners” as used herein, shall be defined as: tools and assessments that can be
37 used to identify students at risk for poor academic outcomes as determined by the department of
38 elementary education and secondary education. The commissioner shall annually publish data on
39 which screening instruments are employed by each school district in the Commonwealth to
40 conduct reading screening.

41 Each district shall, not less than twice per year, assess each student’s reading ability and
42 progress in literacy skills from kindergarten through at least third grade, using a valid,
43 developmentally appropriate screening instrument approved by the department of elementary and
44 secondary education. Consistent with section 2 of chapter 71B of the general laws and the
45 Department's dyslexia and literacy guidelines, if such screenings determine that a student is
46 significantly below relevant benchmarks for age-typical development in specific literacy skills,
47 the school shall determine which actions within the general education program will meet the
48 student's needs, including differentiated or supplementary evidence-based reading instruction
49 and ongoing monitoring of progress. Within 30 school days of a screening result that is
50 significantly below the relevant benchmarks, the school shall inform the student's parent or
51 guardian of the screening results and the school's response and shall offer them the opportunity
52 for a follow-up discussion.

53 SECTION 6. Section 1E of chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding
54 at the end of the first paragraph the following sentence:-

Curricula selected to meet the curriculum frameworks for elementary literacy must be evidence-based and include instruction in the five research-based areas in reading instruction, i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

SECTION 7. Notwithstanding any general law or special law to the contrary, the department of elementary and secondary education shall, subject to appropriation, develop and administer a 2-year pilot program, in partnership with a college or university or school or district or other institution offering an approved preparation program pursuant to Section 38G of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, for teacher apprenticeship during which participants shall complete a paid teaching apprenticeship for two full school years in a high-needs district in the classroom with a highly proficient mentor teacher, as determined by the department of elementary and secondary education using factors including but not limited to recent evaluation ratings, student growth data and demonstrated evidence-based practices. As used herein, “high needs districts” shall be defined as: schools or districts with a high percentage of low-income students and English learners, which may include schools or districts implementing turnaround plans. The program shall provide sufficient funds to candidates to support earning a competitive wage, including but not limited to support for childcare, transportation, textbooks and other core expenses, to ensure a diverse cohort are able to fully participate. In administering the pilot program, the department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate regulations defining the apprenticeship and the target candidates to be admitted to the program.

The department of elementary and secondary education shall file a report with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and the joint committee on education no later than one year after the completion of the pilot on the outcome of the pilot program. The report shall include data on the demographics of participants, licensure pass rates on the MTEL and hiring

rates and an assessment of the feasibility of applying for status as a United States Registered Apprenticeship. The department of elementary and secondary education shall file a report with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and joint committee on education no later than three years after the completion of the pilot that includes, at a minimum, an evaluation of the impact of apprentices on student outcomes as compared to teachers not participating in the pilot using student growth measures and an assessment of the feasibility of expanding to a two-year teacher apprenticeship for all teacher candidates or all candidates in high-needs districts.

SECTION 8. (a) The department of elementary and secondary education shall conduct a study and report on potential initiatives to incentivize diverse and highly effective educators to work in high-needs districts, including incentives to recruit new and diverse teachers to high-needs districts and policies or practices to retain diverse and highly effective teachers currently teaching in high-needs districts. "High-needs districts," as used herein, shall be defined as: schools or districts with a high percentage of low-income students and English learners, which may include schools or districts implementing turnaround plans.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2027, the department of elementary and secondary education shall file a report, including any analysis, recommendations or proposed legislation, with the clerks of the senate and house of representatives and the chairs of the joint committee on education. The report shall include, but not be limited to: (i) a survey of educator salaries and benefits across school districts; (ii) an assessment of potential incentives to attract highly effective educators to high-needs districts; (iii) the feasibility of financial incentives for achieving National Board certification; (iv) the feasibility of establishing a master educator corps program, to be administered by the department, to incentivize educators that have achieved a certain level of mastery to transfer to high-needs districts; (v) an assessment of a salary parity

101 scale for any educators that have switched to high-needs districts; (vi) the feasibility of a
102 statewide salary parity scale that takes into consideration the relative needs of the district and
103 state and municipal contribution and ability to fund and incentivizes master professional
104 educators to relocate to high-needs districts; (vii) any other program, as determined by the
105 department, to help meet the educator requirements of high-needs districts; and (viii) an
106 assessment of legislation necessary to achieve these objectives.