

SENATE No. 2533

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

SENATE, June 23, 2025.

The committee on Higher Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 921) of Joanne M. Comerford and Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to facilitate student financial assistance and establish the FAFSA Trust Fund, reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2533).

For the committee,
Joanne M. Comerford

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An Act to facilitate student financial assistance.

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 Massachusetts General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 1T the following section:-

3 Section 1U. (a) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the commonwealth to maximize
4 federal and state postsecondary financial aid options through the encouragement and requirement
5 of graduating students to submit the applicable application for federal and state financial aid.

6 Before graduating from high school, each student shall submit a free application for
7 federal student aid, hereafter referred to as the FAFSA, or the state equivalent Massachusetts
8 application for state financial aid, hereafter referred to as the MASFA.

9 (b) A student is not required to comply with subsection (a) if: (i) the student’s parent or
10 guardian submits a signed form described in subsection (c) indicating that the parent or guardian
11 authorizes the student to decline to complete and submit the financial aid application; (ii) the
12 student signs and submits the form referenced in subsection (c) on the student’s own behalf if the
13 student is 18 years of age or older or legally emancipated; or (iii) the student’s school files the

14 form referenced in subsection (c) to be approved by the school district, if the student has not
15 reached 18 years of age.

16 (c) The department shall develop, and all school districts shall adopt, 2 forms to be used
17 for the purposes of subsection (b), as follows:

18 (1) A form to be signed by a parent or guardian, or by a student over 18 years of age or
19 legally emancipated. This form shall be written in accessible language, translated into families'
20 preferred languages and require no personal information except for student and parent or
21 guardian (if applicable) names and signatures. The form shall not require any information on
22 citizenship status.

23 (2) A form filed by the school district on behalf of a student under the age of 18 who is
24 not legally emancipated. The form shall be signed by the principal of the student's school and
25 shall include the following information: (i) attestation that the student meets all other graduation
26 requirements; and (ii) attestation that the school has made a good faith effort to contact the
27 family and to provide any support necessary to submit the FAFSA or MASFA, including at least
28 3 personalized communications in the family's preferred language.

29 Prior to completion of high school, each school district shall ensure that every student
30 complies with subsection (a) or (b) and shall provide to each high school student and, if
31 applicable, their parent or guardian, any reasonable support or assistance necessary to comply
32 with this section.

33 (d) The commissioner shall provide guidance to school districts related to the
34 implementation of this section, including, but not limited to, the distribution of information
35 related to this requirement, reporting requirements for school districts and required

36 communications to parents and guardians related to all financial aid options for high school
37 students. Each school district shall provide an annual report to the department by October 30
38 including, but not limited to, the following information: (i) the number of students completing
39 and submitting the FAFSA; (ii) the number of students completing and submitting the MASFA;
40 (iii) the number of students who received an exemption to this requirement through subsection
41 (b) clauses (i), (ii) and (iii) separately and in the aggregate, provided further that this data be
42 broken down by race, ethnicity, primary city or town of residence and such other categories that
43 the department may determine; and (iv) any challenges encountered in implementing subsections
44 (a) and (b) and what financial or other resources are needed to fully implement said subsections.
45 The department shall aggregate the information included in said reports and make said aggregate
46 information publicly available on the department's website.

47 (e) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate
48 fund to be known as the FAFSA and MASFA Trust Fund, hereafter referred to as the fund. The
49 fund shall be administered by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. The
50 fund shall be credited with: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized by the
51 general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii) interest earned on such
52 revenues; and (iii) funds from public and private sources such as gifts, grants and donations to
53 aid districts in supporting students, parents and guardians with submitting the FAFSA and the
54 MASFA. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any
55 money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

56 (f) Amounts credited to the fund may focus on assisting underserved communities across
57 the commonwealth with completing the FAFSA and MASFA, including, but not limited to, those
58 school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, and may be

59 expended, without further appropriation, by the commissioner for the following purposes: (i) to
60 assist with the implementation and execution of section (a), including, but not limited to, staff
61 and administrator training; (ii) to develop related workshops and other support services and
62 systems; and (iii) to facilitate collaboration with stakeholder and community organizations to
63 support students, parents and guardians with submitting the FAFSA and MASFA.

64 (g) Amounts received from private sources shall be approved by the commissioner and
65 subject to review before being deposited in the fund to ensure that pledged funds are not
66 accompanied by conditions, explicit or implicit, on the implementation of workshops or other
67 programming that may be detrimental to students, parents, guardians or school districts, or that
68 places limitations or restrictions on how funds can be used to support the implementation of this
69 section. The review shall be made publicly available.

70 (h) The commissioner shall submit an annual report to the clerks of the house of
71 representatives and senate, the joint committee on education and the house and senate
72 committees on ways and means on the fund's activity. The report shall include, but not be limited
73 to: (i) the source and amount of funds received; (ii) the amounts distributed and the purpose of
74 expenditures from the fund, including but not limited to, funds expended to assist school districts
75 in meeting the requirements in section (a); (iii) any grants provided to high schools and other
76 stakeholder organizations; and (iv) anticipated revenue and expenditure projections for the next
77 year.

78 SECTION 2. Subsections (a) to (d), inclusive, of section 1U of chapter 69 of the general
79 laws shall take effect on October 1, 2027.

80 SECTION 3. Subsections (e) to (h), inclusive, of section 1U of chapter 69 of the general
81 laws shall take effect on October 1, 2026.