

**SENATE . . . . . No. 409**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Paul W. Mark***

*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 to establish a community schools special legislative commission.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Paul W. Mark</i>	<i>Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire</i>	
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/25/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>9/9/2025</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 409**

---

By Mr. Mark, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 409) of Paul W. Mark for legislation to establish a community schools special legislative commission to investigate community schools and to make recommendations regarding the adoption of community schools across the commonwealth. Education.

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to establish a community schools special legislative commission.

*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. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context  
2 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

3 (i) “Community School”, a public school that utilizes a community school coordinator to  
4 facilitate the establishment of a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other  
5 community resources that leverage shared accountability, collaborative leadership, capacity  
6 building, and family and community engagement, to promote student achievement, and the well-  
7 being of students, families, educators, and neighborhood residents through a variety of engaging  
8 practices including the provision of wraparound services.

9 (ii) “Community Schools strategy”, a strategy that transforms a school into a community  
10 school where educators, local community members, families, and students work together to  
11 establish shared vision and goals to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy

12 development, including but not limited to the organization of in- and out-of-school resources,  
13 supports, and student opportunities.

14 (b) There shall be a special legislative commission on community schools, hereinafter  
15 referred to as the commission, to investigate community schools and to make recommendations  
16 regarding the adoption of community schools across the commonwealth. The special legislative  
17 commission shall consist of 15 members: the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on  
18 education, or their designee, who shall serve as co-chairs; the secretary of Education or a  
19 designee; the secretary of Health and Human services or a designee; 1 representative from the  
20 Massachusetts Community Schools Coalition; 1 representative from the American Federation of  
21 Teachers Massachusetts; 1 representative from Massachusetts Teachers Association; 1  
22 representative from United Way of Massachusetts Bay; and 7 members to be appointed by the  
23 Governor: 2 of whom shall be student representatives from existing Massachusetts community  
24 schools, 1 of whom shall be a parent representative from an existing Massachusetts community  
25 schools, 1 of whom shall be a superintendent from a Massachusetts district employing  
26 community school strategies, 1 of whom shall be a principal of a Massachusetts community  
27 school, 1 of whom shall be a Massachusetts community school coordinator, and 1 of whom shall  
28 be a member who represents a community based organization. In making such appointments, the  
29 Governor shall consider rural, urban, and suburban geographic representation across the  
30 commission.

31 (c) The commission shall: (i) analyze systems, structures, and policies that support  
32 successful community school implementation models and trends in community school model  
33 adoption across different jurisdictions in the Commonwealth and nationwide; (ii) investigate the  
34 policies of other such jurisdictions intended to support and incentivize community school model

35 adoption, (iii) provide an assessment of community school adoption, implementation, and  
36 outcomes in Massachusetts; (iv) define the essential elements and principles of implementing  
37 community school models, including but not limited to as an equity strategy; (v) research the  
38 outcomes and evidence associated with community schools model adoption, including but not  
39 limited to reductions in school absenteeism; (vi) investigate the policies of other jurisdictions  
40 intended to support and incentivize community school adoption; (vii) identify any existing  
41 barriers, including but not limited to legal, regulatory, information and training, or funding  
42 barriers for Massachusetts schools to successfully adopt and implement community school  
43 strategies. The commission shall meet not less than once every two months.

44 (d) The commission shall develop a report of its findings and include specific  
45 recommendations in response to such findings, including any legislative or regulatory changes  
46 necessary for the Commonwealth to implement the commission's recommendations. At a  
47 minimum, such report shall include: (i) an overview of the findings of the commission's work  
48 pursuant to subsection (b), including but not limited to policy recommendations relative to  
49 codifying definitions relative to community schools; adopting policies and funding strategies to  
50 incentivize statewide adoption of community school strategies; and, creating sustainable funding  
51 streams in support of local district and school-level adoption and implementation of community  
52 school strategies; (ii) recommendations for a statewide community school pilot program  
53 including, but not limited to: (1) the number and nature of eligible communities to participate in  
54 the pilot program, (2) the resources necessary to support the pilot program, (3) the process by  
55 which pilot funding should be awarded, and (4) the data and outcomes reporting requirements  
56 and criteria for the evaluation of the pilot program and its participants. The commission shall file  
57 its report with the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, the senate and house

58 committees on ways and means, the joint committee on education, the office of the governor, and  
59 the executive office of education not later than February 15, 2026.