

SENATE No.

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 to enhance the alignment and career focus of college and career pathway programs.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Pavel Payano

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Essex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to enhance the alignment and career focus of college and career pathway programs.

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, as appearing in the 2022 official edition, is
2 hereby amended by adding the following two new sections:-

3 Section 38. The department of elementary and secondary education shall promote and
4 support with available resources innovative and collaborative career technical education
5 demonstration programs in which students split their time between their comprehensive high
6 school and a school offering programs under chapter 74; provided, that under such programs,
7 participating students' daily schedule shall include required academic classes and vocational
8 courses when the equipment is available.

9 Section 39. The department shall develop, in consultation with the executive offices of
10 education, economic development and labor and workforce development, credentials for students
11 graduating from the state's high schools in applied knowledge, effective relationships and
12 workplace skills as described in the federal employability skills framework. The department shall

13 develop and disseminate guidance to districts for their consideration in establishing said
14 employability credentials as graduation or completion requirements.

15 SECTION 2. The department of elementary and secondary education shall conduct a
16 review of all offices, programs and processes under its jurisdiction which are involved in
17 designation and oversight of college and career pathway programs, and act to organize
18 department activities in a way that fosters coordination and uniformity across offices and
19 programs with regard to administration of college and career readiness programs and their
20 respective elements. The department shall also, in designation and certification process for said
21 college and career pathway programs shall give preference to those proposals submitted by
22 districts that are career-themed and in fields of study aligned with the state’s labor market needs.
23 The department will report to the legislature’s joint committee on education and the ways and
24 means committees of the house and senate by July 1, 2026, as to what actions it has taken, or
25 plans to take, with regard to implementation of the requirements of this section. The department
26 will, as part of its reporting, recommend any changes in statute it deems necessary to facilitate
27 the coordination of college and career readiness initiatives under its jurisdiction.

28 SECTION 3. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following term shall have the
29 following meaning:

30 “work-based learning”, an educational method that takes place related to work or a
31 specific career, usually in a workplace, prompting students to learn about the environment in a
32 chosen career path and allowing them to gain exposure to the world of work in ways that help
33 them develop skills that employers value and enhance their opportunity for career success but
34 which may be difficult to acquire in a classroom setting.

35 (b) The department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the
36 workforce skills cabinet created in SECTION 1 of this act, shall conduct a study of the barriers
37 that exist to creating greater student access to meaningful work-based learning opportunities in
38 the state's public schools. Said study shall address issues such as transportation, employer
39 liability, personnel, scheduling, curriculum, logistics and any other consideration which may be
40 determined to have the effect of limiting opportunities for students to participate in relevant and
41 meaningful work-based learning. The results of said study shall be issued, along with
42 recommendations for actions to expand work-based learning opportunities in the schools of the
43 Commonwealth, as a report to the legislature's joint committee on education and the ways and
44 means committees of the house and senate by July 1, 2026.