

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Adam Gomez

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 the teacher leadership program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Adam Gomez

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Hampden

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to the teacher leadership program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 69 of the General Law is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

2 Section 39. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall, unless the
3 context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

4 “Distributed leadership”, a range of approaches where school leadership shares aspects
5 of the traditional set of school decisions, organization, management and operations with teachers
6 in a manner that is coordinated by, agreed to and led by the teachers and school leadership.

7 “Educational service agency”, a governmental agency or governmental entity, including
8 an educational collaborative board established by section 4E of chapter 40, which is established
9 and operated exclusively for the purpose of providing such services to 1 or more educational
10 institutions.

11 “Eligible entity”, (i) a local educational agency or educational service agency; (ii) a
12 consortium of local educational agencies or educational service agencies; (iii) a partnership

13 between a local educational agency or educational service agency; (iv) a nonprofit organization
14 with demonstrated expertise in teacher leadership programs, as determined by the commissioner;
15 (v) a local educational agency or educational service agency with demonstrated capacity in
16 supporting teacher leadership programs, as determined by the commissioner; or (vi) an
17 institution of higher education that awards postsecondary teacher certificates or degrees and has
18 a demonstrated capacity in supporting teacher leadership programs or teacher diversity, as
19 determined by the commissioner.

20 “High-need educational service agency”, an educational service agency that serves a
21 significant number or percentage of high-need local educational agencies.

22 “High-need local educational agency”, a high-need local educational agency, as such
23 term is defined in paragraph (10) of section 200 of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, 20
24 U.S.C. 1021(10).

25 “Local educational agency”, any agency that has administrative control and direction of
26 a vocational education program funded in whole or in part by federal funds.

27 “Teacher leader”, one who takes initiative to design and implement solutions within and
28 beyond the classroom positively affecting students, families, and colleagues at the school,
29 district, state or federal level which ensures teacher retention, and ultimately student success.
30 Teacher Leaders may participate in the teacher leadership program under this section.

31 (b)(1) The commissioner shall award competitive grants to eligible entities to establish
32 and maintain teacher leadership programs.

33 (2) From the total amount appropriated to carry out this section for a fiscal year, the
34 commissioner: (A) shall reserve not less than 5 percent to carry out planning grants in subsection
35 (g); (B) may reserve not more than: (i) 3 per cent to provide technical assistance to, and support
36 the capacity building of, the programs assisted under this section; and (ii) 0.5 per cent to support
37 program administration and data collection under this section; and (C) may reserve not more than
38 3.5 per cent to award planning grants to eligible entities in order to assist those eligible entities in
39 developing a program proposal in accordance with subsection (g).

40 (3) Grant periods shall not exceed 3 years, with possible 2-year extensions based on
41 grantee program performance in achieving program objectives.

42 (4) The commissioner shall ensure geographic diversity among grantees, including
43 representation from urban and rural areas.

44 (c)(1) An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to
45 the department, in such manner and containing such information as the commissioner may
46 require including: (A) a description of how the eligible entity shall implement the program
47 proposal described in paragraph (2); (B) a description of how grant funds shall be spent,
48 including if and how other federal, state and local funding sources may be used to supplement
49 grant funds in order to meet the requirements of the teacher leadership program; (C) a
50 description of how the eligible entity shall continue the teacher leadership activities assisted
51 under the grant after the grant period ends; and (D) a description of how the eligible entity shall
52 engage teachers in the development and design of the program, including how the program will
53 function at the school level

54 (2) The program proposal required under this subsection shall include the following:

55 (A) A plan to establish and operate a teacher leadership program that includes the
56 following descriptions of how the eligible entity shall:

57 (i) ensure that the program includes the participation of teacher leaders in goal setting,
58 professional learning or collaboration with content experts, school leadership, colleagues or
59 leadership of an eligible entity, with respect to strategic planning or development at the school
60 level and the level of the eligible entity, including planning and development relating to school
61 climate, community engagement, teacher professional development and mentorship and student
62 growth or implementing practices to support the whole child , including: (1) planning the design
63 of and organizing the physical space, organizational structure, wraparound services and culture
64 of schools to support positive, healthy and developmentally appropriate relationships among
65 members of the school and community; (2) creating multi-tiered and integrated systems of
66 support to address student academic and non-academic needs; and (3) creating and fostering safe
67 and inclusive learning environments;

68 (ii) ensure that the program offers structures for shared decision making, distributed
69 leadership, common planning and collaboration between participating teacher leaders and school
70 leaders;

71 (iii) ensure that teacher leaders receive training and support to improve skills related to
72 acting as instructional leaders, coaches, mentors or facilitators of professional learning;

73 (iv) use this program to establish and sustain teacher leadership opportunities to increase
74 teacher retention, including for teachers who are individuals from underrepresented populations
75 in the teaching profession.

76 (B) A description of how the eligible entity shall meet each of the following program
77 requirements:

78 (i) ensuring all full-time teachers with at least 3 years of full-time teaching experience
79 that maintain their roles as classroom instructors and are employed by the local educational
80 agency may apply to participate in such program as teacher leaders;

81 (ii) providing the selection criteria for program participation to all eligible teachers
82 described in clause (i), which shall include selection based on an eligible teacher's demonstrated
83 ability in carrying out not less than 5 of the criteria in subclauses (1) through (8), inclusive, and a
84 commitment to growth in other criteria where they do not have a demonstrated ability of: (1)
85 carrying out leadership responsibilities while maintaining a role as a classroom instructor; (2)
86 focusing on improving or advancing the vision, goals and priorities of the eligible entity that
87 employs such teacher using evidence-based and practice-based data; (3) collecting and analyzing
88 data of student outcomes or teacher professional outcomes and taking actions to improve student
89 outcomes, teacher outcomes or professional learning informed by such data; (4) facilitating
90 collaborative, evidence-based and practice-based and sustained professional learning with peers,
91 including mentorship and instruction leadership, that lead to improvements in teaching efficacy
92 and professional outcomes; (5) analyzing socioeconomic, cultural and historical contexts of
93 students, their communities and the local educational agency, including existing pedagogy,
94 school policies and school-based outreach to families and the community to create safe, healthy
95 and inclusive school climates; (6) implementing and evaluating strategies aimed at addressing
96 areas of demonstrated need in the school that the teacher is employed, including increasing
97 wraparound services, academic supports, family engagement and community-based services; (7)
98 supporting teachers to effectively serve students with disabilities, English learners and students

99 who are linguistically, racially and culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged or historically
100 underrepresented to increase their social, emotional and academic needs; and (8) using,
101 customizing or developing lesson materials and instructional resources to meet the unique needs
102 of students and the eligible entity to further students' achievement.

103 (iii) ensuring that all teachers and paraprofessionals employed by the participating local
104 educational agencies served by the eligible entity are eligible to participate in programming led
105 by a teacher leader, when applicable;

106 (iv) providing financial assistance or compensation to teacher leaders who participate in
107 such program for the additional responsibilities that are directly related to the teacher leadership
108 program;

109 (v) allowing the financial assistance or compensation described in clause (iv) to be
110 substituted for paid time off or satisfaction of a contract requirement at the request of the teacher
111 leader receiving such compensation and with the authorization and agreement of the eligible
112 entity that serves the elementary or secondary school that such teacher leader is employed;

113 (vi) requiring teacher leaders to support their own development and professional growth
114 by evaluating themselves and each other using evidence, research or practice-based rubrics;

115 (vii) consulting with other teachers who are not teacher leaders when developing and
116 implementing the program as described in this paragraph; and

117 (viii) Expending funds granted under this section to permit not more than 5 percent of
118 such grant funds for administrative expenses incurred by the eligible entity and not less than 95
119 percent of such grant funds to implement the program proposal described in this paragraph at the

120 school or classroom level in order to carry out 1 or more of the following activities: (1)
121 facilitating collaboration between program participants; (2) developing or improving
122 instructional materials; or (3) design new roles and compensation structures that differentiate
123 between classroom responsibilities and responsibilities as a teacher leader.

124 (3) Each eligible entity applying for a grant under this section shall include in such
125 application an assurance that the eligible entity shall comply with reporting and evaluation
126 requirements described in subsection (f).

127 (d) In awarding grants under this section, the commissioner shall give priority to eligible
128 entities that include:

129 (i) a high-need educational service agency;

130 (ii) a high-need local educational agency;

131 (iii) a local educational agency that receives basic support payments under section
132 7003(b)(1) of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C.
133 7703(b)(1);

134 (iv) a local educational agency that demonstrates in their program proposal under
135 subsection (c)(2) a plan to use this program to establish and sustain teacher leadership
136 opportunities to increase teacher recruitment, including teachers who are individuals from
137 underrepresented populations in the teaching profession; and

138 (v) an eligible entity involving a partnership between a local educational agency or
139 educational service agency that has a successful track record in supporting teacher leadership
140 models, retaining teachers or advancing teacher diversity.

141 (e)(1) An eligible entity awarded a grant under this section shall use: (i) not more than 5
142 percent of such grant funds for administrative expenses; and (ii) not less than 95 percent of such
143 grant funds to implement the program proposal described in subsection (c)(2) and, at the eligible
144 entity's option, carry out activities described in paragraph (2).

145 (2) In addition to implementing the program proposal under subsection (c)(2), an eligible
146 entity awarded a grant under this section may use such grant funds to facilitate collaboration
147 between program participants, instructional materials development or the reallocation of work
148 hours for teacher leaders between classroom responsibilities and responsibilities as a teacher
149 leader.

150 (f)(1) An eligible entity shall submit to the department, in a timeline determined by the
151 commissioner, all information necessary for the evaluation described in paragraph (2).

152 (2) The commissioner shall carry out an independent evaluation measuring the
153 effectiveness of the activities carried out under grants awarded under this section, including
154 information about whether participating eligible entities experience greater teacher retention than
155 non-participants. In carrying out the evaluation, the commissioner shall collect and analyze the
156 following information, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and gender:

157 (A) Each participating eligible entity shall submit the following: (i) the 3-year retention
158 rate of all full-time teachers, disaggregated by teachers who are in their first year of teaching and
159 teachers hired by such local educational agency in the same school year as one another; (ii) the
160 5-year retention rate of all full-time teachers, disaggregated by teachers who are in their first year
161 of teaching; and teachers hired by such local educational agency in the same school year as one

162 another; and (iii) the employment status of full-time teachers hired by such educational agency,
163 in the same school year that such eligible entity received a grant under this section.

164 (B) Each teacher leader participating in a program established using such grant funds,
165 shall submit the following: (i) the number of years of teaching experience such teacher leader
166 had at the time of program participation; (ii) whether such teacher leader is employed by a local
167 educational agency served by such eligible entity; (iii) if such teacher leader is not employed by
168 a local educational agency served by such eligible entity, the reason for leaving; and (iv) the year
169 that such teacher leader was first employed as a teacher.

170 (3) The aggregated data submitted under paragraph (1) and the results of the evaluation
171 under paragraph (2) shall be made publicly available on the website of the department, except
172 that such publicly available data and results shall not reveal personally identifiable information.

173 (g)(1) The commissioner may award planning grants to eligible entities to enable those
174 eligible entities to develop a program proposal under subsection (c)(2).

175 (2) An eligible entity seeking a planning grant under this subsection shall submit an
176 application to the department. The commissioner shall establish application requirements,
177 including submission deadlines and required information and documentation.

178 (3) A planning grant under this subsection shall be for a period of not more than 1 year.

179 (h) Annually, not later than December 31, the commissioner shall file a report evaluating
180 the teacher leadership programs and measuring the effectiveness of the activities carried out
181 under the grants awarded including recommendations for regulations and legislation, with the
182 clerks of the house and senate and the joint committee on education.