

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis

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 implementing elementary and secondary interdisciplinary climate literacy education.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Jason M. Lewis

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fifth Middlesex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 2668 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act implementing elementary and secondary interdisciplinary climate literacy education.

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 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by adding the following section.

3 Section 2BBBBBB

4 (a) To achieve, promote and support the instruction of interdisciplinary climate literacy
5 education for K-12 public school students in districts across the commonwealth, there shall be
6 established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the
7 Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Trust Fund. There shall be credited to the fund: (1) revenue
8 from appropriations and other money authorized by the general court and specifically designated
9 to be credited to the fund; (2) funds from public and private sources such as gifts, grants, and
10 donations to further interdisciplinary climate literacy education; and (3) interest earned on money

11 in the fund. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any
12 money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

13 (b)(1) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the
14 Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Council established in section 1U(b) of chapter 69 of the
15 General Laws, shall make expenditures from the fund, without further appropriation, to support
16 the development and implementation of Elementary and Secondary Interdisciplinary Climate
17 Literacy Plans, including, but not limited to:

18 (i) development, purchase, distribution and implementation of curricular materials for
19 interdisciplinary climate literacy;

20 (ii) professional development training, including the provision of trainings, seminars,
21 conferences and materials, for educators to use in the teaching of interdisciplinary climate
22 literacy in K-12 grades;

23 (iii) opportunities for districts and stakeholders to assess and share evidence-based best
24 practices in support of climate change education and student skill development, and to provide
25 feedback and recommendations to the department.; and

26 (iv) provide technical support to districts for their elementary and secondary
27 interdisciplinary climate literacy plans.

28 (2) In making such expenditures, the commissioner shall prioritize underserved
29 communities across the commonwealth including those public schools or school districts with
30 high concentrations of economically-disadvantaged students; those public schools or school
31 districts which serve high proportion of students from environmental justice populations, as

32 defined in section 62 of chapter 30 of the General Laws; or which are located in environmental
33 justice communities or communities that have or will in the future experience disproportionate
34 effects of the change in climate.

35 (3) In making such expenditures, the commissioner may also prioritize schools
36 implementing an interdisciplinary climate literacy program for the first time consistent with the
37 standards set by the department of elementary and secondary education.

38 SECTION 2. Section 1D of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
39 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “skills”, in line 38, the following
40 words:-

41 , interdisciplinary climate literacy

42 SECTION 3. Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official edition,
43 is hereby amended by inserting after section 1T the following new section:-

44 Section 1U. Elementary and Secondary Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plans

45 (a) as used in this section the following word shall, unless the context clearly requires
46 otherwise, have the following meaning:-

47 “Interdisciplinary climate literacy”, An understanding of how human actions influence
48 the climate, and how the climate influences people and other parts of the Earth system through
49 the curricula of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, arts, history, social sciences,
50 civics, and government.

51 (b) The commissioner shall create an Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Advisory
52 Council. The commissioner, in consultation with the Council, shall promulgate guidelines on the
53 development and implementation of district-level Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plans.

54 (c) The council shall consist of 10 members: 2 youth leaders from a range of
55 communities across the Commonwealth, including representatives of diverse environmental
56 justice neighborhoods; 2 representatives of environmental justice organizations; 2 educators
57 representing different disciplines from the fields of science, technology, engineering,
58 mathematics, arts, history, social sciences, civics, or government; 2 representatives of
59 environmental education organizations, 1 educator union representative with experience and
60 expertise in youth mentorship, and 2 experts in climate science and best practices in policy.

61 (d) The guidelines promulgated by the commissioner with the Council shall require
62 district-level Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plans to:

63 (1) be developed with the involvement and input of youth from the district;

64 (2) be developed in consultation with environmental, environmental education, civics,
65 and environmental justice organizations or professionals; and

66 (3) provide equivalent culturally competent instruction and opportunities for English
67 language learners.

68 (e) Each district may implement an Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plan that will
69 provide students with an understanding of the causes of, impacts from, and policy proposals
70 addressing anthropogenic climate change. Plans shall include, but not be limited to; education
71 on environmental justice, the underlying causes of climate change, the effects and consequences

72 of climate change, international reactions, history, and progression of scientific climate research
73 and governmental and nongovernmental responses; evidence based policy solutions, the role of
74 climate and environmental activism in policy making, the essential principles of Earth’s climate
75 system, the options to address human-caused climate change, how to recognize credible
76 information about climate change and know where to find it; how to communicate about climate
77 change in accurate and effective ways, and how to make informed decisions related to climate
78 change.

79 (f) The department shall utilize funding from the Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Trust
80 Fund to support districts to develop or implement their Interdisciplinary Climate Literacy Plans.

81 (g) Annually, not later than October 1, the commissioner of elementary and secondary
82 education shall report to the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the joint committee
83 on education and the house and senate committees on ways and means on the fund’s activities.
84 The report shall include, but not be limited to:

85 (i) the source and amount of funds received;

86 (ii) the expenditures made from the fund and the purposes of such expenditures, including
87 the school districts that have received funding, indicating those that serve environmental justice
88 populations; the purpose of the funds, and the estimated number of students, grade levels, and
89 classes who were projected to benefit from the Fund’s support; and

90 (iii) the report shall be publicly available on the department’s website, along with the
91 names and sources of educational materials developed or used and the partner organizations
92 enlisted, as a result of the grant awards in order to increase access to these resources.