



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133

## Joint Committee on Education

Rep. Kenneth I. Gordon  
House Chair

Sen. Jason M. Lewis  
Senate Chair

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

**Date of Hearing:** Tuesday, May 6, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 PM-5:00 PM

**Location:** B-2 and Virtual

The Joint Committee on Education will be holding a hearing on bills related to Extracurriculars, English Language Learners and Bilingual Education, and Student Learning.

The Joint Committee on Education will hold a hybrid public hearing to solicit written and oral testimony in-person and remotely on the following bills that pertain to Extracurriculars, English Language Learners and Bilingual Education, Student Learning.

To register to testify virtually, you must provide contact information on the form linked [here](#). Individuals who wish to testify virtually at the Joint Committee on Education upcoming hearing must register by completing this form before **1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 6th, 2025**.

**Registration will CLOSE at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 5th.** Those wishing to testify in person may register in person at the time of the hearing but are encouraged to register ahead of time using this form. The Chair will limit testimony to two minutes per individual and reserves the right to call public officials out of turn.

Please submit written testimony to Fiona Bruce-Baiden at [fiona.brucebaiden@mahouse.gov](mailto:fiona.brucebaiden@mahouse.gov) and Senate Chair Jason Lewis at [Jason.Lewis@masenate.gov](mailto:Jason.Lewis@masenate.gov) or to the Committee on Education at 24 Beacon Street, Room 473G, Boston, MA 02133. The Chairs request that those submitting written testimony include “EDUCATION COMMITTEE TESTIMONY” and the bill number IN THE SUBJECT LINE, and provide the committee with your name, organization, and phone number.

Bill No.	Bill Title	Bill Sponsor
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H650	An Act relative to affirming and maintaining equal access to public education for all children	Moran, Frank A. (HOU), Peisch, Alice (HOU)
S436	An Act relative to affirming and maintaining equal access to public education for all children	Payano, Pavel (SEN)
H543	An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school students	Decker, Marjorie C. (HOU)
S417	An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school students	O'Connor, Patrick M. (SEN)
S319	An Act relative to access for after school and out-of-school time programs	Crighton, Brendan P. (SEN)
S446	An Act relative to physical and social recess in schools	Rush, Michael F. (SEN)
H744	An Act relative to club sports coaching staff	Vaughn, Marcus S. (HOU)
H713	An Act relative to supporting student participation in 4-H programs	Sweezey, Kenneth P. (HOU)
S420	An Act relative to supporting student participation in 4-H programs	O'Connor, Patrick M. (SEN)
H702	An Act establishing an elementary and secondary school robotics grant program	Sena, Danillo A. (HOU)
S460	An Act establishing an elementary and secondary school robotics grant program	Velis, John C. (SEN)
H695	An Act relative to fees for student organizations	Scanlon, Adam J. (HOU)
H689	An Act to remodel public school athletics through social-emotional learning	Sangiolo, Amy Mah (HOU)
S315	An Act to remodel public school athletics through social-emotional learning	Creem, Cynthia Stone (SEN)
H639	An Act relative to recognizing cheerleading as a sport	Lombardo, Marc T. (HOU)
H602	An Act concerning athletic activities of students with disabilities	Honan, Kevin G. (HOU)
H719	An Act relative to fairness in high school athletics	Turco, Jeffrey Rosario (HOU)

S353	An Act to prevent discrimination in interscholastic athletic and extracurricular activities	Fattman, Ryan C. (SEN)
H508	An Act to prevent concussion and head injury	Ashe, Brian M. (HOU)
H506	An Act relative to youth and athletics	Arriaga, Shirley B. (HOU)
H629	An Act expanding student access to the state seal of biliteracy	Lewis, Jack Patrick (HOU)
S354	An Act establishing funds to provide for increases in English language learners in school districts	Fattman, Ryan C. (SEN)
H584	An Act to ensure fairness and safety in school sports	Gaskey, John R. (HOU)
S350	An Act to ensure fairness and safety in school sports	Fattman, Ryan C. (SEN)
H737	An Act relative to defending the autonomy and integrity of student athletes and coaches	Vaughn, Marcus S. (HOU)

Please be advised that the schedule and agenda are subject to change at the agreement of the Chairs.

All matters filed in the House that are listed above are required to be reported on by July 5, 2025, subject to extensions consistent with House Rule 27.

The public is invited to participate in this hybrid hearing, which will be livestreamed on the General Court website, <https://malegislature.gov/>. Hearings will be recorded and posted publicly on the Joint Committee on Education page <https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J14/Hearings>

At the discretion of the Chairs and per committee rules, written testimony received by the committee will be made publicly available. The committee may limit availability or redact testimony that includes sensitive personal information, information about minors, or information that may jeopardize the health, wellness or safety of the testifier or others.

Please be advised that the schedule and agenda are subject to change at the discretion of the chair per committee rules.

You may contact committee staff with any questions at (617) 722-2070 or (617) 722-1206 or email [fiona.brucebaiden@mahouse.gov](mailto:fiona.brucebaiden@mahouse.gov) and [Dennis.Burke@masenate.gov](mailto:Dennis.Burke@masenate.gov) if you have any questions.

## Joint Committee on Education

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### **BILL NUMBER**

House, No. 650/ Senate, No. 436

### **TITLE**

An Act Relative to Affirming and maintaining equal access to public education for all students.

### **SPONSORS**

Representative Frank A Moran of 17<sup>th</sup> Essex.

Leader Alice Peisch of 14<sup>th</sup> Norfolk.

Senator Pavel Payano (First Essex)

### **CURRENT LAW**

MGL 71B:3 pertains to the identification of school age children with disabilities, diagnosis of disabilities for school age children, proposal of special education programs, and the evaluation and assessments of children and programs.

MGL 71A:4 pertains to English Language Arts Education.

MGL 71A:5 pertains to a parent's rights to select which English learner program within a district their student will attend, and the request for school transfers.

MGL 69:1B pertains to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

MGL 76:5 pertains to the right to attend public schools, violations, and discrimination.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill inserts language that requires school committees when providing assessments and evaluation material to students identified as English Learners to administer these materials in the students' primary language. The language also requires that the Individualized Education Program Team that is convened for an English Learner include a participant with knowledge of the student language needs, and a participant who understands how to differentiate between a student's English proficiency and a student's disability. The bill also requires that when an evaluation indicates that a child who is an English learner also has a disability the IEP team will ensure that the IEP mentions both services to meet the English language and special education service needs. The bill prohibits school districts from recommending to parents of English learners that they decline any or all services provided in English Learner programs. The bill requires the Board of Elementary and Secondary education to ensure communication between school personal and legal guardians of all students receiving special education, and/or English language services, and for BESE to ensure all interpreters in public schools are bilingual and

trained interpreter and translator. There is language that requires alternative instruction programs used in English Learner programs address any academic deficits resulting from focusing on English language acquisition within a reasonable amount of time. The bill prohibits students from being excluded or discriminated against in admission based on their immigration or citizenship status, or disability status.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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**BILL NUMBER**

House, No. 543

Senate, No. 417

**TITLE**

An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school children

**SPONSORS**

Representative Marjorie Decker of Cambridge

Senator Patrick O’Conor (First Plymouth and Norfolk)

**PRIOR HISTORY**

H.452 of the 2023-2024 Session; sent to study.

**CURRENT LAW**

MGL Ch. 71 pertains to public schools and MGL 71:3 requires that physical education shall be taught as a subject in all grades in all public schools for the physical well-being of students.

**SUMMARY**

SECTION 1: SECTION 1: Amends Chapter 71 of the General Laws by inserting a new section after the existing section 3 (3A)

A. Mandates that all students in grades kindergarten through eight at public and charter schools shall receive at least thirty consecutive minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess per school day. Additionally mandates that recess shall be held outdoors whenever the weather and air quality permits and that, if it doesn’t, schools shall use an appropriate space that promotes physical activity.

B. Stipulates that schools may not decrease the amount of time it allots and provides to students for free-play recess as a result of any changes in standards or curriculum and shall not withhold recess for the purposes of providing academic or other services. Additionally stipulates that the department shall not exclude recess from structured learning time requirements for students and shall not increase the total number of hours required in the school year to meet the requirements set forth in this bill.

C. Stipulates that on non-standard school days with altered schedules, schools may provide less than thirty consecutive minutes of free-play recess (days with delayed openings, early dismissals etc.) This exception does not apply to school days on which there is a field trip.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. H744
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to club sports coaching staff
<b><u>SPONSOR(S)</u></b>	Representative Marcus S. Vaughn of Wrentham
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	N/A
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 4:2A pertains to special legislative commissions.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes a special commission to study and make recommendations on the quality of coaching staff at club sports facilities, with a focus on ensuring proper training, vetting, and reporting mechanisms for coaches who work with children and young adults. It specifies the membership of the commission and the scope of its investigations. It requires that the commission file a report of its findings and recommendations, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such recommendations, to the legislature by June 30, 2025.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 713/ Senate, No. 420
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to supporting student participation in 4-H programs
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representatives Kenneth Sweezey of Duxbury Senator Patrick O'Connor of First Plymouth and Norfolk by request.
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H447 of Session 2023-2024: Committee redraft to H4427: Referred to House Steering, Policy and Schedule: Referred to Third Reading.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 76 pertains to school attendance.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 76 by inserting a new section, Section 22, which requires that schools credit students who participate in a Massachusetts 4-H activity or program as present in the same way as is done for educational field trips for a maximum of 5 days. It provides exceptions for Massachusetts 4-H activities or programs that occur during MCAS testing or a period of suspension or expulsion.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 702  Senate, No. 460
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act establishing an elementary and secondary school robotics grant program.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Danilla Sena of 37 <sup>th</sup> Middlesex/ Senator John Velis of Hampden and Hampshire
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H702 of 2023-2024 session: Study  S460 of 2023-2024 session: Study
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15 pertains to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **SUMMARY**

The bill amends MGL 15 by inserting a new section, Section 67. The language establishes a grant program titled Workforce Preparation Robotics Grant Program to increase robotics and STEM participation in public and charter schools. The bill continues to establish the three different criteria DESE is required to use in awarding the grant to public and charter schools. The criteria include that schools must be in Massachusetts, priority must be given to schools without sponsored or established robotic programs, schools in Cape Cod, or Western Massachusetts. Applicants are required to submit to DESE the application by 1<sup>st</sup> of June. The bill provides a list for the grant amounts for DESE to award to elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 695
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to fees for student organizations.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Adam J. Scanlon of 14 <sup>th</sup> Bristol.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71:47 pertains athletic programs, school organizations, and student activity accounts.

### **SUMMARY**

Amends MGL 71:47 by inserting language that forbids schools from requiring students from paying a fee to participate in a student activity whose primary purpose is political, faith-based, charitable, relating to mental or physical health, student leadership activities , activities that relate to opposing, preventing, addressing, or raising awareness of discrimination or racism, sexism, and other forms of bigotry, activities that relate to opposing, preventing, addressing, or raising awareness of bullying and other purpose deemed by the committee to be a social good.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 689  Senate, No. 315
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to remodel public school athletics through social-emotional learning
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Amy Mah Sangiolo of 11 <sup>th</sup> Middlesex/ Senator Cynthia Creem of Norfolk and Middlesex
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H516 of 2023-2024 session; Attached without Language to H4576; sent to House Rules: sent to House Ways and Means.  S247 of 2023-2024 session; Attached without language to S2761; sent to Senate ways and means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71:37O pertains to school bullying prevention and intervention  MGL 69:1P pertains to safe and supportive schools' framework

### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires DESE to create guidelines to implement social-emotional learning curricula for middle and high school athletic programs. The curricula must explicitly teach students and coaches, among other things, how to create safe, supportive, bias-free team cultures, provide students with leadership roles in carrying out responsibilities including empowering students to speak up and report behaviors contrary to a safe, supportive environment, formulate lessons and guidance to address hate, bias, and negative behaviors, and build positive relationships and skills to assist in overcoming physical, social, and emotional obstacles in athletic competition.

The guidelines must be updated biennially, and school districts must consider the guidelines should they choose to integrate social emotional learning into athletic programs. For purposes of this section, social-emotional learning means the processes by which children acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and constructively handle challenging social situations. DESE must integrate the guidelines into the safe and supportive schools framework pursuant to MGL 69:1P.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 639
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to recognizing cheerleading as a sport
<b><u>SPONSOR(S)</u></b>	Representative Marc T. Lombardo of Billerica
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.3972 of 2023-2024 session: study.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71 pertains to public schools in the Commonwealth.

#### **SUMMARY**

Amends MGL 71 by inserting a new section, Section 47A, which requires every school district to develop guidelines, procedures, and safety standards for the purpose of classifying cheerleading as a sport and providing for student participation in it. It further requires cheerleading coaches to receive training specific to the sport and safety of cheerleaders.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 602
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act concerning athletic activities of students with disabilities
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Kevin Honan of Boston
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.499 of session 2023-2024: Attached with language to H4681, An Act Relative to Special Education: Sent to House Ways and Means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71 pertains to public schools

### **SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 71 by adding a new section –Section 95—which provides definitions related to athletic programs for students with disabilities and requires schools to ensure that students with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in mainstream physical education and athletic programs. It also requires that reasonable modifications or aids or services necessary for students with disabilities to participate are provided. Language includes that adapted programs or unified sports or inclusive programs for physical education and athletics are available in all athletic programming. The bill provides an exception to these requirements if the inclusion of a student with a disability presents an objective safety risk to themselves or others or fundamentally alters the nature of the mainstream physical education or athletic program.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 719
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to fairness in high school athletics
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Jeffery Turco of 19 <sup>th</sup> Suffolk
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H4245 of 2023-2024 session: was attached without language to H4399 An Act to expand access to career technical education and other alternative pathways: House Ways and Means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71 pertains to public schools.

### **SUMMARY**

Amends MGL 71 by inserting a new section, Section 47B. The section allows for athletic program to seek arbitration to review athletic program eligibility decisions by the school committee or a representative. All parties involved in the arbitration must cover their own cost of representation, and all other cost must be split equally between the parties. DESE is required to promulgate regulations that set all other minimum standards for neutral third-party arbitration.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 508
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to prevent concussion and head injury
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Brian M. Ashe of Longmeadow
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.429 of 2023-2024 session: Sent to Study.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	N/A

### **SUMMARY**

This bill allows any student who participates in soccer to wear protective headgear on the field, provided it meets federal standards for headgear used in soccer.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 506
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to youth and athletics
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Shirley B. Arriaga of Chicopee
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H3753 of session 2023-2024: Sent to Study
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 29 pertains to state finance.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes a new trust fund, the PLAY trust fund administered by the commissioner of DESE. This trust fund will be for funding youth athletics in K-8 public schools to support students and families financially and promote good health. It specifies how the fund will be credited and requires the commissioner of elementary and secondary education to report the fund's activities to the legislature and publish it publicly on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website.

# Joint Committee on Education

## Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 629
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act expanding student access to the state seal of biliteracy.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Jack P. Lewis of 7 <sup>th</sup> Middlesex.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 69:1Q pertains to the award of a state seal of biliteracy by school districts to students.

### **SUMMARY**

The bill amends MGL 69:1Q by adding language that allows school districts to use other assessments or equivalent alternatives that the board of secondary and elementary education established in place of the MCAS when determining the criteria a student must meet for the state seal of biliteracy award.

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 584/ Senate, No. 350
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to ensure fairness and safety in school sports.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative John Gaskey of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Plymouth/ Senator Ryan Fatman of Worcester and Hampden.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71 pertains to public schools.
<b><u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u></b>	This language is almost identical to H737 An Act relative to defending the autonomy and integrity of student athletes and coaches. The only difference is the definition section included in these bills, and the Senate bills inclusion of a requirement that the bill go in effect after passing.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill creates a new section in MGL 71 following Section 1D. This new section prohibits a public school from requiring any student athlete on a single sex sports team to participate in a match when playing a team that includes any athletes of the opposite sex. The language also prohibits public school from penalizing coaches who forfeit a match because a team include an athlete of the opposite sex, and prohibits DESE, MIAA, and referees and umpires for school sports or athletic events from penalizing public schools, single-sex public school sports teams, coaches, or student athlete for forfeiting or refusing to play in a match against an opposing team because the team includes athletes of the opposite sex. The bill include language defining a “same sex team.”

## Joint Committee on Education

### Bill Summary

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 737
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to defending the autonomy and integrity of student athletes and coaches.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Marcus V Vaghn of 9 <sup>th</sup> Norfolk.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 71 pertains to public schools.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill creates a new section in MGL 71 following Section 1D. This new section prohibits a public school from requiring any student athlete on a single sex sports team to participate in a match when playing a team that includes any athletes of the opposite sex. The language also prohibits public school from penalizing coaches who forfeit a match because a team include an athlete of the opposite sex, and prohibits DESE, MIAA, and referees and umpires for school sports or athletic events from penalizing public schools, single-sex public school sports teams, coaches, or student athlete for forfeiting or refusing to play in a match against an opposing team because the team includes athletes of the opposite sex.