



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, July 8th, 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 Targeted Student Issues, and Student Discipline.

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 Targeted Student issues, and Student Discipline.

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 Monday, July 7th, 2025**.

Registration will CLOSE at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, July 7th, 2025. 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 jointcommittee.education@malegislature.gov and Emily Reynolds at emily.reynolds@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. **The Committee will accept written testimony until July 15th, 2025.**

Bill No.	Sponsor	Document Title
H748	Walsh, Thomas P. (HOU)	An Act to promote healthy culture and climate within schools

H705	Smola, Todd M. (HOU)	An Act to promote healthy culture and climate within schools
S359	Feeney, Paul R. (SEN)	An Act promoting healthy culture and climate within schools
H731	Ultrino, Steven (HOU)	An Act requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act
S380	Jehlen, Patricia D. (SEN)	An Act requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act
H730	Ultrino, Steven (HOU)	An Act addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in educational achievement
S376	Jehlen, Patricia D. (SEN)	An Act addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in students' educational achievement
H718	Tarsky, Joshua (HOU)	An Act to reducing out-of-school suspensions
H641	Marsi, John J. (HOU)	An Act relative to fair educational practices
S349	Fattman, Ryan C. (SEN)	An Act relative to fair educational practices
H625	Kushmerek, Michael P. (HOU)	An Act relative to corporal punishment
H576	Fluker-Reid, Brandy (HOU)	An Act to reduce exclusionary discipline for violations of rules related to student grooming and dress
S368	Gomez, Adam (SEN)	An Act to reduce exclusionary discipline for violations of rules related to student grooming and dress
H724	Tyler, Chynah (HOU)	An Act establishing a commission on school segregation
H721	Tyler, Chynah (HOU)	An Act to assesses school integration within the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program
H712	Sousa, Priscila S. (HOU)	An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery
S437	Payano, Pavel (SEN)	An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery
H663	Pease, Kelly W. (HOU)	An Act relative to educational equity for gifted and beyond grade-level children
H662	Pease, Kelly W. (HOU)	An Act to prohibit age discrimination

H661	Pease, Kelly W. (HOU)	An Act relative to equitable accelerated learning opportunities for public school students
H622	Kilcoyne, Meghan K. (HOU)	An Act relative to an expert panel on the education of advanced and gifted students
H621	Kilcoyne, Meghan K. (HOU)	An Act relative to state engagement in the education of gifted and talented students
H620	Keefe, Mary S. (HOU)	An Act to ensure educational rights are upheld for incarcerated youth
H573	Fiola, Carole A. (HOU)	An Act to protect children from adults in positions of authority or trust
H571	Fiola, Carole A. (HOU)	An Act providing for alternatives to fines for failure to send
H524	Cabral, Antonio F. D. (HOU)	An Act to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation
S406	Lovely, Joan B. (SEN)	An Act relative to recovery high schools
S399	Lewis, Jason M. (SEN)	An Act to promote equity in school attendance requirements
S361	Finegold, Barry R. (SEN)	An Act providing for a study of chronic student absences
S344	DiDomenico, Sal N. (SEN)	An Act enhancing the educational outcomes of expectant and parenting students

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 August 24th, 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 and emily.reynolds@masenate.gov if you have any questions.

Joint Committee on Education
Bill Section-by-Section Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 748/ House, No. 705
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to promote a healthy culture and climate within schools
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Rep. Thomas P. Walsh
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	H. 705
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.580 of the 2023-2024 session; attached to H4400 without language, placed before HWM
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37H $\frac{3}{4}$ pertains to suspension or expulsion 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ (b) pertains to a decision-maker's discretion when considering suspension or expulsion

SUMMARY

This bill seeks to ensure that students are not expelled or suspended unless alternative remedies and re-engagement efforts have been utilized. Requires school staff who act as decision makers at disciplinary hearings to employ mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and collaborative problem-solving methods to solve the issue. Allows for exceptions to be made when the student poses a safety threat to others. These threats or concerns must be documented.

HOUSE No. 748

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Thomas P. Walsh

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 promote healthy culture and climate within schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Thomas P. Walsh</i>	<i>12th Essex</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>	<i>3/4/2025</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>4/2/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 748

By Representative Walsh of Peabody, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 748) of Thomas P. Walsh and Paul McMurtry that school administrators consider alternatives to suspension or expulsion of certain students. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 580 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to promote healthy culture and climate within schools.

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

1 Notwithstanding any general of special law to the contrary, section 37 H ³/₄ of Chapter 71,
2 as so appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out section (b) and
3 inserting in place thereof the following section:-

4 (b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a
5 student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways
6 to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until
7 alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in
8 direct response to a specific incident or incidents, including but not limited to direct threats,
9 unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or
10 counter-productive, except, however, in cases where the student’s continued presence in school

11 would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or
12 other serious harm upon another person while in school or has caused a significant disruption to
13 the learning environment for other students. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be
14 limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative
15 problem-solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker
16 shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning
17 process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and
18 supports models and (ii) trauma-sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or
19 district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

Joint Committee on Education Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 705
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to promote a healthy culture and climate within schools
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Rep. Smola of Warren
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	H748
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H580 of the 2023-2024 session; attached without language to H400, which sat before HWM.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37H $\frac{3}{4}$ pertains to suspension or expulsion 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ (b) pertains to a decision-maker's discretion when considering suspension or expulsion

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 71:37H $\frac{3}{4}$ (b) by removing language requiring principals, headmasters, superintendents, or other decision-makers to exercise discretion and only requires them to consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. Also removes language stating, “avoid using expulsion as a consequence” and inserts language prohibiting suspension or expulsion until alternative remedies are employed and results documented, unless it is documented that such remedies would be unsuitable, counter-productive, pose a concern about the safety of others, or disrupt learning for others.

The bill provides examples of alternative remedies, such as, mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and collaborative problem-solving.

It also requires the decision-maker to implement models to re-engage students such as positive behavioral interventions and support models and trauma-sensitive learning models, however said models must not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

HOUSE No. 705

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Todd M. Smola

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 promote healthy culture and climate within schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Todd M. Smola</i>	<i>1st Hampden</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 705

By Representative Smola of Warren, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 705) of Todd M. Smola that school administrators consider alternatives to suspension or expulsion of certain students. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 580 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to promote healthy culture and climate within schools.

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 37H3/4 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting in place thereof the
3 following:-

4 "(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a
5 student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways
6 to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until
7 alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in
8 direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to
9 why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, except, however, in cases
10 where the student’s continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern

11 about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in
12 school or has caused a significant disruption to the learning environment for other students.
13 Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict
14 resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal,
15 headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or
16 district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be
17 limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive
18 learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered
19 a direct response to a specific incident."

SENATE No. 359

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Paul R. Feeney

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 promoting healthy culture and climate within schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Paul R. Feeney

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Bristol and Norfolk

SENATE No. 359

By Mr. Feeney, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 359) of Paul R. Feeney for legislation to promote a healthy culture and climate within schools. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 282 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act promoting healthy culture and climate within schools.

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

Section 37H ³/₄ of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out subsection (b) and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, except, however, in cases where the student’s continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern

about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school or has caused a significant disruption to the learning environment for other students.

Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem-solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma-sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

**Joint Committee on Education
Bill Summary**

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 731/ Senate, No. 380
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to corporal punishment
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Rep. Steven Ultrino of Malden/ Senator Pat Jehelen (Second Middlesex)
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37G pertains to corporal punishment of pupils; physical restraints; and relevant regulation.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 71:37G to ensure that private educational institutions through the twelfth grade, in addition to public educational institutions, are banned from punishing students corporally. It additionally requires private schools to submit reports of physical restraint in instances where it was necessary to protect students to BESE.

HOUSE No. 731

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Steven Ultrino and Joan Meschino

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 requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Joan Meschino</i>	<i>3rd Plymouth</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 731

By Representatives Ultrino of Malden and Meschino of Hull, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 731) of Steven Ultrino and Joan Meschino relative to statewide targets for addressing persistent disparities in student achievement, suspension and expulsion through data reporting. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act.

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. Section 1S of chapter 69 of the General Laws, added by section 5 of chapter
2 132 of the acts of 2019, is hereby amended by striking out paragraphs (a) and (b) and inserting in
3 place thereof the following 2 paragraphs:-

4 (a) The commissioner shall establish statewide targets for addressing persistent disparities
5 in achievement and suspension and expulsion including, but not limited to, disparities in annual
6 days of lost instruction among student subgroups in the aggregate and within subcategories,
7 including, but not limited to, subject matter and relevant grade levels. The targets shall include
8 annual benchmarks on the progress expected to be achieved in the aggregate and by subcategory.

9 (b) Each district shall establish targets for addressing persistent disparities in achievement
10 and suspension and expulsion among student subgroups consistent with the targets established by
11 the department. Each district shall develop an evidence-based 3-year plan to meet its targets.

12 Each district’s plan shall be developed by the superintendent in consultation with the school
13 committee and shall consider input and recommendations from parents and other relevant
14 community stakeholders, including but not limited to, special education and English learner
15 parent advisory councils, school improvement councils and educators in the school district.

16 SECTION 2. Paragraph (c) of said section 1S of said chapter 69, as so appearing, is
17 hereby amended by striking out clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting in place thereof the following 2
18 clauses:-

19 (ii) a description of the evidence-based programs, supports and interventions that the
20 school district will implement to reduce persistent disparities in achievement, to reduce
21 suspension and expulsion of students, and to reduce disparities of suspension and expulsion,
22 including but not limited to annual days of lost instruction among student subgroups, including,
23 but not limited to: (A) expanded learning time in the form of a longer school day or school year;
24 (B) increased opportunity for common planning time for teachers; (C) social services to support
25 students’ social-emotional and physical health; (D) hiring school personnel that best support
26 improved student performance; (E) increased or improved professional development; (F)
27 purchase of curriculum materials and equipment that are aligned with the statewide curriculum
28 frameworks; (G) expanding early education and pre-kindergarten programming within the
29 district in consultation or in partnership with community-based organizations; (H) diversifying
30 the educator and administrator workforce; (I) developing additional pathways to strengthen
31 college and career readiness; (J) implementing evidence-based disciplinary and educational
32 models, including, but not limited to: positive behavioral interventions and supports, response to
33 intervention, restorative justice, and trauma sensitive learning models; (K) implementing
34 intermediary disciplinary steps before the use of suspension or expulsion including, but not

35 limited to: mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, or collaborative problem solving;
36 and (L) any other program determined to be evidence-based by the commissioner; provided,
37 however, that if a district elects not to implement the evidence-based programs described in
38 clauses (A) to (L), inclusive, the district plan shall specify the reasons for electing not to
39 implement said programs including a description of why said programs would not effectively
40 address persistent disparities in achievement and suspensions and expulsions among student
41 subgroups;

42 (iii) identification of outcome metrics to be used by the district to measure success in
43 addressing persistent disparities in achievement and suspension and expulsion among student
44 subgroups; provided, however, that the department shall develop standard metrics that may be
45 incorporated in district plans and may include: (A) results from the statewide student assessment
46 including student growth; (B) results from the English proficiency assessment administered to
47 English learners; (C) grade-level completion and attendance data; (D) participation in advanced
48 coursework; and (E) rates of suspension, expulsion and lost instruction; and (F) other indicators
49 of district and school climate, diversity and performance; and.

50 SECTION 3. Said section 1S of said chapter 69, as so appearing, is hereby further
51 amended by striking out paragraphs (d) and (e) and inserting in place thereof the following 2
52 paragraphs:-

53 (d) Each district shall submit its plan to the department every 3 years. Upon receipt of a
54 district plan, the commissioner shall review the plan to ensure that it sets forth clear, appropriate
55 and achievable goals and measurable standards for student improvement that comply with the
56 requirements of this section; provided, however, that the district shall amend any plan deemed

57 not to conform with the requirements of this section. Following the submission of a 3-year plan,
58 each district shall annually, not later than April 1, submit to the department and to the public: (i)
59 relevant data, pursuant to its plan, to assess success in addressing persistent disparities in
60 achievement and suspension and expulsion among student subgroups; and (ii) amendments to the
61 plan that reflect changes deemed necessary to improve district performance in meeting plan
62 goals. Each plan shall be made publicly available on both the submitting district's website and
63 the department's website.

64 (e) Annually, not later than December 31, the commissioner shall submit a report to the
65 clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and the chairs of the joint committee on
66 education on the progress made in addressing persistent disparities in achievement and
67 suspension and expulsion among student subgroups in the aggregate and within subcategories on
68 a statewide basis; provided, however, that district and school-level data shall be made available
69 on the department's website along with the report.

70 SECTION 4. Section 37H of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
71 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting before the first paragraph the following
72 definitions:-

73 As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires
74 otherwise, have the following meanings:-

75 "Disparate rate of lost instruction," an aggregate rate of lost instruction per 100 students
76 in a particular subgroup which deviates from the aggregate rate of lost instruction per 100
77 students in a school or district by greater than or equal to 1½ standard deviations;

78 “Disproportionate number of students,” a rate of suspension and expulsion per 100
79 students in a specific subgroup in a school or district which deviates from the aggregate rate of
80 suspension and expulsion per 100 students in a school or district, by greater than or equal to 1½
81 standard deviations;

82 “Expulsion,” the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom
83 activities and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely or permanently, as
84 permitted pursuant to this section or section 37H½;

85 “Homeless children and youths,” students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate
86 nighttime residence as defined in 42 USC Chapter 119, Subchapter VI, Part B, §11434a.

87 “Rate of lost instruction,” a rate of days of exclusion for all students or for a particular
88 student subgroup derived by taking the cumulative number of days of instruction lost due to
89 exclusion in a school year, dividing by the total number of students or total number of students in
90 a subgroup, and multiplying by 100

91 “Significant number of students,” a percentage of students in a given school that is
92 greater than the Commonwealth’s aggregate rate of suspension and expulsion per 100 students as
93 calculated annually by the department of elementary and secondary education;

94 “Standard deviations,” the square root of the average of the squares of the differences
95 between each adjusted composite rate for a student subgroup in a school or district and the
96 average adjusted composite rate for all students in a school or district.

97 SECTION 5. Clause (f) of said fourth paragraph of said section 37H of said chapter 71,
98 as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the last sentence and inserting in place thereof
99 the following sentence:-

100 This report shall include district level data disaggregated and cross-tabulated by student
101 status and categories established by the commissioner including, but not limited to: (a) race and
102 ethnicity; (b) gender; (c) socioeconomic status; (d) English language learner status; (e) disability;
103 (f) homeless children and youths.

104 SECTION 6. Said fourth paragraph of said section 37H of said chapter 71, as so
105 appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out clause (g) and inserting in place thereof the
106 following 2 clauses:-

107 (g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that: (a)
108 suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school
109 year; (b) suspends or expels a disproportionate number of students from any of the subgroups
110 named in paragraph (f) or designated by the commissioner; or (c) displays disparate rates of lost
111 instruction between subgroups, the commissioner shall investigate and shall recommend models
112 that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion and address
113 disproportionate discipline, in both incidence and duration, of any subgroup. The commissioner
114 shall publicly identify and categorize schools that fall into 1 or more of the following categories:
115 (a) the school has suspended or expelled a significant number of students for more than 10 days;
116 (b) the school has suspended or expelled a disproportionate number of students from any of the
117 subgroups named in paragraph (f) or designated by the commissioner; or (c) the school has

118 displayed disparate rates of lost instruction for any subgroup. The results of this analysis shall be
119 made publicly available on both the district's website and the department's website.

120 (h) Annual reports and accountability plans submitted by charter schools pursuant to
121 regulations promulgated by the department shall contain data consistent with the requirements
122 set forth in this section.

SENATE No. 380

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patricia D. Jehlen

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 requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/10/2025</i>

SENATE No. 380

By Ms. Jehlen, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 380) of Patricia D. Jehlen and James B. Eldridge for legislation to establish statewide targets for addressing persistent disparities in achievement and suspension and expulsion in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act requiring accountability for inequities in suspension and expulsion or RAISE Act.

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. Section 1S of chapter 69 of the General Laws, added by section 5 of chapter
2 132 of the acts of 2019, is hereby amended by striking out paragraphs (a) and (b) and inserting in
3 place thereof the following 2 paragraphs:-

4 (a) The commissioner shall establish statewide targets for addressing persistent disparities
5 in achievement and suspension and expulsion including, but not limited to, disparities in annual
6 days of lost instruction among student subgroups in the aggregate and within subcategories,
7 including, but not limited to, subject matter and relevant grade levels. The targets shall include
8 annual benchmarks on the progress expected to be achieved in the aggregate and by subcategory.

9 (b) Each district shall establish targets for addressing persistent disparities in achievement
10 and suspension and expulsion among student subgroups consistent with the targets established by
11 the department. Each district shall develop an evidence-based 3-year plan to meet its targets.
12 Each district’s plan shall be developed by the superintendent in consultation with the school

13 committee and shall consider input and recommendations from parents and other relevant
14 community stakeholders, including but not limited to, special education and English learner
15 parent advisory councils, school improvement councils and educators in the school district.

16 SECTION 2. Paragraph (c) of said section 1S of said chapter 69, as so appearing, is
17 hereby amended by striking out clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting in place thereof the following 2
18 clauses:-

19 (ii) a description of the evidence-based programs, supports and interventions that the
20 school district will implement to reduce persistent disparities in achievement, to reduce
21 suspension and expulsion of students, and to reduce disparities of suspension and expulsion,
22 including but not limited to annual days of lost instruction among student subgroups, including,
23 but not limited to: (A) expanded learning time in the form of a longer school day or school year;
24 (B) increased opportunity for common planning time for teachers; (C) social services to support
25 students' social-emotional and physical health; (D) hiring school personnel that best support
26 improved student performance; (E) increased or improved professional development; (F)
27 purchase of curriculum materials and equipment that are aligned with the statewide curriculum
28 frameworks; (G) expanding early education and pre-kindergarten programming within the
29 district in consultation or in partnership with community-based organizations; (H) diversifying
30 the educator and administrator workforce; (I) developing additional pathways to strengthen
31 college and career readiness; (J) implementing evidence-based disciplinary and educational
32 models, including, but not limited to: positive behavioral interventions and supports, response to
33 intervention, restorative justice, and trauma sensitive learning models; (K) implementing
34 intermediary disciplinary steps before the use of suspension or expulsion including, but not
35 limited to: mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, or collaborative problem solving;

36 and (L) any other program determined to be evidence-based by the commissioner; provided,
37 however, that if a district elects not to implement the evidence-based programs described in
38 clauses (A) to (L), inclusive, the district plan shall specify the reasons for electing not to
39 implement said programs including a description of why said programs would not effectively
40 address persistent disparities in achievement and suspensions and expulsions among student
41 subgroups;

42 (iii) identification of outcome metrics to be used by the district to measure success in
43 addressing persistent disparities in achievement and suspension and expulsion among student
44 subgroups; provided, however, that the department shall develop standard metrics that may be
45 incorporated in district plans and may include: (A) results from the statewide student assessment
46 including student growth; (B) results from the English proficiency assessment administered to
47 English learners; (C) grade-level completion and attendance data; (D) participation in advanced
48 coursework; and (E) rates of suspension, expulsion and lost instruction; and (F) other indicators
49 of district and school climate, diversity and performance; and.

50 SECTION 3. Said section 1S of said chapter 69, as so appearing, is hereby further
51 amended by striking out paragraphs (d) and (e) and inserting in place thereof the following 2
52 paragraphs:-

53 (d) Each district shall submit its plan to the department every 3 years. Upon receipt of a
54 district plan, the commissioner shall review the plan to ensure that it sets forth clear, appropriate
55 and achievable goals and measurable standards for student improvement that comply with the
56 requirements of this section; provided, however, that the district shall amend any plan deemed
57 not to conform with the requirements of this section. Following the submission of a 3-year plan,

58 each district shall annually, not later than April 1, submit to the department and to the public: (i)
59 relevant data, pursuant to its plan, to assess success in addressing persistent disparities in
60 achievement and suspension and expulsion among student subgroups; and (ii) amendments to the
61 plan that reflect changes deemed necessary to improve district performance in meeting plan
62 goals. Each plan shall be made publicly available on both the submitting district's website and
63 the department's website.

64 (e) Annually, not later than December 31, the commissioner shall submit a report to the
65 clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and the chairs of the joint committee on
66 education on the progress made in addressing persistent disparities in achievement and
67 suspension and expulsion among student subgroups in the aggregate and within subcategories on
68 a statewide basis; provided, however, that district and school-level data shall be made available
69 on the department's website along with the report.

70 SECTION 4. Section 37H of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
71 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting before the first paragraph the following
72 definitions:-

73 As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires
74 otherwise, have the following meanings:-

75 "Disparate rate of lost instruction," an aggregate rate of lost instruction per 100 students
76 in a particular subgroup which deviates from the aggregate rate of lost instruction per 100
77 students in a school or district by greater than or equal to 1½ standard deviations;

78 "Disproportionate number of students," a rate of suspension and expulsion per 100
79 students in a specific subgroup in a school or district which deviates from the aggregate rate of

80 suspension and expulsion per 100 students in a school or district, by greater than or equal to 1½
81 standard deviations;

82 “Expulsion,” the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom
83 activities and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely or permanently, as
84 permitted pursuant to this section or section 37H½;

85 “Homeless children and youths,” students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate
86 nighttime residence as defined in 42 USC Chapter 119, Subchapter VI, Part B, §11434a.

87 “Rate of lost instruction,” a rate of days of exclusion for all students or for a particular
88 student subgroup derived by taking the cumulative number of days of instruction lost due to
89 exclusion in a school year, dividing by the total number of students or total number of students in
90 a subgroup, and multiplying by 100

91 “Significant number of students,” a percentage of students in a given school that is
92 greater than the Commonwealth’s aggregate rate of suspension and expulsion per 100 students as
93 calculated annually by the department of elementary and secondary education;

94 “Standard deviations,” the square root of the average of the squares of the differences
95 between each adjusted composite rate for a student subgroup in a school or district and the
96 average adjusted composite rate for all students in a school or district.

97 SECTION 5. Clause (f) of said fourth paragraph of said section 37H of said chapter 71,
98 as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the last sentence and inserting in place thereof
99 the following sentence:-

100 This report shall include district level data disaggregated and cross-tabulated by student
101 status and categories established by the commissioner including, but not limited to: (a) race and
102 ethnicity; (b) gender; (c) socioeconomic status; (d) English language learner status; (e) disability;
103 (f) homeless children and youths.

104 SECTION 6. Said fourth paragraph of said section 37H of said chapter 71, as so
105 appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out clause (g) and inserting in place thereof the
106 following 2 clauses:-

107 (g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that: (a)
108 suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school
109 year; (b) suspends or expels a disproportionate number of students from any of the subgroups
110 named in paragraph (f) or designated by the commissioner; or (c) displays disparate rates of lost
111 instruction between subgroups, the commissioner shall investigate and shall recommend models
112 that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion and address
113 disproportionate discipline, in both incidence and duration, of any subgroup. The commissioner
114 shall publicly identify and categorize schools that fall into 1 or more of the following categories:
115 (a) the school has suspended or expelled a significant number of students for more than 10 days;
116 (b) the school has suspended or expelled a disproportionate number of students from any of the
117 subgroups named in paragraph (f) or designated by the commissioner; or (c) the school has
118 displayed disparate rates of lost instruction for any subgroup. The results of this analysis shall be
119 made publicly available on both the district's website and the department's website.

120 (h) Annual reports and accountability plans submitted by charter schools pursuant to
121 regulations promulgated by the department shall contain data consistent with the requirements
122 set forth in this section.

Joint Committee on Education
Bill Summary (Section-by-Section)

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 730/ Senate, No. 376
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to remedy disparities in students' educational achievement
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Steven Ultrino of Malden Senator Pat Jehlen (Second Hampden)
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.597 of the 2023-2024 session; attached to H4400. H.4138 of the 2021-2022 session; accompanied new draft H.4646; reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Education; referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	<p>MGL 69:1S pertains to statewide targets addressing persistent disparities in achievement and district 3-year plans.</p> <p>MGL 71:37H pertains to policies relative to student conduct and student handbooks. Subsection (a) outlines disciplinary measures for possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance on school premises or at a school-related event. Subsection (b) pertains to assault on an educational staff member. Subsection (c) pertains to a student's right to a hearing for violation of (a) or (b). Subsection (d) pertains to a student's right to appeal.</p> <p>MGL 71:37H ½ pertains to suspension, expulsion, and right to appeal for a student charged or convicted of a felony.</p> <p>MGL 71:37H ¾ pertains to suspension and expulsion on grounds other than those set forth in 37H or 37H ½</p> <p>MGL 94C pertains to controlled substances.</p> <p>MGL 269:10 outlines prohibitions pertaining to carrying or possessing dangerous weapons and punishments for violations.</p>

PARAGRAPH SUMMARY

Amends MGL 71:37H (a) which defines a dangerous weapon as “including, but not limited to, a gun or knife,” by striking it in its entirety and inserting in its place language that refers to the definition of a dangerous weapon outlined in MGL 269:10; and further by excluding marijuana from controlled substances listed in MGL 94C. Also substitutes the word exclusion for expulsion. Strikes language which allows the decision to be based on whether the student would “have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school” and inserts in its place reasoning based on the premise that the student would “pose a specific, documentable

concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in school.” Requires the student to receive written notification of charges and right to a hearing; reasons for exclusion if so decided after the hearing; and the right to appeal and process for doing so. Amends MGL 71:37H ³/₄ by adding language prohibiting any long-term suspension from extending beyond the end of the school year in which the suspension was imposed.

HOUSE No. 730

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Steven Ultrino and Joan Meschino

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 addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in educational achievement.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Joan Meschino</i>	<i>3rd Plymouth</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>4/1/2025</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>6/10/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>6/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 730

By Representatives Ultrino of Malden and Meschino of Hull, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 730) of Steven Ultrino and Joan Meschino relative to exclusion policies in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in educational achievement.

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

SECTION 1. Subsection (a) of section 37H of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out in lines 43 to 44, inclusive, the words, “including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife” and inserting in place thereof the following words:-

“a device as defined as section 10 of chapter 269 of the General Laws or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, cocaine, and heroin, but not including marijuana, may be subject to exclusion from the school or school district by the principal.”

SECTION 2. Clause (b) of the fourth paragraph of section 37H of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the word “assaults”, in line 48, and inserting in place thereof the following words:- willfully assaults, with intent and means to harm.

SECTION 3. Said paragraph (1) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out the words “have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school”, in lines 9 and 10, and inserting in place thereof the following words:- pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in school.

SECTION 4. Said paragraph (1) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out, in lines 10 to 12, inclusive, the sentence, “The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect” and inserting in place thereof the following two sentences:-

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the right to a hearing before the principal. If, after the hearing, the principal chooses to suspend the student, the written notice of the suspension shall include the reasons for such suspension, including the basis for the principal’s determination of the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in school, prior to such suspension taking effect. Further, any student who is placed on diversion prior to arraignment is not eligible for suspension under this section.

SECTION 5. Paragraph (2) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the first paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following three paragraphs:-

Upon a student being convicted of a or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of

serious bodily injury upon another person while in school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and right to a hearing before the principal. If after the hearing, the principal chooses to suspend or expel the student, the written notice shall include the reasons for such exclusion, including the basis for the principal's specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in school, prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet for a fair hearing before the principal to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The notice shall include the right to be represented by a lawyer or advocate (at the student's expense); adequate time to prepare for the hearing; access to documented evidence prior to the hearing; the right to present witnesses at the hearing and to question them and a reasonably prompt written decision including specific grounds for the decision.

The principal shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the fair hearing, provided that such hearing may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that hearing. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties

under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

SECTION 6. Subsection (a) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in lines 1-2, the words “and expulsion”.

SECTION 7. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 11, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 8. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 15, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 9. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 19, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 10. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 31, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 11. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 36, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 12. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 38, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 13. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 40, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 14. Subsection (e) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 53, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 15. Subsection (e) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 57, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 16. Subsection (e) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in lines 72-73, the words “or expulsion”.

SECTION 17. Subsection (f) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 74, the words “or expelled”.

SECTION 18. Section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting the following sentence at the end of the sixth paragraph:- No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school.

SENATE No. 376

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patricia D. Jehlen

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 addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in students' educational achievement.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>6/18/2025</i>

SENATE No. 376

By Ms. Jehlen, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 376) of Patricia D. Jehlen for legislation to promote the education success of court involved children. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 294 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act addressing school exclusion policies to remedy disparities in students' educational achievement.

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. Subsection (a) of section 37H of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as
2 appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out in lines 43 to 44,
3 inclusive, the words, “including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife” and inserting in place
4 thereof the following words:-

5 “a device as defined as section 10 of chapter 269 of the General Laws or a controlled
6 substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, cocaine, and heroin,
7 but not including marijuana, may be subject to exclusion from the school or school district by the
8 principal.”

9 SECTION 2. Clause (b) of the fourth paragraph of section 37H of said chapter 71, as so
10 appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the word “assaults”, in line 48, and inserting in
11 place thereof the following words:- willfully assaults, with intent and means to harm.

12 SECTION 3. Said paragraph (1) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing,
13 is hereby further amended by striking out the words “have a substantial detrimental effect on the
14 general welfare of the school”, in lines 9 and 10, and inserting in place thereof the following
15 words:- pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury upon
16 another person while in school.

17 SECTION 4. Said paragraph (1) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing,
18 is hereby further amended by striking out, in lines 10 to 12, inclusive, the sentence, “The student
19 shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such
20 suspension taking effect” and inserting in place thereof the following two sentences:-

21 The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the right to a hearing
22 before the principal. If, after the hearing, the principal chooses to suspend the student, the written
23 notice of the suspension shall include the reasons for such suspension, including the basis for the
24 principal’s determination of the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in
25 school, prior to such suspension taking effect. Further, any student who is placed on diversion
26 prior to arraignment is not eligible for suspension under this section.

27 SECTION 5. Paragraph (2) of said section 37H½ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
28 hereby amended by striking out the first paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following
29 three paragraphs:-

30 Upon a student being convicted of a or upon an adjudication or admission in court of
31 guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the
32 student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal determines that the student's
33 continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of
34 serious bodily injury upon another person while in school. The student shall receive written
35 notification of the charges and right to a hearing before the principal. If after the hearing, the
36 principal chooses to suspend or expel the student, the written notice shall include the reasons for
37 such exclusion, including the basis for the principal's specific, documentable concern about the
38 infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person while in school, prior to such expulsion
39 taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the
40 process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in
41 effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

42 For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal of a school in which the
43 student is enrolled shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student,
44 notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the
45 primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written
46 notification and shall have the opportunity to meet for a fair hearing before the principal to
47 discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or
48 expulsion taking effect. The notice shall include the right to be represented by a lawyer or
49 advocate (at the student's expense); adequate time to prepare for the hearing; access to
50 documented evidence prior to the hearing; the right to present witnesses at the hearing and to
51 question them and a reasonably prompt written decision including specific grounds for the
52 decision.

53 The principal shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the
54 hearing, provided that such hearing may take place without the parent or guardian only if the
55 principal, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that
56 hearing. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties
57 under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings,
58 hearings or interviews under this subsection.

59 SECTION 6. Subsection (a) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
60 hereby amended by striking out, in lines 1-2, the words “and expulsion”.

61 SECTION 7. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
62 hereby amended by striking out, in line 11, the words “or expulsion”.

63 SECTION 8. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
64 hereby amended by striking out, in line 15, the words “or expulsion”.

65 SECTION 9. Subsection (c) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
66 hereby amended by striking out, in line 19, the words “or expulsion”.

67 SECTION 10. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
68 hereby amended by striking out, in line 31, the words “or expulsion”.

69 SECTION 11. Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
70 hereby amended by striking out, in line 36, the words “or expulsion”.

71 SECTION 12 Subsection (d) of section 37H³/₄ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
72 hereby amended by striking out, in line 38, the words “or expulsion”.

73 SECTION 13. Subsection (d) of section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
74 hereby amended by striking out, in line 40, the words “or expulsion”.

75 SECTION 14. Subsection (e) of section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
76 hereby amended by striking out, in line 53, the words “or expulsion”.

77 SECTION 15. Subsection (e) of section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
78 hereby amended by striking out, in line 57, the words “or expulsion”.

79 SECTION 16. Subsection (e) of section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
80 hereby amended by striking out, in lines 72-73, the words “or expulsion”.

81 SECTION 17. Subsection (f) of section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
82 hereby amended by striking out, in line 74, the words “or expelled”.

83 SECTION 18. Section 37H¾ of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
84 inserting the following sentence at the end of the sixth paragraph:- No long-term suspension shall
85 extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Joint Committee on Education
Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 718
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to reduce out-of-school suspensions
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Rep. Tarsky of Needham
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37H ½ pertains to felony complaint of conviction of student; suspension; expulsion; and the right to appeal.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 71:37H ½ by adding a section which defines the term “in-school suspension.” Stipulates that in-school suspensions shall be offered where appropriate in lieu of out-of-school suspensions, and that any student serving an in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits and make up missed assignments during the period of their suspension. The bill requires at least 1 person that has a standard or provisional educator certificate and has experience teaching math, science, and the humanities to supervise the suspended student. Requires DESE to provide funding or staff to schools that demonstrate insufficient means for the maintenance of an in-school-suspension program.

HOUSE No. 718

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joshua Tarsky

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 reduce out-of-school suspensions.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Joshua Tarsky</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 718

By Representative Tarsky of Needham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 718) of Joshua Tarsky for legislation to reduce out-of-school suspensions. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to reduce out-of-school suspensions.

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 37H¾ of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:-

3 (g)(1) For the purposes of this subsection, the term “in-school suspension” shall mean the
4 removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no
5 more than 10 consecutive school days, or no more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple
6 infractions during the school year.

7 (2) Schools shall offer, where appropriate, an option for in-school suspension. A student
8 serving an in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, and
9 make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress
10 during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. In-school suspensions shall be
11 monitored by: (i) at least 1 person who holds a standard educator certificate or a provisional
12 educator certificate, pursuant to section 38G, and has experience teaching subject matter

13 involving science or mathematics; and (ii) at least 1 person who holds a standard educator
14 certificate or a provisional educator certificate, pursuant to said section 38G, and has experience
15 teaching subject matter involving the humanities or social sciences; provided, that 1 person may
16 satisfy the requirements of clauses (i) and (ii).

17 (3) The department shall provide funding or staff to any school that demonstrates an
18 insufficient funding or staffing level for the maintenance of an in-school suspension program, as
19 determined by the department

**Joint Committee on Education
Bill Summary**

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 641; Senate, No. 349
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to fair educational practices
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative John Marsi and Senator Ryan Fattman
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	S.272 of the 2023-2024 session; sent to study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 151C:1 pertains to definitions related to fair educational practices, discrimination, and sexual harassment as they relate to educational institutions. MGL 151C:2 pertains to unfair practices regarding admission to educational institutions.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 151C:1 by adding the term “special medical status” —defined as “the condition of an individual due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or due to the reception or failure to receive any medical treatment whether preventative, curative or palliative”—to the list of definitions and amends MGL 151C:2 by incorporating this term into the list of protected categories pertinent to admission to educational institutions. It further amends MGL 151C:2 by expanding protections against discrimination to include continued enrollment at, rather than just admission to, educational institutions.

HOUSE No. 641

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John J. Marsi

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 fair educational practices.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>John J. Marsi</i>	<i>6th Worcester</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Joseph D. McKenna</i>	<i>18th Worcester</i>	<i>2/11/2025</i>
<i>David F. DeCoste</i>	<i>5th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/21/2025</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/24/2025</i>
<i>Steven George Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>6/7/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 641

By Representative Marsi of Dudley, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 641) of John J. Marsi and Joseph D. McKenna that individuals cannot be excluded from admission or enrollment in educational institutions based on medical conditions or health-related decisions. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to fair educational practices.

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. Section 1 of chapter 151C of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding after clause (e) the following new clause:- “(f)
3 The term “special medical status” means the condition of an individual due to a disability as
4 defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or due to the reception or failure to receive any
5 medical treatment whether preventative, curative or palliative.”

6 SECTION 2. Clause (a) of section 2 of chapter 151C of the General Laws, as so
7 appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 4 the following
8 words:- “or continued enrollment”.

9 SECTION 3. Clause (a) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
10 further amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 5 and inserting in place thereof
11 the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

12 SECTION 4. Clause (c) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
13 amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 11 and inserting in place thereof the
14 following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

15 SECTION 5. Said clause (c) said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
16 hereby further amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 11 the following words:-
17 “or continued enrollment”.

18 SECTION 6. Said clause (c) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
19 hereby further amended by deleting the words “applicants for admissions” in line 15 and
20 inserting in place thereof the following words:- “such persons”.

21 SECTION 7. Clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
22 amended by inserting after the words “admission to” in line 17 the following words:- “or
23 continued enrollment in”.

24 SECTION 8. Said clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
25 hereby further amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 19 and inserting in
26 place thereof the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

27 SECTION 9. Said clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
28 hereby further amended by inserting after the words “admitted to” in line 20 the following
29 words:- “or enrolled in”.

30 SECTION 10. Clause (e) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
31 hereby amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 22 the following words:- “or
32 continued enrollment”.

33 SECTION 11. Clause (g) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
34 hereby amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 43 and inserting in place
35 thereof the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

SENATE No. 349

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Ryan C. Fattman

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 fair educational practices.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Ryan C. Fattman</i>	<i>Worcester and Hampden</i>	
<i>David F. DeCoste</i>	<i>5th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/24/2025</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>4/25/2025</i>

SENATE No. 349

By Mr. Fattman, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 349) of Ryan C. Fattman for legislation relative to fair educational practices. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 272 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to fair educational practices.

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. Section 1 of chapter 151C of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding after clause (e) the following new clause:- “(f)
3 The term “special medical status” means the condition of an individual due to a disability as
4 defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or due to the reception or failure to receive any
5 medical treatment whether preventative, curative or palliative.”

6 SECTION 2. Clause (a) of section 2 of chapter 151C of the General Laws, as so
7 appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 4 the following
8 words:- “or continued enrollment”.

9 SECTION 3. Clause (a) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
10 further amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 5 and inserting in place thereof
11 the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

12 SECTION 4. Clause (c) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
13 amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 11 and inserting in place thereof the
14 following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

15 SECTION 5. Said clause (c) said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
16 hereby further amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 11 the following words:-
17 “or continued enrollment”.

18 SECTION 6. Said clause (c) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
19 hereby further amended by deleting the words “applicants for admissions” in line 15 and
20 inserting in place thereof the following words:- “such persons”.

21 SECTION 7. Clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is hereby
22 amended by inserting after the words “admission to” in line 17 the following words:- “or
23 continued enrollment in”.

24 SECTION 8. Said clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
25 hereby further amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 19 and inserting in
26 place thereof the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

27 SECTION 9. Said clause (d) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
28 hereby further amended by inserting after the words “admitted to” in line 20 the following
29 words:- “or enrolled in”.

30 SECTION 10. Clause (e) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
31 hereby amended by inserting after the word “admission” in line 22 the following words:- “or
32 continued enrollment”.

33 SECTION 11. Clause (g) of said section 2 of said chapter 151C, as so appearing, is
34 hereby amended by deleting the words “or national origin” in line 43 and inserting in place
35 thereof the following words:- “, national origin or special medical status”.

Joint Committee on Education
Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 625
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to corporal punishment
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Michael Kushmerek of 3 rd Worcester
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37G pertains to corporal punishment of pupils; physical restraints; and relevant regulation.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 71:37G to ensure that private educational institutions through the twelfth grade, in addition to public educational institutions, are banned from punishing students corporally. It additionally requires private schools to submit reports of physical restraint in instances where it was necessary to protect students to BESE.

HOUSE No. 625

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael P. Kushmerek

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 corporal punishment.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Michael P. Kushmerek</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 625

By Representative Kushmerek of Fitchburg, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 625) of Michael P. Kushmerek for legislation to prohibit corporal punishment of pupils at private educational institutions. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to corporal punishment.

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. Section 37G of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “committee”, in line 1, the
3 following words:- or a private educational institution providing a course of study through the
4 twelfth grade.

5 SECTION 2. Said section 37G of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further
6 amended by striking out the words “of the school committee”, in line 2, and inserting in place
7 thereof the following word:- thereof.

8 SECTION 3. Said section 37G of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further
9 amended by inserting after the word “committee”, in line 6, the following words:- or a private
10 educational institution providing a course of study through the twelfth grade.

11 SECTION 4. Said section 37G of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further
12 amended by striking out the words “of the school committee”, in lines 6 and 7, and inserting in
13 place thereof the following word:- thereof.

14 SECTION 5. Subsection (b) of said section 37G of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is
15 hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- When such an assault has occurred in a
16 private educational institution, the institution shall file a detailed report with the board of
17 education.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 576/ Senate, No S.368
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to reduce disparities created by exclusionary school discipline policies
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Rep. Fluker-Reid of Boston Senator Adam Gomez (Hampden)
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.478 of the 2023-2024 session; attached with language to H.4400, which was sent to HWM.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 71:37H pertains to policies relative to conduct of students and teachers; student handbook

SUMMARY

This bill adds a new section to MGL 71:37H permitting school committees to include a dress or grooming code in its code of student conduct, providing that the code permits students to wear any religiously or ethnically specific or significant head covering, subjects students to the same rules regardless of gender identity, does not have a disparate impact on students beyond a 10% discrepancy in violations per year, is clear, specific, and objective, does not allow employees to enforce the code through direct physical contact with the student or attire, and does not allow an employee to require a student to undress in front of anyone to comply with the code.

The bill also amends MGL 71:37H $\frac{3}{4}$ to prohibit students from being suspended or expelled for a violation or violations of the dress code standards, and requires DESE to update any rule, regulation, or policy, and to provide training, to effectuate the bill.

HOUSE No. 576

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brandy Fluker-Reid

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 reduce exclusionary discipline for violations of rules related to student grooming and dress.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Brandy Fluker-Reid</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Samantha Montaño</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/6/2025</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/6/2025</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>2/24/2025</i>
<i>Mindy Domb</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>	<i>4/1/2025</i>
<i>Russell E. Holmes</i>	<i>6th Suffolk</i>	<i>4/1/2025</i>
<i>Steven Owens</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/1/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 576

By Representative Fluker-Reid of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 576) of Brandy Fluker-Reid and others relative to exclusionary discipline for violations of rules related to student grooming and dress. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 4400 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to reduce exclusionary discipline for violations of rules related to student grooming and dress.

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. Section 37H of Chapter 71 as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition is
2 hereby amended by inserting after subsection (g) the following:-

3 (h) Any rules related to student dress or grooming included in a school district or charter
4 school’s code of student conduct or otherwise adopted by the school district or charter school
5 shall (1) make no distinction, discrimination, or restriction on account of sex or gender identity
6 (2) not treat students differently or have a disparate impact on any student based on that student’s
7 race, national origin, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity (3) be clear,
8 specific, and objective in defining terms, if used; (4) prohibit any school district or charter
9 school employee from enforcing any rules related to student grooming and dress by direct

10 physical contact with a student or a student's attire; and (5) prohibit any school district or charter
11 school employee from requiring a student to undress in front of any other individual, including
12 the enforcing school district or charter school employee, to comply with the rules related to dress
13 or grooming. Nothing in this section shall limit the rights students are already permitted under
14 Chapter 71, Section 82 of 21 Massachusetts General Laws or any other state or federal laws
15 relating to a student's right to freedom of expression.

16 SECTION 2. Section 37H ³/₄ of Chapter 71 as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition is
17 hereby amended by inserting as the last sentence of subsection (a) the following -: In addition to
18 any rights students may have, in no cases may a school district or charter school suspend a
19 student solely on the basis of an alleged violation of rules related to student dress and grooming,
20 provided however that a school district or charter school may require students to wear clothing of
21 a specific color, and provided further that nothing herein shall limit school districts or charter
22 school from taking action to prevent bullying of any student as defined in M.G.L Chapter 70,
23 section 370 or harassment of any student on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion,
24 national origin, or sexual orientation.

25 SECTION 3. The changes detailed in Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect 60 days after
26 passage of this act.

27 SECTION 4. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt,
28 promulgate, amend and rescind rules and regulations or formulate policies and recommendations
29 as necessary, including training, to effectuate the purpose of Sections 1 and 2

SENATE No. 368

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Adam Gómez

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 reduce exclusionary discipline for grooming and dress code violations.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Adam Gómez</i>	<i>Hampden</i>	
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2025</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>2/4/2025</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>2/4/2025</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>2/20/2025</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>2/27/2025</i>
<i>Liz Miranda</i>	<i>Second Suffolk</i>	<i>3/24/2025</i>
<i>Robyn K. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	<i>6/11/2025</i>

SENATE No. 368

By Mr. Gomez, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 368) of Adam Gomez, Michael J. Barrett, Joanne M. Comerford, Jason M. Lewis and other members of the Senate for legislation to reduce exclusionary discipline for grooming and dress code violations. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 290 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to reduce exclusionary discipline for grooming and dress code violations.

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. Section 37H of Chapter 71 as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition is
2 hereby amended by inserting after subsection (g) the following:-

3 (h) Any rules related to student dress or grooming included in a school district or charter
4 school’s code of student conduct or otherwise adopted by the school district or charter school
5 shall (1) make no distinction, discrimination, or restriction on account of sex or gender identity
6 (2) not treat students differently or have a disparate impact on any student based on that student’s
7 race, national origin, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity (3) be clear,
8 specific, and objective in defining terms, if used; (4) prohibit any school district or charter school
9 employee from enforcing any rules related to student grooming and dress by direct physical
10 contact with a student or a student's attire; and (5) prohibit any school district or charter school

11 employee from requiring a student to undress in front of any other individual, including the
12 enforcing school district or charter school employee, to comply with the rules related to dress or
13 grooming. Nothing in this section shall limit the rights students are already permitted under
14 Chapter 71, Section 82 of 21 Massachusetts General Laws or any other state or federal laws
15 relating to a student's right to freedom of expression.

16 SECTION 2. Section 37H ³/₄ of Chapter 71 as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition is
17 hereby amended by inserting as the last sentence of subsection (a) the following -: In addition to
18 any rights students may have, in no cases may a school district or charter school suspend a
19 student solely on the basis of an alleged violation of rules related to student dress and grooming,
20 provided however that a school district or charter school may require students to wear clothing of
21 a specific color, and provided further that nothing herein shall limit school districts or charter
22 school from taking action to prevent bullying of any student as defined in M.G.L Chapter 70,
23 section 370 or harassment of any student on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion,
24 national origin, or sexual orientation.

25 SECTION 3. The changes detailed in Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect 60 days after
26 passage of this act.

27 SECTION 4. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt,
28 promulgate, amend and rescind rules and regulations or formulate policies and recommendations
29 as necessary, including training, to effectuate the purpose of Sections 1 and 2.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 724
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act establishing a commission on school segregation
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Chynah Tyler of Boston
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.590 of the 2023-2024 Session; attached to H4408; House Rules.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	N/A

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a 20-member commission on school segregation in Massachusetts. The commission shall, among other things, assess current and historical trends of school segregation in Massachusetts and make recommendations for policy changes to advance school integration. The commission shall consult with and solicit input from DESE, the executive office of housing and economic development, the student advisory council, and any other entity the commission deems appropriate. The bill also requires the commission to conduct at least 5 public hearings and to file a report not later than 12 months following the first meeting of the commission.

HOUSE No. 724

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Chynah Tyler

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 establishing a commission on school segregation.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/10/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 724

By Representative Tyler of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 724) of Chynah Tyler for legislation to establish a special commission (including members of the General Court) on school segregation. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 590 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a commission on school segregation.

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

1 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be a commission
2 on school segregation in the commonwealth. The commission shall consist of 20 members: the
3 house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education, or their designees, who shall serve
4 as the co-chairs of the commission; the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on
5 housing, or their designees; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be
6 a teacher and one of whom shall be an alumnus of the METCO program; 1 of whom shall be
7 chosen by the chair of the Black & Latino Legislative Caucus; 1 of whom shall be a
8 superintendent chosen by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; 1 of whom
9 shall be a school committee member chosen by the Massachusetts Association of School
10 Committees; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Bridges Collaborative at the Century Foundation;

11 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education; 1 of whom
12 shall be chosen by Policy for Progress; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Metropolitan Area
13 Planning Council; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Smart Growth Alliance; 1 of whom shall be
14 a parent chosen by Massachusetts Parent United; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Urban
15 League of Springfield; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Boston Branch of the NAACP; 1 of
16 whom shall be chosen by Latinos for Education; 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Lawyers
17 Committee for Civil Rights; and 1 of whom shall be chosen by the Education Trust.

18 The commission shall: (i) assess the current state and historical trends of school
19 segregation in Massachusetts, both within districts and across district boundaries, (ii) identify
20 current and historical programs the Commonwealth or individual districts have used to increase
21 school integration, (iii) identify successful efforts to increase school integration in other states,
22 (iv) identify laws, regulations, and administrative directives that hinder the ability of the state or
23 individual districts to pursue school integration, (v) develop recommended policy changes to
24 advance the goal of school integration in the Commonwealth. In developing its
25 recommendations, the commission shall consider the impact of such recommendations on
26 educational equity and prioritize proposals that expand educational opportunities in historically
27 disadvantaged communities.

28 The commission shall consult with and solicit input from various persons and groups,
29 including, but not limited to: (i) the department of elementary and secondary education; (ii) the
30 executive office of housing and economic development; (iii) the student advisory council; (iv)
31 any other parties or entities the commission deems appropriate.

32 The first meeting of the commission shall take place within 60 days of the effective date
33 of this act. The commission shall file a report containing its findings and recommendations,
34 including legislative recommendations, if any, with the clerks of the house and senate not later
35 than 12 months following the first meeting of the commission. Prior to issuing its
36 recommendations, the commission shall conduct at least five public hearings to receive
37 testimony from members of the public, at least one of which shall take place in Boston, at least
38 one of which shall take place in Worcester, and one of which shall take place in Springfield.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 721
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to assesses school integration within the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Tyler of Boston
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.589 of the 2023-24 Session; Committee redrafted to H.4408; reported favorably to HWM.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 4:2A pertains to special legislative commissions

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a 13-member special legislative commission pursuant to MGL 4:2A to reassess school integration within the METCO program. The commission shall evaluate METCO's impact and make recommendations for school integration and METCO program improvements. The commission must convene no later than 180 days after the effective date of this act and submit its findings and recommendations to the clerks of the House and Senate and the governor within 1 year.

HOUSE No. 721

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Chynah Tyler

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 assesses school integration within the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/9/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 721

By Representative Tyler of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 721) of Chynah Tyler relative to the establishment of a special commission (including members of the General Court) to reassess school integration within the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) Program. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 589 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to assesses school integration within the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) 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 (a) There shall be a special legislative commission established pursuant to section 2A of
2 chapter 4 of the General Laws to reassess school integration within the Metropolitan Council for
3 Educational Opportunity program, hereinafter called the METCO program.

4 The commission shall consist of 13 members: 2 of whom shall be the chairs of the joint
5 committee on education or their designees, who shall serve as co-chairs; 1 of whom shall be
6 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives or a designee; 1 of whom shall be
7 appointed by the president of the senate or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the minority leader of
8 the house of representatives or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the minority leader of the senate
9 or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the secretary of education or a designee; 1 of whom shall be

10 the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee; 1 of whom shall be the
11 president of the Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts, Inc. or a designee; 1 of whom shall
12 be the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People New
13 England Area Conference or a designee; and 3 of whom shall be appointed by the governor and
14 shall be former participants in the METCO program.

15 The commission shall evaluate the historical impact of the METCO program in the
16 commonwealth and make recommendations to the general court regarding school integration and
17 improvements to the program.

18 (b) The commission shall convene beginning not later than 180 days after the effective
19 date of this act and meet not fewer than 4 times. The commission shall submit its findings and
20 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, by filing the same with the clerks of the
21 house of representatives and senate and the governor not later than 1 year after the effective date
22 of this act.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 721/ Senate, No. 437
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Priscila Sousa of 6 th Middlesex. Senator Pavel M. Payano (1 st Essex)
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	S.341 of session 2023-2024: Attached to S2663: Reported Favorable to Senate Ways and Means
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 69:1B pertains to the duties of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Chapter 741 of the Acts of 1965 pertains to school attendance.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 69:1B by inserting language that requires all children under 18 to attend school if they have not graduated from high school, which shall take effect on September 1, 2025. It also requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to develop and administer a three-year competitive grant pilot program for dropout prevention and recovery for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average. DESE shall submit an annual report analyzing the program's implementation to the legislature as well as a final report within six months of the conclusion of the three-year pilot

HOUSE No. 712

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Priscila S. Sousa

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 dropout prevention and student recovery.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Priscila S. Sousa</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 712

By Representative Sousa of Framingham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 712) of Priscila S. Sousa relative to dropout prevention and student recovery. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery.

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. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “attendance”, in line 120, the
3 following words:- ; provided, however, that all children under the age of 18 shall be required to
4 attend school if they have not graduated from high school.

5 SECTION 2. Chapter 741 of the acts of 1965 is hereby repealed.

6 SECTION 3. (a) Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary
7 education shall develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and
8 recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average.
9 The pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community
10 agencies serving students who reside in the districts.

11 (b) The dropout prevention and recovery programs shall target high school students who
12 have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school using at least 1 of the methods
13 described in clauses (i) to (iv), inclusive.

14 (i) Alternative education, which shall mean diploma or general educational development
15 granting programs that use evidence-based instruction and student support strategies designed to
16 meet the needs of the target population and prepare them for postsecondary education or training.
17 The evidence-based instruction and student support strategies may include, but shall not be
18 limited to: smaller class size, competency-based learning, project-based learning, work-based
19 learning, community service learning, graduation coaching, case management, family
20 engagement, wraparound support, restorative justice and social service referrals;

21 (ii) Graduation coaches, who shall be professionals with youth development and
22 academic support expertise and shall provide graduation plans to the target population. The
23 graduation plans shall include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals.
24 Graduation coaches shall also provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans,
25 navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure
26 appropriate social services.

27 (iii) Dropout outreach and recovery programs, which shall mean targeted outreach and
28 transition support for students who have dropped out of school. The programs shall, at a
29 minimum: (1) reach out to students; (1) determine their academic status and personal
30 circumstances; (3) assist students in enrolling in a high school or general educational
31 development program; and (4) provide transitional support and track student academic progress.

32 (iv) Expectant and parenting student support, which may include, but shall not be limited
33 to: (1) the development and implementation of school policies that set high academic
34 expectations, establish procedures for maternity and paternity leave, and provide flexible
35 scheduling; (2) expectant and parenting student liaisons who shall work with students to develop
36 graduation plans that include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals and who
37 provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements,
38 engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services; and
39 (3) annual data collection that shall include, but shall not limited to, the number of parenting
40 students in the district, any supports or interventions provided to the parenting students, and
41 parenting student progress toward and completion of secondary school.

42 (c) The department shall develop guidelines for an annual review of the progress being
43 made by each district and local community agency participating in the pilot program. Each
44 district and agency in the pilot program shall participate in any evaluation or accountability
45 process implemented by or authorized by the department. The department shall prepare and
46 submit an annual report describing and analyzing the implementation of the pilot program in all
47 participating districts. The report shall include, but shall not be limited to: (i) the number of
48 participating school districts, schools and local community agencies; (ii) the number of students
49 served and the type and duration of those services; (iii) the progress made by those students
50 toward attaining a high school diploma or general educational development; and (iv) the number
51 of students served who have attained a high school diploma or passed the general educational
52 development test. The department shall file its annual report not later than September 1 of each
53 year by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate who shall
54 forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education. The department shall file a final

55 report within 6 months of the conclusion of the 3-year pilot period that shall include an analysis
56 of all relevant data so as to determine the effectiveness of the program and specific legislative
57 recommendations, including whether the program should be expanded, maintained or
58 discontinued, by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate
59 who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education.

60 SECTION 4. Section 1 shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

SENATE No. 437

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Pavel M. 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 relative to dropout prevention and student recovery.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Pavel M. Payano

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Essex

SENATE No. 437

By Mr. Payano, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 437) of Pavel M. Payano for legislation relative to dropout prevention and student recovery. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 341 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery.

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

SECTION 1. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “attendance”, in line 120, the following words:- ; provided, however, that all children under the age of 18 shall be required to attend school if they have not graduated from high school.

SECTION 2. Chapter 741 of the acts of 1965 is hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. (a) Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary education shall develop and administer a 3-year pilot program for dropout prevention and recovery programs for school districts with annual dropout rates greater than the state average. The pilot program shall be a competitive grant process for school districts or local community agencies serving students who reside in the districts.

(b) The dropout prevention and recovery programs shall target high school students who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school using at least 1 of the methods described in clauses (i) to (iv), inclusive.

(i) Alternative education, which shall mean diploma or general educational development granting programs that use evidence-based instruction and student support strategies designed to meet the needs of the target population and prepare them for postsecondary education or training. The evidence-based instruction and student support strategies may include, but shall not be limited to: smaller class size, competency-based learning, project-based learning, work-based learning, community service learning, graduation coaching, case management, family engagement, wraparound support, restorative justice and social service referrals;

(ii) Graduation coaches, who shall be professionals with youth development and academic support expertise and shall provide graduation plans to the target population. The graduation plans shall include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals. Graduation coaches shall also provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services.

(iii) Dropout outreach and recovery programs, which shall mean targeted outreach and transition support for students who have dropped out of school. The programs shall, at a minimum: (1) reach out to students; (1) determine their academic status and personal circumstances; (3) assist students in enrolling in a high school or general educational development program; and (4) provide transitional support and track student academic progress.

(iv) Expectant and parenting student support, which may include, but shall not be limited to: (1) the development and implementation of school policies that set high academic expectations, establish procedures for maternity and paternity leave, and provide flexible scheduling; (2) expectant and parenting student liaisons who shall work with students to develop graduation plans that include, at a minimum, academic, career and postsecondary goals and who provide follow-up support to complete the graduation plans, navigate academic requirements, engage families, overcome socio-emotional barriers and secure appropriate social services; and (3) annual data collection that shall include, but shall not be limited to, the number of parenting students in the district, any supports or interventions provided to the parenting students, and parenting student progress toward and completion of secondary school.

(c) The department shall develop guidelines for an annual review of the progress being made by each district and local community agency participating in the pilot program. Each district and agency in the pilot program shall participate in any evaluation or accountability process implemented by or authorized by the department. The department shall prepare and submit an annual report describing and analyzing the implementation of the pilot program in all participating districts. The report shall include, but shall not be limited to: (i) the number of participating school districts, schools and local community agencies; (ii) the number of students served and the type and duration of those services; (iii) the progress made by those students toward attaining a high school diploma or general educational development; and (iv) the number of students served who have attained a high school diploma or passed the general educational development test. The department shall file its annual report not later than September 1 of each year by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education. The department shall file a final

report within 6 months of the conclusion of the 3-year pilot period that shall include an analysis of all relevant data so as to determine the effectiveness of the program and specific legislative recommendations, including whether the program should be expanded, maintained or discontinued, by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate who shall forward a copy of the report to the joint committee on education.

SECTION 4. Section 1 shall take effect on September 1, 2025.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 663
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to educational equity for gifted and beyond grade-level children
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Kelly Pease of 4 th Hampden.
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	Similar Language and Topic as H662, H621, and H622
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.523 of the 2023-2024 session; study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	<p>MGL 69:1 pertains to the intent of Title XII: Education and providing a public education system of sufficient quality for all Commonwealth children.</p> <p>MGL 69:1I pertains to assessment instruments for evaluation of public school performance.</p> <p>MGL 70 pertains to school funds and state aid for public schools.</p> <p>MGL 71:38G pertains to certification for certain teaching and administrative positions, provisional and standard certificates, policies and guidelines regarding requirements and qualifications, continuing education, and certificate renewals.</p> <p>MGL 71:38Q pertains to professional development plans for educators.</p> <p>MGL 71:38Q½ pertains to curriculum accommodation plans.</p> <p>MGL 71A:1 pertains to findings and declarations regarding English language instruction in public schools.</p> <p>MGL 71B pertains to children with special needs.</p> <p>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination based on disability.</p> <p>20 USC s. 6312 pertains to local educational agency plans.</p> <p>20 USC s. 6611 pertains to formula grants to states.</p>

20 USC s. 6613 pertains to local use of funds.

20 USC s. 7801(27) outlines the federal definition for “Gifted and Talented”.

SUMMARY

This bill creates a new chapter of the General Laws, Chapter 71C, titled “Education of Gifted and Talented and Beyond Grade-level Students,” which defines terms related to gifted students; mandates new responsibilities for BESE regarding education for gifted children; and establishes new reporting requirements for school districts and DESE regarding gifted education. It also amends MGL 69:1A by establishing an “office of beyond grade-level and gifted and talented education” within DESE; amends MGL 70 by requiring DESE to establish a professional development program in gifted and talented education; and amends MGL 71:38G by mandating new training requirements related to gifted and talented education for educator certification.

HOUSE No. 663

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kelly W. Pease

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 educational equity for gifted and beyond grade-level children.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>1/6/2025</i>
<i>Margaret R. Scarsdale</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>	<i>5/23/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 663

By Representative Pease of Westfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 663) of Kelly W. Pease relative to education for gifted and beyond grade-level children. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to educational equity for gifted and beyond grade-level children.

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. Within Title XII, after Chapter 71B, insert Chapter 71C, titled, “Education
2 of Gifted and Beyond Grade-level Students” together with the following Sections:

3 Section 1. Purposes

4 The purposes of this chapter are--

5 (1) to ensure that all gifted and beyond grade-level children have available to them a free
6 appropriate public education that emphasizes gifted education and related services designed to
7 meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent
8 living;

9 (2) to ensure that the rights of gifted and/or beyond grade-level children and parents of
10 such children are protected;

11 (3) to assist the Department and school districts of the Commonwealth to support and
12 uncover emerging talent and to provide the opportunity for gifted and/or beyond grade-level
13 children to experience an education so they, too, can develop to their potential as specified for all
14 children in Section 1 of Chapter 69;

15 (b) to assist districts in the implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated,
16 multidisciplinary, interagency system of intervention services for gifted and beyond grade-level
17 children and their families;

18 (c) to ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve
19 developmental, social, and emotional, as well as academic results for gifted and/or beyond grade-
20 level children by supporting system improvement activities; coordinated research and personnel
21 preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and support; and technology
22 development and media services; and

23 (d) to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to recognize, educate and develop
24 gifted and beyond grade-level children.

25 Section 2. Definitions

26 The following words as used in this chapter shall have the following meanings, unless the
27 context clearly requires otherwise:

28 “Beyond grade-level”, students achieving or capable of achieving beyond the curriculum
29 level appropriate for the majority of students of the same chronological age. Beyond grade-level
30 students exist in every race, ethnicity, gender, religion, geographical and income groups; these
31 children may also be English Learners and/or have one or more disabilities. Their learning needs,

32 growth trajectories and domains of strengths vary from individual to individual and, over time,
33 and are impacted by their environment.

34 “Board”, the board of elementary and secondary education

35 "Department", the department of elementary and secondary education.

36 "Free appropriate public education", gifted education and related services as gifted and
37 beyond-grade level children may require so they may attain, through their public school
38 education, the personal developmental goals, qualities, characteristics and skills, which other
39 children generally acquire through being challenged appropriately to their needs, in public
40 schools using the education standards established by statute or established by regulations
41 promulgated by the board of education. Such gifted education and related services provided to
42 beyond grade-level or gifted children shall be reasonably calculated to enable them to make
43 progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.

44 “Gifted and talented”, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement
45 capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific
46 academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in
47 order to fully develop those capabilities (the same as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act
48 (ESSA), P.L. 114-95 (Title VIII, Part A, Definition 27); (20 USC 7801(27))). The term includes
49 children who are defined as beyond grade level, performing or capable of performing beyond the
50 curriculum level appropriate for the majority of students of the same chronological age. The term
51 gifted and talented, as used in this section, shall include highly or profoundly gifted, and twice-
52 exceptional children, unless otherwise specified. Gifted and talented children exist in every race,
53 ethnicity, gender, religion, geographical and income groups; these children may also be English

54 Learners and/or have one or more disabilities. Their learning needs, growth trajectories and
55 domains of strengths vary from individual to individual and, over time, and are impacted by their
56 environment.

57 “Gifted education”, educational, programs and assignments including to special classes
58 and programs or services designed to develop the educational and developmental potential of
59 gifted children including, but not limited to, educational placements of children by school
60 committees, the departments of public health, mental health, developmental services, youth
61 services and children and families in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and the
62 regulations set forth by the board. Such programs, services and assignments are to be reasonably
63 calculated to enable the child to make effective progress in light of the child’s circumstances.

64 “Gifted school age child”, a school age child in a public or non-public school setting
65 who, because of advanced learning abilities, is unable to progress effectively, in light of the
66 child’s circumstances, in the regular education program and, thereby, requires special education
67 services; including a school age child who requires only a related service or related services to
68 ensure access of the gifted child to a free appropriate public education.

69 No child shall be denied gifted services solely because such child shall have failed the
70 statewide assessment tests authorized pursuant to section 1I of chapter 69 or other academic
71 assessment. The use of the word gifted in this section shall not be used to provide a basis for
72 labeling or stigmatizing the child or defining the needs of the child and shall in no way limit the
73 services, programs, and opportunities provided to such child.

74 “Highly or profoundly gifted”, certain gifted and talented children who present in low
75 incidence within the population of children requiring gifted and talented education.

76 “Most productive environment”, the educational placement that assures that, to the
77 maximum extent appropriate, gifted and beyond grade-level children, including children in
78 public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated together with other children
79 who are their academic and developmental peers in the regular public school classroom or in
80 special classes, or separate schooling when their appropriate education cannot be achieved
81 satisfactorily within the regular public school classroom.

82 “Regular education”, the school program and pupil assignment which normally leads the
83 majority of the student population to achieve the necessary knowledge and skills required to
84 successfully advance to college preparatory or technical education or to a career.

85 “School age child”, any person of ages five through twenty-one who has not attained a
86 high school diploma or its equivalent.

87 “School age child requiring gifted education”, a gifted child who requires special gifted
88 education as determined in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and the regulations set
89 forth by the board.

90 “Talent Development”, Finding, recognizing and cultivating strengths of a student’s
91 emergent potential.

92 “Twice-exceptional”, students who may be gifted and talented or beyond grade-level who
93 may also have one or more learning disabilities.

94 Section 3. Board to Create Regulations

95 The board shall promulgate regulations regarding educational services, programs and
96 learning opportunities for gifted and talented children, beyond grade-level children, twice-
97 exceptional children, and highly or profoundly gifted children, including, but not limited to:

98 A comprehensive definition of each above term, along with other related terms, which
99 definition shall emphasize a thorough, narrative description of each child's development potential
100 so as to minimize the possibility of stigmatization and to assure a free and appropriate public
101 education in the most productive environment for the child.

102 Defining state-, district-, and school-level responsibility, oversight, and associated
103 accountability standards to ensure that each such child is recognized and educated according to
104 the requirements of Chapter 69, Section 1 and of Title XII, generally, and that these measures
105 extend to gifted and beyond grade-level children of every race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion,
106 geographical and income groups, English Learner or disability status. This shall include a talent
107 development framework to find and cultivate strengths of a student's latent and emergent
108 potential as well as providing a learning environment that acknowledges and supports the
109 academic and social-emotional needs of students already achieving at advanced levels, and
110 encourages growth beyond proficiency.

111 Provisions for the education of all gifted children such that their needs are met through
112 programming provided within-district and, for highly and profoundly gifted children, within
113 programs of the special education collaboratives of the Commonwealth, within state-operated or
114 -contracted day or residential schools, or within private placements.

115 Section 4: Agreements between school committees or with public or private schools

116 The school committee of any city, town or school district may, to meet its obligations
117 under section three, with the approval of the department enter into an agreement with any other
118 school committee to jointly provide gifted and talented education or, subject to the consent of the
119 parent or guardian affected thereby and subject to constitutional limitations, may enter into an
120 agreement with any public or private school, agency, or institution to provide the necessary
121 gifted and talented education within the city, town or school district; provided, however, that
122 every school committee, where feasible, shall be associated with an educational collaborative
123 providing services to certain gifted and talented children who are highly or profoundly gifted,
124 and/or are low incidence in the population of children requiring gifted and talented education.

125 In the case of an agreement between school committees to jointly provide gifted and
126 talented education, said agreement shall designate one city, town or school district as the
127 operating agent. Funds received by such operating agent from other cities, towns or school
128 districts or appropriated by such operating agent for the purposes of such agreement, in addition
129 to gifts and grants, shall be deposited with and held as a separate account by its treasurer. The
130 school committee may apply said funds to the costs of services or programs operated pursuant to
131 the agreement without further appropriation.

132 Section 5: Costs or obligations; payment; budget

133 Any school committee which provides or arranges for the provision of gifted education
134 for highly or profoundly gifted or twice-exceptional children and/or other low-incidence gifted
135 children pursuant to the provisions of section four shall pay for such special education personnel,
136 materials and equipment, tuition, room and board, transportation, rent and consultant services as
137 are necessary for the provision of gifted and talented education; provided, however, that the

138 school committee shall not be obligated to pay for health care goods or services to the extent that
139 such goods or services constitute medically necessary treatment for disease, illness, injury, or
140 bodily dysfunction which would be covered by a third party payor but for a school-aged child's
141 eligibility for such goods and services under this chapter; provided, further, that the
142 determination of medical necessity shall be made by the third party payor under its standard
143 program of utilization review, that the school-aged gifted and talented child with a disability or
144 his parent or guardian if he is a minor shall have the right to freedom of choice in the election of
145 the provider of health care goods and services, and that the provider of health care goods and
146 services does not have a direct or indirect financial relationship to the school committee; and
147 provided, further, that school committees may accept payment for health care goods and services
148 provided by certified school committee employees from third party payors other than the
149 program of medical care and assistance established under chapter one hundred and eighteen E
150 except as provided under section seventy-two of chapter forty-four. Where no such third party
151 payor is available, school committees are not relieved of their responsibilities under this chapter.

152 Section 6. Annual Reporting by Districts on Gifted Education

153 Each school district shall report to the department, on an annual basis, the following
154 elements as they are described in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (Public Law 114-95):

155 a description of the manner in which its application of federal funds, as per 20 U.S.C. s
156 6312, will assist schools in identifying and serving gifted and talented students.

157 a description of the manner in which its application of federal funds will provide services,
158 programs and activities, as per 20 U.S.C s. 6613, which will address the learning needs of gifted
159 and talented students

160 a description of the manner in which its application of federal funds will provide training,
161 as per 20 U.S.C s. 6613, to support the identification of students, of every grade level, who are
162 gifted and talented, including high-ability students who have not been formally identified for
163 gifted education services, and implementing instructional practices that support the education of
164 such students, such as

165 early entrance to kindergarten

166 enrichment, acceleration and curriculum compacting activities

167 dual or concurrent enrollment programs in secondary school and post-secondary
168 education.

169 The manner in which each homeless child or youth shall be provided services for gifted
170 and talented and beyond grade-level students comparable to services offered to other students in
171 the school selected.

172 Each school district shall report to the department, on an annual basis, the total number
173 of gifted and/or beyond grade level children served; and the number by each of race/ethnicity,
174 gender, disability under IDEA, disability under Section 504, limited English proficiency, and
175 eligibility for free and reduced lunch.

176 Section 7. Annual Reporting by the Department

177 The department, each year, shall publish in a prominent location on its website the
178 following:

179 a description as required by 20 U.S.C. s. 6611 of how the department will improve the
180 skills of teachers, principals or other school leaders in order to enable them to identify students
181 who are gifted and talented and provide instruction based on the needs of such students.

182 a description of how the department’s application of federal Title I funds through
183 services, programs, and activities shall address the learning needs of gifted and talented students.

184 a description for each district as to the elements reported pursuant to Section 6 of Chapter
185 71C.

186 a description of the information related to gifted and talented and beyond grade-level
187 professional development reported to the department pursuant to Chapter 71 Section 38Q.

188 a listing of specific school districts claiming to have gifted and talented programs and
189 their contact information

190 SECTION 2. Section 1 of Chapter 69 of the General laws, as appearing in the 2020
191 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the phrase, “including a limited English
192 proficient student as defined in section 1 of chapter 71A,” the following words:

193 “ including beyond grade-level and gifted and talented students as defined by regulations
194 established pursuant to Section 3 of Chapter 71C”

195 SECTION 3. Chapter 69 Section 1A of the General Laws, as appearing in the Official
196 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following text at the end of the second paragraph.

197 “ There shall be within the department an office of beyond grade-level and gifted and
198 talented education to assist the commissioner in overseeing and monitoring the development and
199 implementation of appropriate beyond grade-level and gifted and talented education and assist

200 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in meeting its obligations to gifted and
201 talented and beyond grade-level students under chapter 69 section 1B. The office shall compile
202 best practices relative to effective programs, services, and techniques to assist beyond-grade-
203 level and gifted and talented students in receiving an education meaningful for them and shall
204 disseminate such information to school districts on, at least, an annual basis. The department
205 shall allocate its resources to employ a full-time director of said office responsible for education
206 of beyond-grade-level and gifted and talented students throughout the commonwealth. Said
207 director position shall be filled by a person with qualifications, experience and demonstrated
208 expertise in the field of gifted education policy.”

209 SECTION 4. Chapter 69 Section 1B of the General Laws, as appearing in the Official
210 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting “ gifted and talented programs and the number of
211 students served within,” following “special programs, ” in the third line of the seventh paragraph.

212 SECTION 5. Chapter 70 of the General Laws, as appearing in the Official Edition, is
213 hereby amended by inserting the following new section:

214 “Section 16. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish a
215 professional development program in gifted and talented education which will provide access to
216 certain educators across the Commonwealth, fifteen hours of professional development in the
217 specific field of the education of gifted and talented and beyond grade-level students. Fifteen
218 hours of such professional development shall be completed in any five year period for the
219 renewal of licensure for any educators, including administrators, whose classrooms, schools, or
220 districts contain one or more beyond-grade level student or students identified, or who could be
221 identified as gifted and talented as defined in Section 2 of Chapter 71C, or as determined by a

222 school district professional or any other professional working in the field of psychology, gifted
223 education or who regularly provides services of educational assessments.”

224 SECTION 6. Chapter 71 Section 38G of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
225 Official Edition, shall be amended by inserting after the sentence, “In addition to any other
226 requirements in this section, in order to receive a provisional or standard educator certificate,
227 persons applying for such certification shall have completed such courses or training sessions as
228 the board shall require in second language acquisition” the following words:

229 “In addition to any other requirements of this section, in order to receive a provisional or
230 standard educator certificate, persons applying for such certification shall have completed such
231 courses or training sessions as the board shall require in gifted and talented education. The board
232 shall establish such requirements as recommended by generally-accepted standards in the field of
233 gifted and talented education.

234 In addition to any other requirements of this section, the board shall require, as a
235 provision of an administrator's or an educator's initial certification, that all educators and
236 administrators shall have training in strategies for effective education of beyond grade-level and
237 gifted and talented students as defined in Section 2 of Chapter 71C.”

238 SECTION 7. Chapter 71 Section 38Q of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
239 Official Edition, shall be amended by inserting in the first paragraph the following text:

240 “ In any school district with gifted and talented students as defined in Section 2 of
241 Chapter 71C, the plan shall provide training for administrators and teachers in gifted education,
242 and shall state how such training will support the needs of gifted and talented students. Each
243 school district shall report to the department, on an annual basis, the gifted education training

244 provided by the district, the number of educators in the district receiving such training and the
245 total number of hours received. Each school district shall report to the department, on an annual
246 basis, the specific ways in which its Title II Part A programs and activities address the learning
247 needs of beyond grade-level and gifted and talented students and is improving the education of
248 beyond grade-level and gifted and talented students.”

249 after the sentence, “In any school district with limited English proficient students, the
250 plan shall provide training for teachers in second language acquisition techniques for the re-
251 certification of teachers and administrators.”

252 SECTION 8. Chapter 71 Section 38Q of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
253 Official Edition, shall be amended by inserting the following sentence after the second sentence
254 of the second paragraph, which ends with the words “limited English proficient students.” the
255 following text:

256 “ The plan shall include data that demonstrates, statewide and by school district, the types
257 of professional development provided for educators who work with beyond grade-level, gifted
258 and talented, highly or profoundly gifted, and twice-exceptional students, all as defined in
259 Section 2 of Chapter 71C.”

260 SECTION 9. Chapter 71 Section 38Q1/2 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
261 Official Edition, shall be amended by inserting after the sentence ending in “under Chapter 71B”
262 the following words:

263 “The plan shall provide pathways of accommodations and interventions for beyond
264 grade-level, gifted and talented, highly or profoundly gifted, and twice-exceptional students, as
265 they are defined in Section 2 of Chapter 71C, including, among such provisions, the specification

266 of curriculum compacting and acceleration protocols for individual subjects or whole grade, as
267 appropriate for the student.”

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 662
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to prohibit age discrimination
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Kelly Pease of 4 th Hampden.
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	Similar topic as H663, H661, and H622
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H533 of the 2023-2024 session; study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 76:5 pertains to the right to attend public schools in the town where the student resides, consequences of violations, and preventing discrimination in admissions to public schools.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 76:5 by adding the following sentence: “No person admitted to any public school shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of age.”

HOUSE No. 662

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kelly W. Pease

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 prohibit age discrimination.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>1/6/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 662

By Representative Pease of Westfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 662) of Kelly W. Pease for legislation to prohibit age discrimination in public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to prohibit age discrimination.

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 5 of Chapter 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is
2 hereby amended by inserting at the end thereof, the following sentence:

3 “No person admitted to any public school shall be discriminated against in obtaining the
4 advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of age.”

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 661
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to equitable accelerated learning opportunities for public school students
<u>SPONSOR(S)</u>	Representative Kelly Pease of 4 th Hampden.
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.520 of session 2023-2024: study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 69:1B pertains to the board of elementary and secondary education; duties. MGL 71: 38Q pertains to professional development plans; statewide assistance plan

SUMMARY

Requires BESE to establish regulation for an academic accelerated program for student K-12. This regulation shall provide a framework, and direct school district to provide age-appropriate curricula, instruction, and pacing for students who demonstrate readiness for academic content or skill beyond the curriculum ordinarily taught for students their age. All students must be tested to see if they qualify for an accelerated program, and if so then a plan for the student academic goals, and social development must be created. DESE will provide professional training for schools on how to create an accelerated program. The bill also requires DESE to consider a variety of strategies for accelerated programs.

HOUSE No. 661

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kelly W. Pease

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 equitable accelerated learning opportunities for public school students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>1/6/2025</i>
<i>Francisco E. Paulino</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 661

By Representative Pease of Westfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 661) of Kelly W. Pease and Francisco E. Paulino relative to accelerated learning opportunities for public school students. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to equitable accelerated learning opportunities for public school students.

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 1B of Chapter 69 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition
2 is hereby amended by inserting after the 25th paragraph the following paragraphs:

3 “The board of elementary and secondary education shall establish regulations regarding,
4 in the K-12 public schools of the Commonwealth, the use of whole-grade and content-specific
5 academic acceleration designed to match the level, complexity, and pace of instruction of the
6 curriculum to the readiness and motivation of the student; enabling accelerated students to
7 master knowledge and skills, as they may be capable, at a rate faster or at an age earlier than the
8 typical age-average student. Said regulations shall authorize, provide a framework, and direct
9 school districts to provide access to appropriate curriculum, instruction and pacing for students
10 who demonstrate readiness for academic content, skills or understanding at a level beyond the
11 curriculum ordinarily taught to students of a certain age.

12 To ensure equity in education, the acceleration regulations established pursuant to this
13 section shall direct that schools evaluate all children to determine the need for acceleration
14 accommodations, not only those students recommended for acceleration by teachers and parents.
15 Said regulations shall require the use of screening assessments, and an evaluation tool designed
16 to take personal bias out of the decision-making process when considering a child for
17 acceleration; and to ensure that acceleration decisions are evidence-based, systematic,
18 thoughtful, well-reasoned, and defensible. Such regulations shall require that any determination
19 made regarding acceleration accommodations for a student shall be documented in a written
20 acceleration plan including, at a minimum, relevant academic and social-emotional supports.

21 Said written acceleration plan shall be implemented by administrators, counselors, and
22 teachers. All districts shall provide professional development for educators to ensure a
23 supportive environment for accelerated students and document it in their plans pursuant to
24 Chapter 71 Section 38Q . The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
25 develop and make available professional development and other assistance for implementation of
26 acceleration plans.

27 In developing said regulations, the department shall consider, at a minimum, the
28 following acceleration strategies:

- 29 Single subject acceleration;
- 30 Combined classes (multi-age);
- 31 Online courses and open educational resources;
- 32 Concurrent or dual enrollment, and early college;

- 33 Curriculum compacting;
- 34 Credit by examination or prior experience;
- 35 Credit toward graduation requirements for high-school level courses taken during
- 36 elementary and middle school
- 37 Competency/mastery-based learning and advancement;
- 38 Whole-grade acceleration (one or more);
- 39 Self-paced instruction;
- 40 Mentoring;
- 41 Early entrance to first grade;
- 42 Early graduation”

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 622
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to an expert panel on the education of advanced and gifted students.
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Meghan Kilcoyne of 12 th Worcester.
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	Similar subject matter to H661, 662, and 663.
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	N/A
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	N/A

SUMMARY

Establishes a gifted education expert panel with 9 members assigned to develop recommendation to ensure advanced and gifted students in the commonwealth are being educated and developed appropriately within the public education system. Includes language that list who will be a member for the panel. Requires the panel to meet at least 4 times a year for 4 years. After 2 years the co-chairs are required to determine the remaining time period the panel will meet. Requires the panel to create legislative recommendation the legislature, the secretary and the commissioners of early education and care, elementary and secondary education and higher education. The bill includes language on what must be in the recommendations. Requires the secretary of education, in coordination with the panel co-chairs, and the commissioners on EEC, elementary and secondary education, and Higher education to prepare and submit an annual report on the activities of the panel by June 30. Required the panel to have the first meeting within 60 days of the bill passing.

HOUSE No. 622

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Meghan K. Kilcoyne

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 an expert panel on the education of advanced and gifted students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Meghan K. Kilcoyne</i>	<i>12th Worcester</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>5/30/2025</i>
<i>Bridget Plouffe</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>	<i>6/4/2025</i>
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>6/13/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 622

By Representative Kilcoyne of Clinton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 622) of Meghan K. Kilcoyne that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education be authorized to establish an advisory panel for the development of advanced and gifted students. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to an expert panel on the education of advanced and gifted students.

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.

2 (a) There shall be a gifted education expert panel to develop recommendations to ensure
3 advanced and gifted students in the commonwealth are being educated and developed
4 appropriately within the public education system and are thereby provided the opportunity to
5 reach their full potential and to lead lives as participants in the political and social life of the
6 commonwealth and as contributors to its economy. The panel shall consist of 9 members: the
7 secretary of education, who shall serve as co-chair, and 8 persons appointed by the secretary, in
8 collaboration with the commissioners of early education and care, elementary and secondary
9 education, and higher education, who shall be experts on gifted education; provided, however,
10 that 2 shall be selected from a list provided to the secretary from the chairs of the joint committee
11 on education and the chairs of the joint committee on higher education, and that 2 shall be
12 selected from a list provided to the secretary from the Massachusetts Association for Gifted

13 Education. Panel members shall each be appointed for a term of 4 years. The panel shall
14 designate a co-chair every new term. No member, with the exception of the secretary, shall serve
15 for more than 2 consecutive terms. The members of the panel shall serve without compensation
16 but may be reimbursed for expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred in the performance of
17 their duties. Panel members shall not be, by virtue of their membership, state employees under
18 chapter 268A of the General Laws. The panel shall meet not less than 4 times annually for the
19 first 4 years. After the first two years, the panel co-chairs shall determine the time period in
20 which the panel shall continue to meet.

21 (b) The panel shall advise the legislature, the departments of early education and care,
22 elementary and secondary education and higher education and the executive office of education
23 on the development, refinement and implementation of state plans and policies for the
24 development of the state's advanced and gifted children including, but not limited to, education
25 of the general populace regarding gifted children, appropriate strategies to identify and serve
26 gifted children to meet their unique academic and other developmental needs including activities
27 and programs through the education collaboratives, district and school assistance centers, and
28 readiness centers to support gifted education for children from age three through college,
29 inclusive. The panel shall make recommendations to the legislature, the secretary and the
30 commissioners of early education and care, elementary and secondary education and higher
31 education on the alignment, coordination and implementation, including, but not limited to the
32 following areas:

33 (1) strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of academic, social and emotional curricula
34 on the unique academic, other developmental and psychological needs of gifted children, that (i)
35 is anchored in rich and relevant content; (ii) uses a wide variety of types of activities to support

36 content under study; (iii) emphasizes the role of community interaction in promoting social
37 skills; and (iv) contains a balanced instructional design focused on developing academic, social,
38 and emotional skills.

39 (2) effective instructional practices to promote advanced and gifted children's
40 understanding of unique social and emotional feelings and experiences.

41 (3) pre-service and in-service professional development and training for educators on
42 gifted education children, over-sensitivities commonly experienced by many, the administration
43 of screenings and assessments, and the analysis of data gained through screenings and
44 assessments to make instructional decisions to improve the academic, social, and emotional skill
45 acquisition in young children;

46 (4) developmentally appropriate screening and assessment to identify, monitor and report
47 on gifted children's progress toward achieving benchmarks in developmental skills such as
48 sociability, emotional regulation, organization, time management, persistence, resilience,
49 productive use of coaches, compensatory skills, and learning how to experience and react to
50 failure, across educational levels from age three to college, inclusive;

51 (5) family partnership strategies for improving the quality, frequency and efficacy of
52 homeschool interactions to support gifted children's development, as well as for building
53 community capacity to support gifted children within their families; and

54 (6) action steps to implement the research-based recommendations contained in reports
55 written by experts in gifted child development, academically and otherwise.

56 (7) action steps to implement research-based recommendations contained in reports
57 written by experts in gifted education on student screening and teacher preparation methods with
58 respect to gifted children's needs including, but not limited to, highly or profoundly gifted and
59 twice exceptional students. The panel shall also advise on leveraging existing and new federal
60 grant opportunities and private funding to support gifted children from age three to college,
61 inclusive. Subject to appropriation, the secretary and commissioners of early education and care,
62 elementary and secondary education and higher education may appoint personnel necessary to
63 coordinate the activities of the panel and provide administrative support as needed.

64 SECTION 2. The secretary of education, in coordination with the gifted education expert
65 panel co-chair and the commissioners of early education and care, elementary and secondary
66 education and higher education, shall prepare and submit an annual report on the activities of the
67 gifted education expert panel in advising the departments and the activities of the departments.
68 The report shall include information on the alignment and collaboration between the 3
69 commissioners, as overseen by the secretary, on gifted child development for children from age 3
70 to college, inclusive, and on teacher training and professional development on gifted children,
71 their education, and all subject areas covered in clauses (1) to (6), inclusive, of subsection (b) of
72 section 1. The report shall also include a description of all state and federal funding related to
73 gifted education and the programs such funding supports. The secretary shall submit the report
74 not later than June 30 to the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, who shall
75 forward the report to the senate and house chairs of the joint committee on education and the
76 senate and house chairs of the joint committee on higher education. The report shall also be
77 made available on the websites of the departments of early education and care, elementary and

78 secondary education and higher education and on the website of the executive office of
79 education.

80 SECTION 3. The gifted education expert panel shall conduct its first meeting not later
81 than 60 days after the effective date of this act.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 621
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to state engagement in the education of gifted and talented students.
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Maghan K Kilcoyne of 12 th Worcester.
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	This bill covers a similar topic area as H622, H661, and H662.
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	N/A
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 69:1B pertains to the duties of the board of secondary and elementary education.

SUMMARY

Expands BESE duties by amending MGL 69:1B, adding language that requires BESE to create state policies and procedures that ensure the appropriate education to gifted student in K-12. BESE is required to survey schools and districts annually on policies to identify and educate gifted students, and the number of gifted students the school educates disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income status, and grade level. Requires BESE publish this data on there website. The BESE is required to publish an annual report describing how the state and districts are developing structural capacity to provide gifted, talented and advanced students the opportunity to reach their full potential.

HOUSE No. 621

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Meghan K. Kilcoyne

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 state engagement in the education of gifted and talented students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Meghan K. Kilcoyne</i>	<i>12th Worcester</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>5/30/2025</i>
<i>Bridget Plouffe</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>	<i>6/4/2025</i>
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>6/13/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 621

By Representative Kilcoyne of Clinton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 621) of Meghan K. Kilcoyne relative to the education of advanced and gifted students in grades K-12. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to state engagement in the education of gifted and talented students.

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 1B of Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting at the end of the sixth paragraph, the following three paragraphs:

3 The board shall create state policies and procedures to ensure appropriate education of
4 advanced and gifted students in all grades K-12.

5 The board shall survey schools and districts on an annual basis to report the following:

6 (a) The policies and procedures they have in place to identify and educate their
7 advanced, gifted and talented students

8 (b) the number of advanced and gifted students, disaggregated by race/ethnicity and
9 low-income, identified and served at each of the K-12 grade levels

10 The board shall compile and publish the information received regarding (a) and (b) in an
11 annual compiled report, and as part of the school and district profiles on the department website.

12 The board shall ensure that district programming for advanced students is based on best
13 practices identified within the field of gifted education, and that gifted, talented and advanced
14 students of all ages receive effective challenges within their zones of proximal development
15 throughout the ordinary school day. The Board shall publish an annual report describing how the
16 state and districts are developing structural capacity to provide gifted, talented and advanced
17 students the opportunity to reach their full potential to fulfill, for them, the intent stated in section
18 1 of this chapter.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 620
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to ensure educational rights are upheld for incarcerated youth
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Mary S. Keefe of Worcester
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H515 of session 2023-2024: Study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	<p>MGL 15A:39 pertains to secondary education students qualified to enroll in higher education institutions.</p> <p>MGL 71 pertains to public schools in the Commonwealth.</p> <p>MGL 71B:11A states that the department of education shall provide special education to school aged children with a disability who are incarcerated in county houses of correction.</p> <p>MGL 124:1 pertains to the powers and duties of the Commissioner of Correction.</p> <p>MGL 124:2 pertains to the duties of deputy commissioners.</p> <p>MGL 127 pertains to officers and inmates of penal and reformatory institutions as well as paroles and pardons.</p> <p>MGL 127:39 pertains to the use of restrictive housing and conditions of confinement in correctional facilities.</p> <p>MGL 127:48 pertains to the establishment and maintenance of education, training, and employment programs for persons committed to the custody of the Department of Correction.</p> <p>MGL 127:49A pertains to the evaluation of inmates for participation in education, training, and employment programs outside correctional facilities.</p>

SUMMARY

This bill amends existing law by expanding on the educational rights and opportunities provided to incarcerated school-age individuals, including enrollment in Massachusetts public institutions of higher education; credit for coursework towards graduation requirements; special education

services; and minimum time allotments for classroom instruction and educational opportunities.

HOUSE No. 620

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Mary S. Keefe

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 ensure educational rights are upheld for incarcerated youth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>6/12/2025</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>6/9/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 620

By Representative Keefe of Worcester, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 620) of Mary S. Keefe and Antonio F. D. Cabral relative to educational rights for incarcerated youth. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 515 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to ensure educational rights are upheld for incarcerated youth.

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. Section 39 of chapter 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking the first sentence and inserting in place thereof
3 the following: -

4 A qualified student enrolled in a public secondary school, including school-age children
5 in the care or custody of the department of youth services, county houses of corrections or the
6 department of correction, may enroll as a student in Massachusetts public institutions of higher
7 education.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition,
9 is hereby amended by inserting after section 6A the following section:-

10 Section 6B. All public secondary schools shall credit coursework completed by students
11 in institutional settings, including the county houses of correction, the department of correction,
12 the department of mental health, the department of public health, and the department of youth
13 services toward the public school's graduation requirements and shall list said coursework on the
14 student's transcript.

15 SECTION 3 . Section 11A of chapter 71B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
16 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place
17 thereof the following paragraph:-

18 Upon a student's entry into custody in a jail or correctional facility, the facility will
19 promptly conduct appropriate intake procedures to determine if the student was previously
20 identified as being in need of special education and promptly report this information, as well as
21 any perception that the student, though not identified previously, may be in need of special
22 education to the department of elementary and secondary education. The department shall
23 directly provide special education to school-aged children with a disability in the care and
24 custody of state correctional facilities as defined by section 1 of chapter 125.

25 SECTION 4 . Section 1 of chapter 124 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
26 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:-

27 (v) in accordance with clause (q), the commissioner shall, as part of making and
28 promulgating rules and regulations regarding education, training, and employment, require that
29 all individuals who have not attained their 22nd birthday housed at a county house of corrections
30 or state correctional facility, regardless of classification, disciplinary, or housing status, be
31 provided with opportunities to: receive credit toward high school graduation; graduate from high

32 school; pursue and receive credit for high school equivalency through instruction and testing
33 such as the Hi-Set or GED; pursue and receive credit for higher education; and receive
34 vocational training. The rules and regulations shall require that educational opportunities be
35 offered for a minimum of 6 hours of classroom instruction every weekday, 12 months per year;
36 and pursue, as far as practicable, college-level courses or appropriate vocational education and
37 training. Education for special education students shall be delivered in accordance with
38 established individual education plans or newly established plans where no previous plan exists.
39 New or prior individualized education plans may be reasonably modified, or newly written, to
40 accommodate limitations imposed by the correctional environment, so long as such
41 modifications or new plans do not preclude the delivery of a free appropriate public education or
42 impede progress toward a high school graduation.

43 Interpretation and translation services will be provided to English Language Learner
44 students, including but not limited to those with disabilities, to ensure meaningful access to the
45 special education process, which shall include interpretation services at IEP and Section 504
46 meetings and translated Section 504 plans and IEPs, assessments conducted by or at the request
47 of the facility or its medical service providers as part of an initial evaluation or reevaluation to
48 determine eligibility for special education and related services, and due process rights notices in
49 accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational
50 Opportunities Act of 1974.

51 SECTION 5. Section 2 of said chapter 124, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
52 striking the last paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraphs:-

53 Subject to the supervision and control of the commissioner, the deputy commissioner for
54 educational services shall, in consultation with the department of elementary and secondary
55 education, establish and maintain standards for all teaching positions in the jurisdiction of the
56 department and shall review the qualifications and performances of all teaching personnel in the
57 department.

58 Each of the said deputy commissioners shall perform such other duties as may be
59 assigned to him from time to time by the commissioner.

60 SECTION 6. Chapter 127 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition,
61 is hereby amended by inserting after section 32A the following section:-

62 Section 32B. Any person who has attained the age of criminal majority but has not yet
63 attained the age of 26 in jails or correctional facilities shall be treated as needing aid,
64 encouragement, and guidance, consistent with the goal of positive youth development to assume
65 the responsibilities and exercise the rights of a citizen of the commonwealth.

66 SECTION 7: Section 39 of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
67 inserting in paragraph (b) after the word "population," in line 31, the following words:-

68 including the right to special education services

69 SECTION 8. Section 48 of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
70 striking the last paragraph of said section and inserting in place thereof:-

71 The commissioner shall make and promulgate rules and regulations governing programs
72 established under this section which shall include provisions for hours, conditions of
73 employment, wage rates for employment program participants, incentive payments for education

74 and training program participants, provision of good time for participation in education programs
75 at the highest level as awarded by the institution for any activity in the institution, and deductions
76 from said wages pursuant to the provisions of section 86 F.

77 SECTION 9. Section 49A of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
78 inserting after the third paragraph the following paragraph:-

79 Consistent with the foregoing, all individuals who have not attained their 22nd birthday
80 housed at a county house of corrections or state correctional facility, regardless of disciplinary
81 classification or housing status, shall be provided with a minimum of 6 hours of classroom
82 instruction and educational opportunities on every weekday, 12 months per year to: receive
83 credit toward high school graduation; graduate from high school; receive special education
84 services for those who are eligible; pursue and receive credit for higher education; and receive
85 vocational training.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 573
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to protect children from adults in positions of authority or trust.
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Carole Fiola of 6 th Bristol.
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	N/A
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 119:21 pertains to definitions applicable to SEC 21 and 51H. MGL 119:51A pertains to reporting of suspected abuse or neglect, mandated reporters, collection of physical evidence, penalties, content of reports, liability, and privileged communication MGL 268 pertains to crimes against public justice.

SUMMARY

Amends MGL's by inserting a new chapter, 119B, which focuses on Child sexual abuse preventions. The first section includes definitions for terms including abuse prevention policy, age-appropriate, and sexual misconduct. Requires every school to adopt an abuse prevention policy, DESE must create a abuse prevention policy which they must review at least every 5 years. Requires that all mandated reports in a school receive biennially training on the prevention, identification, and reporting on child abuse, these training can be in person or online. Requires DESE to make the abuse prevention policy available on their website. Requires every elementary or secondary school and youth serving organization to provide age-appropriate instruction on a list of topics related to child abuse prevention and healthy relationships.

Requires that if a person over the age of 21 who is employed or contracted with a school, DESE, DYS, DCF, DMH, DDS, or a private institution who is a teacher, administrator, or in a similar position that has relations with someone under 19 which has not gotten a high school diploma or GED, or under 22 but has special needs as defined under 71B will be imprisoned in a state prison for up to 5 years, in a jail or corrections home for up to 2.5 years, or fined up to \$10K, or both. Requires registration as a sex offender, and have their license revoked.

HOUSE No. 573

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carole A. Fiola

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 protect children from adults in positions of authority or trust.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Carole A. Fiola</i>	<i>6th Bristol</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>John R. Gaskey</i>	<i>2nd Plymouth</i>	<i>1/28/2025</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/3/2025</i>
<i>John J. Lawn, Jr.</i>	<i>10th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/20/2025</i>
<i>John J. Marsi</i>	<i>6th Worcester</i>	<i>3/20/2025</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/26/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 573

By Representative Fiola of Fall River, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 573) of Carole A. Fiola and others that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education be authorized to adopt an abuse prevention policy. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to protect children from adults in positions of authority or trust.

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. The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter 119A the
2 following chapter:-

3 CHAPTER 119B. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

4 Section 1. For the purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have
5 the following meanings:-

6 “Abuse”, an act involving a minor that constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the
7 Commonwealth or any sexual misconduct between an adult and a minor under the care of that
8 individual.

9 “Abuse prevention policy”, a policy adopted by a school that supports the prevention of
10 sexual abuse by outlining a code of conduct for employees that identifies inappropriate behavior
11 between a teacher and a minor or student.

12 “Age-appropriate”, topics, messages and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or
13 age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and
14 behavioral capacity typical for the age or group.

15 “Department, the Massachusetts department of elementary and secondary education.

16 “Employee”, a person defined as such in section 148B of chapter 149.

17 “Job performance” includes, but is not limited to, abilities, attendance, attitude, awards,
18 demotions, disciplinary actions, duties, effort, knowledge, promotions, skills, and in the case of a
19 former school employee, the reasons for separation.

20 “Mandated reporter”, a person defined as such in section 21 of chapter 119.

21 “Minor”, a person under 18 years of age.

22 “School”, a public or private educational institution that serves minors in the
23 Commonwealth, including an entity with the mission of providing activities and socialization for
24 minors that is operated by such an educational institution.

25 “Sexual misconduct”, any action directed towards or with a minor, regardless of the age
26 of the minor that is designed to promote a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor. Such
27 acts, include but are not limited to:

28 sexual or romantic invitation;

29 dating or soliciting dates;

30 engaging in sexualized or romantic dialogue;

31 making sexually suggestive comments;
32 self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic or erotic nature; or
33 any sexual, indecent, romantic or erotic contact with a minor or student.

34 Section 2. School Abuse Prevention Policies

35 (a) Every school shall adopt the abuse prevention policy as set forth by the department of
36 elementary and secondary education. The abuse prevention policy shall support the prevention of
37 sexual abuse by outlining a code of conduct for employees that identifies inappropriate behavior
38 for employees and students. The policy shall also detail the institution's procedures for meeting
39 its obligations under section 51A of chapter 119.

40 (b) The department, in consultation with the office of the child advocate, the department
41 of children and families and the department of early education and care shall create the abuse
42 prevention policy for schools across the Commonwealth.

43 (c) The department shall review the model abuse prevention policy at least once every 5
44 years to ensure it includes up-to-date information and best practices.

45 Section 3. School Employee Sexual Abuse Prevention Education

46 (a) All mandated reporters employed by a school shall receive instruction biennially on
47 the prevention, identification, and reporting of child sexual abuse. This instruction shall include
48 comprehensive training and information to help schools and their personnel:

49 (1) recognize, appropriately respond to and prevent behaviors violating the school abuse
50 prevention policy;

51 (2) recognize, appropriately respond to, and prevent sexually inappropriate, coercive, or
52 abusive behaviors between minors' served by schools;

53 (3) identify the ways in which the behavioral and verbal cues for sexual abuse differ from
54 those of other abuse and neglect;

55 (4) support the healthy development of students and minors, and the building of
56 protective factors, to mitigate against their sexual victimization by adults or by other minors;

57 (5) respond to disclosures of sexual abuse or reports of behaviors violating the abuse
58 prevention policy of adults or minors in a supportive and appropriate manner that meets
59 mandated reporting requirements under section 51A of chapter 119;

60 (6) seek out community resources available to assist schools in the prevention,
61 identification, reporting and referral to treatment of cases involving the sexual abuse or
62 exploitation of minors.

63 (b) The department shall use tested, research-based instructional materials that meet the
64 requirements of subsection (a). The mode of delivery for the trainings may include in-person or
65 e-learning instruction.

66 (c) The department shall adapt, implement and maintain an existing evidence-based
67 online or in-person training course to satisfy the requirements of subsection (b); provided,
68 however, that if the department cannot find an existing program to adapt to this purpose, then the
69 department shall create, implement, maintain and update such a training program; provided
70 further, that such training program shall be provided to schools at no cost.

71 (d) For each training required under this section, each school shall maintain records that
72 include the names of the individuals within their school.

73 (e) The department shall make the abuse prevention policy publicly available on its
74 website.

75 Section 4. Youth Sexual Abuse Education

76 (a) Every school that serves elementary or secondary school students and every youth-
77 serving organization shall provide age-appropriate instruction to help students and children
78 served by such schools:

79 (1) recognize and report inappropriate behavior in adults that may indicate that they pose
80 a sexual risk to minors

81 (2) recognize and report inappropriate behaviors in other children that may indicate that
82 they pose a sexual risk to children and youth

83 (3) learn how to develop healthy and respectful interpersonal relationships, including
84 appropriate body boundaries and privacy rules;

85 (4) learn how to communicate effectively to trusted adults and any concerns they do have
86 about body boundaries or privacy violations

87 (5) learn about available school and community resources to prevent and respond to
88 sexual abuse; and

89 (6) recognize and understand the consequences of false, inaccurate, or exaggerated
90 reports and the importance of children reporting honestly to the best of their ability.

91 (b) The department shall use tested, research-based instructional materials that meet the
92 requirements of subsection (a) and assist schools in implementing the program. The mode of
93 delivery for the trainings may include in-person or e-learning instruction. For each training
94 required under this section, each school shall maintain records that include the names of the
95 individuals within their school who participated in the training during that year. The department
96 shall make the abuse prevention policy publicly available on its website.

97 SECTION 2. Chapter 268 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
98 section 21A the following new section:-

99 Section 21B. A person over the age of 21 who is employed by or contracts with a public
100 or private school, the department of elementary and secondary education, the department of
101 youth services, the department of children and families, the department of mental health, the
102 department of developmental services or a private institution that provides services to clients of
103 such departments, who is a teacher, administrator or a person in a similar position of authority in
104 the school, department or institution and, in the course of such employment or contract or as a
105 result thereof, engages in, within or outside of the school, department or institution, sexual
106 relations with a person who is (i) under the age of 19, has not received a high school diploma,
107 general educational development certificate or equivalent document and is served by the school,
108 department or institution; or (ii) under the age of 22, has special needs under chapter 71B, has
109 not received a high school diploma, general educational development certificate or equivalent
110 document and is served by the school, department or institution, shall have a cause of action
111 against such an employee or contractor, under chapter 260, section 4C. In a civil action
112 commenced under said section, a person served by such school, department or institution shall be
113 deemed incapable of consent to sexual relations with such an employee or contractor.

114 SECTION 3. Chapter 268 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 21B the
115 following new section:-

116 Section 21C. A person over the age of 21 who is employed by or contracts with a public
117 or private school, the department of elementary and secondary education, the department of
118 youth services, the department of children and families, the department of mental health, the
119 department of developmental services or a private institution that provides services to clients of
120 such departments, such as an administrator, teacher, counselor, coach, bus driver, or a person in a
121 position of authority in the school, department, or institution, and in the course of such
122 employment or contract or as a result thereof, engages in, within or outside of the school,
123 department or institution, sexual relations with a person who is: (i) under the age of 19, has not
124 received a high school diploma, general educational development certificate or equivalent
125 document and is served by the school, department or institution; or (ii) under the age of 22, has
126 special needs under chapter 71B, has not received a high school diploma, general educational
127 development certificate or equivalent document and is served by the school, department or
128 institution, shall be punished by imprisonment in a state prison for not more than 5 years or in a
129 jail or house of corrections for not more than 2 ½ years, by a fine of \$10,000 or by both such fine
130 and imprisonment. Registration as a sex offender shall be required. In the case of a teacher or
131 other licensed professional, revocation of the teaching certificate or professional license shall
132 also be required. In a prosecution commenced under this section, an individual served by such
133 school, department or institution shall be deemed incapable of consent to sexual relations with
134 the person.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 571
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act providing for alternatives to fines for failure to send
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Carol A. Fiola of Fall River
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	N/A
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.476 of the 2023-2024 session; reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Education; referred to the House Steering, Policy, and scheduling; referred to third reading.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 76:2 requires every person who is responsible for a child to send the child to school as required by statute. If the responsible party fails to do so for seven-day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any period of six months, he or she shall be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars.

SUMMARY

The bill amends MGL 72:2 by adding a new paragraph:

For a person who fails to send the child for whom he or she is responsible to school, the court may, as an alternative to the fine, order them to attend a counseling program or other service deemed appropriate by the court. If the court finds that all parties have successfully completed said programs, the court shall dismiss the charge under this section against the defendant. Charges under this section shall be assigned to an expedited docket.

HOUSE No. 571

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carole A. Fiola

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 providing for alternatives to fines for failure to send.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Carole A. Fiola</i>	<i>6th Bristol</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>	<i>1/23/2025</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/23/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 571

By Representative Fiola of Fall River, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 571) of Carole A. Fiola, Paul McMurtry and Lindsay N. Sabadosa relative to providing for alternative penalties for failure to send children to school. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 476 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act providing for alternatives to fines for failure to send.

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 2 of chapter 76 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following
2 paragraph:-

3 Notwithstanding any general or special law, rule or regulation to the contrary, the court
4 may, as an alternative to the fine provided herein, order a person in control of a child and the
5 child described in section 1, who fails to attend school under this section, to attend a counseling
6 program or other appropriate program or services, as determined by the court. If the court finds
7 that the child, and a person in control of such child, have successfully completed the court
8 ordered programs or services the court shall dismiss the charge under this section against the
9 defendant. Charges under this section shall be assigned to an expedited docket for disposition.

Joint Committee on Education

Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	House, No. 524
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral of New Bedford
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	H.3811 of the 2023-2024 session; study.
<u>CURRENT LAW</u>	MGL 69:1B pertains to the duties of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). MGL 76:1 pertains to school attendance requirements and exceptions.

SUMMARY

This bill amends MGL 76:1 by requiring school attendance for students between the ages of 6 to 18 until the completion of twelfth grade or the high school equivalency test, whichever comes first. It further prevents students over the age of 16 from facing criminal penalties for failure to attend school through the mandatory age for attendance and establishes a High School Graduation Commission to study barriers to high school graduation. It also amends MGL 69:1B by requiring BESE to establish the permissible and mandatory ages for school attendance, provided that all students under the age of 18 shall be required to attend school if they have not yet graduated from high school or completed the high school equivalency test.

HOUSE No. 524

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Antonio F. D. Cabral

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 require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Priscila S. Sousa</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 524

By Representative Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 524) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and Priscila S. Sousa relative to requiring school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 3811 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation.

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. Section 1 of chapter 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by:

3 (a) striking out, in lines 1 to 2, the words “between the minimum and maximum ages
4 established for school attendance by the board of education” and inserting in place thereof the
5 following words:

6 “ages of 6 and 18, having completed at least the twelfth grade, high school equivalency
7 test, or whichever comes first”.; and

8 (b) inserting after the word “herewith”, in line 58, the following words:

9 “, provided that no student over the age of 16 shall face criminal penalties for failure to
10 attend school through the mandatory age for school attendance”.

11 SECTION 2. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby
12 amended by inserting before the period, in line 120, the following words:

13 “, provided, however, that all children under the age of 18 shall be required to attend
14 school if they have not graduated from high school or completed the high school equivalency
15 test”.

16 SECTION 3. Chapter 76 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
17 inserting after section 21 the following section:

18 Section 22. Commission to Study Barriers to High School Graduation.

19 (a) Establishment of Commission. There shall be a special commission, referred to as
20 the ‘High School Graduation Commission’. Said commission shall—

21 (1) investigate and study barriers to high school graduation; and

22 (2) make recommendations regarding the identification of students at risk of dropping
23 out of high school and the targeting of services and programs that will ensure all students can
24 graduate from high school.

25 (b) Members.

26 (1) The commission shall be chaired by the secretary of education or the secretary’s
27 designee.

28 (2) The commissioner of the department of higher education or the commissioner's
29 designee and the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education or the
30 commissioner's designee shall each be members.

31 (3) The governor shall appoint 4 members, one of whom shall be nominated by the
32 Massachusetts Teachers Association and one of whom shall be nominated by the American
33 Federation of Teachers of Massachusetts.

34 (4) The speaker of the house shall appoint one member and the senate president shall
35 appoint one member.

36 (c) Reporting Requirements. The commission shall report its findings and any
37 legislation necessary to implement said findings to the governor, the clerks of the senate and
38 house of representatives, the senate and house of representatives committees on ways and means,
39 the senate and house of representatives committees on education, six months upon effective date
40 of the act. The commission report shall include but not be limited to: an analysis of the student
41 populations who are at the highest risk of dropping out, mechanisms to identify students who are
42 at risk of dropping out, barriers to high school graduation and evidence based services that
43 reduce and eliminate barriers to high school graduation. In making its recommendations the
44 commission shall consider among other issues—

45 (1) grades, attendance patterns, disciplinary issues, family and environmental factors,
46 breaks or gaps in education, teen parenthood, limited English proficiency and disabilities that
47 may indicate a student is at risk of not completing high school;

48 (2) mechanisms and information technology that can be used to identify students at
49 risk of dropping out and track students' progress once identified;

- 50 (3) appropriate benchmarks for periodic review of students' progress;
- 51 (4) wrap around support services designed to effectively target and alleviate or
52 eliminate barriers for students completing high school;
- 53 (5) methods to reengage students who have left school;
- 54 (6) dedicated tutoring and academic services for students who have gaps in education
55 as a result of moving, illness, absences, disciplinary issues or immigration;
- 56 (7) emotional support services and resources for students at risk of dropping out; and
- 57 (8) recommendations for mechanisms to emphasize the importance of high school
58 graduation for all students.

59

60 SECTION 4. Sections 1 to 3 of this Act shall become effective on the next school year
61 calendar after passage.

SENATE No. 406

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joan B. Lovely

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 recovery high schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Joan B. Lovely

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Second Essex

SENATE No. 406

By Ms. Lovely, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 406) of Joan B. Lovely for legislation relative to recovery high schools. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 2669 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to recovery high schools.

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

1 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the department of elementary
2 and secondary education, in consultation with the principals of the 5 recovery high schools in the
3 commonwealth, shall: (i) examine the costs associated with sending students to a recovery high
4 school, as defined in subsection (a) of section 91 of chapter 71 of the General Laws; (ii)
5 determine the average cost per pupil at recovery high schools in the commonwealth; and (iii)
6 determine, in consultation with the department of public health, whether enrollment in a recovery
7 high school should require a medical diagnosis of “substance use disorder or dependency, as
8 defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV-TR”.

9 The department shall submit its findings to the chairs of the house and senate committees
10 on ways and means, the chairs of the joint committee on education and the chairs of the joint
11 committee on mental health, substance use and recovery not later than June 30, 2025

SENATE No. 399

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 to promote equity in school attendance requirements.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Jason M. Lewis

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fifth Middlesex

SENATE No. 399

By Mr. Lewis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 399) of Jason M. Lewis for legislation to promote equity in school attendance requirements. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to promote equity in school attendance requirements.

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 121 of chapter 5 of the acts of 1995 as amended by sections 30 and 31 of chapter
- 2 158 of the acts of 2014 is hereby repealed.

SENATE No. 361

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Barry R. Finegold

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 providing for a study of chronic student absences.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Barry R. Finegold

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Second Essex and Middlesex

SENATE No. 361

By Mr. Finegold, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 361) of Barry R. Finegold for legislation to conduct a study into the causes and remedies for frequent student absences in the public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act providing for a study of chronic student absences.

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. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the department
2 of elementary and secondary education shall conduct a study into the causes of and remedies for
3 frequent student absences in the public schools of the commonwealth. The study shall include,
4 but not be limited to, an analysis of: (i) disparities, if any, in rates of absenteeism based on
5 region, socioeconomic status or student age; (ii) disparities, if any, in rates of absenteeism
6 between students enrolled in a career pathway program, as opposed to a program of general
7 education; (iii) common causes of absences among students missing not less than 7 school days
8 in an academic year; and (iv) causes of absences, if any, that are specific to the commonwealth
9 or individual regions of the commonwealth. As part of the study, the department shall consult
10 with the department of transitional assistance, the department of children and families, the
11 Massachusetts Teachers Association, the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers, the
12 Massachusetts Charter Public School Association, public school districts located in gateway
13 cities and public school districts with above average student populations missing not less than 10

14 per cent of school days according to the most recent end of year attendance report compiled by
15 the department. The department shall report on its findings and submit any recommendations to
16 the clerks of the house and senate and the joint committee on education no later than 180 days
17 after enactment; provided, however, that the secretary of education may grant up to 1 extension
18 of not more than 90 days.

19 SECTION 2. Section 1 shall take effect upon enactment.

SENATE No. 344

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Sal N. DiDomenico

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 enhancing the educational outcomes of expectant and parenting students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Sal N. DiDomenico

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Middlesex and Suffolk

SENATE No. 344

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 344) of Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to enhance the educational outcomes of expectant and parenting students. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 266 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act enhancing the educational outcomes of expectant and parenting students.

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 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after section 21 the following section:-

3 Section 22. (a) As used in this section the following words shall, unless the context
4 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

5 “Department”, the department of elementary and secondary education.

6 “Expectant student”, a student who is pregnant or an expectant parent of a child.

7 “Parenting student”, a student who is the parent of a child.

8 “Parenting student liaison”, the position established under subsection (d).

9 “Title IX”, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.

10 “Title IX coordinator”, the school district employee designated under the requirements of
11 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. and its implementation.

12 (b) The department, after consultation with relevant state agencies and appropriate
13 community partners shall: (i) publish to its website a model of expectant and parenting student
14 policy and encourage all districts to develop their own expectant and parenting students policies
15 that align with this model; and (ii) compile and post on its website a list of resources, best
16 practices and research for schools to use to help expectant and parenting students stay in school
17 and to increase graduation rates for expectant and parenting students. These materials shall be
18 incorporated into the training of expectant and parenting student liaisons, as described in
19 subsection (d). The department shall update the model plan and the list of resources, best
20 practices and research at least every 3 years.

21 (c) A public school with students in grade 7 or higher in either (i) a municipality with an
22 annual birth rate to women ages 13 to 19 per 1,000 that is among the top 10 highest teen birth
23 rates in the state or (ii) a municipality with an annual total number of births to women ages 13 to
24 19, inclusive, greater than 150 shall qualify for an expectant and parenting student liaison
25 modeled after an evidence-based program at Chelsea High School. Each qualifying municipality
26 shall receive funding for the liaison model. The amount of this funding shall be determined by
27 the department. Districts shall determine which schools with grades 7 or higher shall have
28 liaisons. The districts shall give preference to placing liaisons at schools with the highest
29 percentages of expectant and parenting students. Each school shall post on its website the name
30 and contact information of its expectant and parenting student liaison. The duties of the

31 expectant and parenting student liaison may be in addition to other duties the liaison may have.
32 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the expectant and parenting student
33 liaison shall have access to the school records necessary for the liaison to assist the expectant or
34 parenting student with the development of a plan for the student to graduate from high school.

35 The department of public health shall calculate the annual birth rate and annual total
36 number of births to women ages 13 to 19, inclusive, of each municipality. No later than April 1,
37 2026 the department of public health shall notify the department of its findings. No later than
38 May 1, 2026 the department shall notify those school districts whose annual birth rate or annual
39 total number of births to women ages 13 to 19, inclusive, require the designation of an expectant
40 and parenting student liaison in the upcoming school year.

41 Each expectant and parenting student liaison shall, in close consultation with an
42 expectant or parenting student, create an individualized plan for graduation that (i) is designed to
43 ensure the student meets graduation requirements, (ii) includes flexible class scheduling and
44 alternative credit accumulation options, as needed, and (iii) furthers the student's post-graduation
45 college or career goals. As needed, the plan shall also include a proposed end date for the
46 student's maternity or paternity leave of absence. The liaison shall present the advantages and
47 disadvantages of each education option available to the student, without coercing or steering the
48 student in any direction, and work with the student to determine which options best meet the
49 student's needs. If flexible class scheduling and alternative credit accumulation options are not
50 available in the student's school or district, the liaison shall work with the student to find such
51 options. With the consent of the student, the liaison shall make a reasonable attempt to engage a
52 family member in the development of the plan and any modifications to it. If such a family
53 member is not available or if the student does not consent to the involvement of a family

54 member, the liaison shall make a reasonable attempt to engage an adult outside of the student's
55 family in the development or modification of the plan, provided that the student consents to such
56 involvement.

57 The liaison shall review the plan with the student at designated points during the school
58 year and assess the student's progress toward each graduation requirement and post-graduation
59 goal. The liaison and student shall modify the plan from time to time as appropriate.

60 Before, during and after a student's maternity or paternity leave of absence, the liaison
61 shall attempt to connect a student with academic and social-emotional supports within and
62 outside of the school, including but not limited to child care, health care, transportation, flexible
63 scheduling, alternative credit accumulation options, and parenting and life skills classes. The
64 liaison shall follow up with the student to ensure he or she has obtained needed supports and
65 shall, where necessary, work in partnership with community-based organizations to assist and
66 advocate for the student in obtaining support services. The expectant and parenting student
67 liaison shall inform each expectant and parenting student of the student's rights under Title IX.

68 Each school district shall ensure that each expectant and parenting student liaison
69 receives training in the needs and rights of expectant and parenting students. This training shall
70 include but not be limited to the rights of expectant and parenting students under federal law,
71 information on graduation requirements, flexible scheduling options, alternative education
72 options, community resources for expectant and parenting teens, and the importance of
73 encouragement and support of their educational success.

74 (e) In all schools with grades 7 or higher, the expectant and parenting student liaison or
75 Title IX coordinator shall annually report to the superintendent the known number of parenting

76 students in the school, a summary of the academic achievement of these students, the number
77 who graduate from high school, the number who drop out of school, and the number who enroll
78 in post-secondary educational programs. Each superintendent shall annually report this data for
79 the school district to the department. The department shall use its existing data collection tools to
80 obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the
81 information. The department shall post on its website aggregate statewide data and shall make
82 district-level data available upon request except for data from districts that report fewer than 5
83 parenting students.

84 (f) School staff may encourage but shall not force or coerce an expectant or parenting
85 student to inform his or her parents or guardians of the student's pregnant or parenting status.

86 (g) Nothing in this section shall supersede or replace rights or remedies under any other
87 general or special law, nor shall this section create a private right of action.

88 SECTION 2. Each public school with students in grade 7 or higher that is required to
89 have an expectant and parenting student liaison shall identify and train a liaison, as defined under
90 section 22 of chapter 76, no later than September 1, 2025. No later than September 1, 2025, each
91 public school with students in grade 7 or higher shall have and shall file with the department of
92 elementary and secondary education an expectant and parenting student policy. No later than
93 September 1, 2025, the department of elementary and secondary education shall specify a
94 method for districts and schools to report the information required by subsection (e) of section 22
95 of chapter 76.