



# 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, September 2, 2025

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

**Location:** A-2 and Virtual

Early Education and Care (EEC)

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 Early Education and Care.

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. Friday, August 29th, 2025**.

**Registration will CLOSE at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, August 29th.** 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 be advised that the schedule and agenda are subject to change at the discretion of the chair per committee rules.

Please submit written testimony to Fiona Bruce-Baiden at [jointcommittee.education@malegislature.gov](mailto:jointcommittee.education@malegislature.gov) and Emily Reynolds at [emily.reynolds@masenate.gov](mailto: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 Tuesday, September 9, 2025.**

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

<b>Bill No</b>	<b>Bill Sponsor</b>	<b>Bill Title</b>
<b>H707</b>	Sousa, Priscila S. (HOU)	An Act relative to public preschool facilities
<b>H703</b>	Sena, Danillo A. (HOU)	An Act providing for universal pre-k for 3- to 5-year-olds
<b>H687</b>	Sabadosa, Lindsay N. (HOU)	An Act ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education
<b>S339</b>	DiDomenico, Sal N. (SEN)	An Act ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education
<b>H606</b>	Howard, Vanna (HOU)	An Act relative to universal prekindergarten access
<b>H523</b>	Cabral, Antonio F. D. (HOU)	An Act to achieve universal pre-kindergarten
<b>H618</b>	Kearney, Patrick Joseph (HOU)	An Act relative to tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten
<b>H522</b>	Cabral, Antonio F. D. (HOU)	An Act relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten
<b>H510</b>	Ashe, Brian M. (HOU)	An Act relative to changing the minimum age requirement for kindergarten
<b>H615</b>	Kane, Hannah (HOU)	An Act to ensure the health and safety of children
<b>H542</b>	Decker, Marjorie C. (HOU)	An Act expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare
<b>S341</b>	DiDomenico, Sal N. (SEN)	An Act expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare
<b>H541</b>	Decker, Marjorie C. (HOU)	An Act enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in public prekindergarten through 3rd grade
<b>S373</b>	Gomez, Adam (SEN)	An Act enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade
<b>S372</b>	Gomez, Adam (SEN)	An Act creating a Disproportionate Share Childcare Provider Fund
<b>S357</b>	Feeney, Paul R. (SEN)	An Act relative to licensed care and financial resource information for new parents and guardians
<b>H257</b>	Nguyen, Tram T. (HOU)	An Act relative to child care cost transparency
<b>S113</b>	Cyr, Julian (SEN)	An Act relative to child care cost transparency

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.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 707
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to public preschool facilities
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Priscila Sousa of Framingham
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.586 of 2023-2024 session: Attached to S2697: Referred to Senate Ways and Means: Passed the Senate: Reported to House Ways and Means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D:1A pertains to definitions for the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).  MGL 70B:2 pertains to definitions related to the school building assistance program.

**SUMMARY**

Amends MGL 70B:2 by changing the definition of “Capital construction projects” by adding the phrase, “including any facility used as a public preschool program as defined by Section 1A of Chapter 15D, in any city or town,” to the definition. This expands the definition to include preschool programs as qualifying for capital construction projects funded by the Massachusetts School Business Authority (MSBA).

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 707**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

*Priscila S. Sousa*

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*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 public preschool facilities.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Priscila S. Sousa</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/13/2025</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>4/24/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 707**

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By Representative Sousa of Framingham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 707) of Priscila S. Sousa relative to public preschool facility construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 586 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to public preschool facilities.

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

Section 2 of Chapter 70B is hereby amended by changing the definition of “Capital construction project” to the following:-

“any capital project, other than a major reconstruction project, for the construction, the enlargement or original equipping of any public schoolhouse, including any facility used as a public preschool program as defined by Section 1A of Chapter 15D, in any city or town, or a project for the renovation or partial renovation of an existing structure for use as a schoolhouse; or the renovation or partial renovation of an existing schoolhouse.”

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 703
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act providing for universal pre-k for 3- to 5-year-olds
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Danillo Sena of Acton
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.578 of 2023-2024 session: Attached to S2697: Referred to Senate Ways and Means: Passed the Senate: Reported to House Ways and Means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D pertains to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).  MGL 15D:1 pertains to the purpose of early education and care in Massachusetts.

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 15D by inserting a new section—Section 19—which requires the Department of EEC to administer a universal pre-k program to expand pre-k options available across the state. This program will be for any child who is from 2 years and 9 months of age to 5 years of age who is not enrolled in kindergarten. The pre-k program shall be provided in a public school or public charter school. This bill also establishes a pre-k advisory council within EEC. The Governor shall appoint the members of the advisory council established in this act within 90 days after the passage of this act.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 703

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Danillo A. Sena*

*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 universal pre-k for 3- to 5-year-olds.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>Carmin Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/18/2025</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>4/23/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 703**

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By Representative Sena of Acton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 703) of Danillo A. Sena and Carmine Lawrence Gentile relative to universal access to pre-kindergarten programs. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 578 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act providing for universal pre-k for 3- to 5-year-olds.

*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 1 of chapter 15D of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:

Every young child in the commonwealth has diverse strengths rooted in their family’s culture, background, language and beliefs. Universal access to pre-k programs for young children will provide a momentous start to achieve the purposes of this chapter by mandating responsive and respectful learning environments that welcome children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Universal access to pre-k for all children will advance the state’s goals of equity, diversity and full inclusion by providing an opportunity to all children to experience responsive interactions that nurture their full range of social, emotional, cognitive, physical and linguistic abilities.

SECTION 2. Said chapter 15D is hereby further amended by adding the following section:-

Section 19. (a) In addition to the program provided for in section 13, the department shall administer a universal pre-k program as provided by this section. The program shall expand pre-k options available to the children of this state.

(b) Each pre-k program shall provide an opportunity for enrollment in the program to any child residing in the geographic area served by the program who is from 2 years and 9 months of age to 5 years of age who is not enrolled in or has not attended kindergarten.

For the purposes of this section, the term “pre-k program” shall mean services designed to provide developmentally appropriate early development and learning experiences based on the department’s pre-k learning standards to children who are from 2 years and 9 months of age to 5 years of age who are not eligible for or enrolled in kindergarten. A pre-k program pursuant to this section shall be provided in a public school or a public charter school.

(c) The office shall adopt rules that provide for no fewer than 30 hours per week of publicly funded pre-k learning, which shall be available each week public school is in session to each child who is from 2 years and 9 months of age to 5 years of age who is not eligible for or enrolled in kindergarten operated by a public school.

(d) In developing rules for the pre-k program, the office shall consult with the advisory council established under this section and shall consider such factors as coordination with existing programs, the preparation necessary for instructors, qualifications of instructors, training of staff, adequate space and equipment and special transportation needs.

(e) There shall be within the department a pre-k advisory council. The purpose of the council shall be to assist the department in administering the pre-k program. The council shall:

(i) identify resources necessary for the office to develop, support and sustain the implementation of a high quality pre-k program, including evaluations, professional development opportunities, technical assistance, monitoring guidance and administrative assistance;

(ii) ensure that pathways and supports are available to teaching staff to increase culturally and linguistically diverse staff to teach and assist in pre-k classrooms and environments; and

(iii) establish minimum salary requirements and target salary requirements for pre-k program teachers.

The council shall consist of 11 members who are appointed by the governor from a list of 15 nominees provided by the department. The department must nominate at least 3 individuals representing gateway cities. The department must nominate at least 1 individual from each of the following professions or organizations: principal of a public elementary school, kindergarten teacher at a public elementary school, teacher of the first grade or above at a public elementary school, teacher at an early education program, member of a public school district, Head Start, preschool program and professor of early education at an institute of higher education in the Commonwealth.

Members shall serve for a term of 4 years and at the pleasure of the governor.

SECTION 3. The governor shall appoint the members of the advisory council established in this act not later than 90 days after the passage of this act.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 687 / Senate, No. 339
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Lindsay Sabadosa of Northampton Senator Sal DiDomenico (Middlesex and Suffolk)
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.566 and S.264 of 2024-2025 session: Attached to S2697: Referred to Senate Ways and Means: Passed the Senate: Reported to House Ways and Means.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D pertains to the department of early education and care (EEC).  MGL 69:1J pertains to underperforming or chronically underperforming schools; the creation and submission of turnaround plan; appointment of receiver; and the annual review of the schools.

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 15D by inserting a new section—Section 13A—which requires EEC and department of elementary and secondary education (DESE) to develop and administer a grant program to support high quality pre-k programs for children between 2 years and 9 months and kindergarten-eligible age. The grants shall be awarded based on readiness and need. Districts shall provide quarterly basis reports on all aspects of the plan. This bill requires the Commissioner of EEC to annually evaluate the effectiveness of programs established under this section.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 687**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

***Lindsay N. Sabadosa***

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*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 ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/10/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 687**

By Representative Sabadosa of Northampton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 687) of Lindsay N. Sabadosa relative to ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 566 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education.

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

Chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 13 the following section:-

Section 13A. (a) The department of early education and care, in consultation with the department of elementary and secondary education, shall develop and administer the high quality pre-kindergarten Education grant program to support the implementation of high quality pre-kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 2 years and 9 months and the age a child becomes eligible for kindergarten in the district where he or she resides. The grants shall be used to invest in a high quality, mixed-delivery early education system in order to reduce the achievement gap and improve third-grade reading scores. Eligible grantees shall include individual school districts and collaborations of multiple school districts in a region. Proposals must include partnerships with licensed community-based early learning programs.

(b) The departments shall establish requirements for grant applicants which shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) a tracking system for preschool students in the program using the state student identifier system; (2) a child to instructor ratio of no more than 10 to 1; (3) tactics to engage families in the enrollment process and implementation of the plan required under subsection (c), and methods to ensure a high level of participation by families with 3 and 4 year olds; (4) teacher qualifications and on-going professional development requirements; (5) full school day program in the district; (6) a class size of no more than 20 preschool students; (7) inclusion of children with disabilities; (8) instructional staff salaries and benefits comparable to the responding districts salaries and benefits for kindergarten to high school staff; (9) developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction; (10) evidenced based curricula; (11) accommodations and support for access and participation in all learning opportunities by each child; (12) a learning environment aligned with the state early learning and development standards; (13) on-site or access to comprehensive services for children; (14) partnership with, and promotion of, community service providers for families to support children's learning and development; (15) evidenced based health and safety standards; (16) a timetable for implementation; (17) program evaluation and data collection systems to ensure continuous improvement; (18) a description of the learning environment reflecting the state early learning and development standards; (19) a description of the physical structures for the education of the students; (20) a teacher evaluation system and professional improvement program; and (21) a vision and initial plan for serving children from birth to age 3.

Grants shall be awarded based on two primary criteria: readiness and need.

Readiness shall be defined as the community having in place an EEC-approved plan for preschool expansion. All grantees must meet this criteria. Plans must include: (1) detailed assessment of the local early education and care system, including supply of high-quality

preschool classrooms, qualifications of teachers, facilities, and transportation; (2) estimate of the percentage of high-needs children entering kindergarten annually with no prior preschool experience; (3) a profile of family and community needs and assets, including parent perspectives and demand for preschool; (4) list of local resources such as funding or in-kind support, recent early learning initiatives, strategic plans, professional development strategies, and evidence of collaboration within the mixed-delivery system of early education and care; and (5) proposed program budgets.

Need shall be defined by the percentage of high-need students, as defined by the department of elementary and secondary education, enrolled in a grantee's school district. In any given fiscal year, the department shall award implementation grants in order from highest need to lowest need until that fiscal year's grant funds are expired.

In awarding grants, preference shall be given to districts designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming pursuant to section 1J of chapter 69.

(c) Each recipient of the grant shall establish a plan to implement the requirements set forth in subsection (b) and any other requirements as may be prescribed by the board of early education and care. Each district shall establish a local governing council to implement and oversee all aspects of the plan. Districts shall provide on a quarterly basis reports to the department of early education and care on all aspects of the plan. The district and the local council shall implement the plan as approved within the period of time approved by the department. Failure to satisfactorily implement the plan within the approved period of time shall result in the termination of the plan and reversion of the grant funds to the department.

(d) The board of early education and care shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act within six months of the effective date including guidelines for membership

to local governing councils in each recipient district and evaluation criteria required in the quarterly reports. A grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall require that recipients undertake ongoing evaluations of the implementation of the plan and all its aspects.

The commissioner of early education and care shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of programs established under this section, including the potential for replicating such programs throughout the commonwealth. The commissioner shall also provide technical assistance to school districts seeking to replicate programs funded under this section.

**SENATE . . . . . No. 339**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

***Sal N. DiDomenico***

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*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 ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Sal N. DiDomenico*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Middlesex and Suffolk*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 339**

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By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 339) of Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to ensure high quality pre-kindergarten education. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 264 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act ensuring high quality pre-kindergarten education.

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

Chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 13 the following section:-

Section 13A. (a) The department of early education and care, in consultation with the department of elementary and secondary education, shall develop and administer the high quality pre-kindergarten education grant program to support the implementation of high quality pre-kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 2 years and 9 months and the age a child becomes eligible for kindergarten in the district where he or she resides. The grants shall be used to invest in a high quality, mixed-delivery early education system in order to reduce the achievement gap and improve third-grade reading scores. Eligible grantees shall include individual school districts and collaborations of multiple school districts in a region. Proposals must include partnerships with licensed community-based early learning programs.

(b) The departments shall establish requirements for grant applicants which shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) a tracking system for preschool students in the program using the state student identifier system; (2) a child to instructor ratio of no more than 10 to 1; (3) tactics to engage families in the enrollment process and implementation of the plan required under subsection (c), and methods to ensure a high level of participation by families with 3 and 4 year olds; (4) teacher qualifications and on-going professional development requirements; (5) full school day program in the district; (6) a class size of no more than 20 preschool students; (7) inclusion of children with disabilities; (8) instructional staff salaries and benefits comparable to the responding districts salaries and benefits for kindergarten to high school staff; (9) developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction; (10) evidenced based curricula; (11) accommodations and support for access and participation in all learning opportunities by each child; (12) a learning environment aligned with the state early learning and development standards; (13) on-site or access to comprehensive services for children; (14) partnership with, and promotion of, community service providers for families to support children's learning and development; (15) evidenced based health and safety standards; (16) a timetable for implementation; (17) program evaluation and data collection systems to ensure continuous improvement; (18) a description of the learning environment reflecting the state early learning and development standards; (19) a description of the physical structures for the education of the students; (20) a teacher evaluation system and professional improvement program; and (21) a vision and initial plan for serving children from birth to age 3.

Grants shall be awarded based on two primary criteria: readiness and need.

Readiness shall be defined as the community having in place an EEC-approved plan for preschool expansion. All grantees must meet this criteria. Plans must include: (1) detailed assessment of the local early education and care system, including supply of high-quality

preschool classrooms, qualifications of teachers, facilities, and transportation; (2) estimate of the percentage of high-needs children entering kindergarten annually with no prior preschool experience; (3) a profile of family and community needs and assets, including parent perspectives and demand for preschool; (4) list of local resources such as funding or in-kind support, recent early learning initiatives, strategic plans, professional development strategies, and evidence of collaboration within the mixed-delivery system of early education and care; and (5) proposed program budgets.

Need shall be defined by the percentage of high-need students, as defined by the department of elementary and secondary education, enrolled in a grantee's school district. In any given fiscal year, the department shall award implementation grants in order from highest need to lowest need until that fiscal year's grant funds are expired.

In awarding grants, preference shall be given to districts designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming pursuant to section 1J of chapter 69.

(c) Each recipient of the grant shall establish a plan to implement the requirements set forth in subsection (b) and any other requirements as may be prescribed by the board of early education and care. Each district shall establish a local governing council to implement and oversee all aspects of the plan. Districts shall provide on a quarterly basis reports to the department of early education and care on all aspects of the plan. The district and the local council shall implement the plan as approved within the period of time approved by the department. Failure to satisfactorily implement the plan within the approved period of time shall result in the termination of the plan and reversion of the grant funds to the department.

(d) The board of early education and care shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act within six months of the effective date including guidelines for membership

to local governing councils in each recipient district and evaluation criteria required in the quarterly reports. A grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall require that recipients undertake ongoing evaluations of the implementation of the plan and all its aspects.

The commissioner of early education and care shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of programs established under this section, including the potential for replicating such programs throughout the commonwealth. The commissioner shall also provide technical assistance to school districts seeking to replicate programs funded under this section.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House. No, 606
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to universal prekindergarten access
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Vanna Howard of Lowell
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H501 in 193 <sup>rd</sup> session, attached to S2697, referred to SWM, passed and referred to HWM. No further action.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D pertains to the department of early education and care (EEC). MGL 70 pertains to school funds and state aid for public schools. MGL 70:2 pertains to definitions related to school funding.

**SUMMARY**

This bill requires EEC and the department of elementary and secondary education (DESE) to develop and administer a grant program to support high quality pre-kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 2 year and 9 months and the age a child becomes eligible for kindergarten. It directs EEC and DESE to establish program quality requirements and standards that districts must meet in order to receive a grant. The board of early education and care must promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of the act within six months of its effective date, and the EEC commissioner must annually evaluate the effectiveness of programs. This bill also updates the definitions for Kindergarten Enrollment, Pre-school enrollment, Foundation enrollment, and Low-Income enrollment.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 606**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:  
*Vanna Howard*  
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*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 universal prekindergarten access.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/8/2025</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>4/22/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 606**

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By Representative Howard of Lowell, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 606) of Vanna Howard for legislation relative to universal prekindergarten access. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 501 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to universal prekindergarten access.

*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. Chapter 15D of the general laws, as appearing in the 2018 official edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 13 the following section:-

Section 13A. (a) The department of early education and care, in consultation with the department of elementary and secondary education, shall develop and administer the High Quality Pre-Kindergarten Expansion grant program to support the phased development of high quality, district-wide, full-day pre-kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 2 years and 9 months and the age a child becomes eligible for kindergarten in the school district where he or she resides. The grants shall be used to bring to scale a high quality, mixed delivery early education system in order to reduce the achievement gap and improve third grade reading scores.

(b) The departments shall establish requirements for grant applicants which shall include, but not be limited to the following: (1) a tracking system for preschool students in the program using the state student identifier system; (2) a child to instructor ratio of no more than 10 to 1; (3) tactics to engage families in the enrollment process and implementation of the plan required under subsection (c), and methods to ensure a high level of enrollment by families with 3 and 4 year olds; (4) teacher qualification and evaluation system requirements, and on-going professional development requirements; (5) a full school-day program ; (6) a class size of no more than 20 preschool students; (7) inclusion of children with disabilities; (8) instructional staff salaries and benefits comparable to the corresponding district salaries and benefits for kindergarten to high school staff; (9) developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction; (10) evidenced based curricula; (11) a learning environment aligned with the state early learning and development standards; (12) on-site access to comprehensive services for children, or convenient access to such services off site; (13) partnership with, and promotion of, community service providers for families to support children’s learning and development; (14) evidenced based health and safety standards; (15) a timetable for phasing-in of facilities, staff development, and other systems to achieve district-wide implementation; (16) program evaluation and data collection systems to ensure continuous improvement; (17) a description of the physical structures for the education of the students; (18) a plan to improve or sustain, as appropriate, the development of literacy skills from preschool through third grade.

Among proposals satisfying the requirements of this subsection, priority in grant awards shall be given first to districts that have received grants through the department’s commonwealth preschool partnership or the federal preschool expansion grants initiative. The department shall also develop and publish a metric for prioritizing the awarding of grants to qualified applicants based on: their accountability level as determined by the department of elementary and

secondary education; their third grade reading proficiency scores; and their percentage of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Nothing herein shall require the department to award a grant to a district, regardless of priority status, that it has determined does not meet one or more of the requirements of this subsection.

(c) Each recipient of the grant shall establish a plan to implement the requirements set forth in subsection (b) and any other requirements as may be prescribed by the board of early education and care. Each superintendent shall appoint a local governing council to implement and oversee all aspects of the plan; provided however, that the superintendent may utilize a pre-existing council for this purpose. Districts shall provide on a quarterly basis reports to the department of early education and care on all aspects of the plan. The district and the local council shall implement the plan as approved within the period of time approved by the department. Failure to satisfactorily implement the plan within the approved period of time shall result in the termination of the plan and reversion of the grant funds to the department.

(d) The board of early education and care shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act within six months of the effective date including guidelines for membership to local governing councils in each recipient district and evaluation criteria required in the quarterly reports. A grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall require that recipients undertake ongoing evaluations of the implementation of the plan and all its aspects.

The department of early education and care shall, subject to appropriation, establish a dedicated team to provide support, technical assistance, and oversight of programs established under this section. The department shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of programs established under this section, both for feedback and accountability for grant recipients and to inform the replication of such programs throughout the commonwealth.

SECTION 2. Chapter 70 of the general laws, as appearing in the 2018 official edition, is hereby amended by adding after Section 2 the following section:-

“Section 2A. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

“Boards”, the board of elementary and secondary education and the board of early education and care.

“Departments”, the department of elementary and secondary education and the department of early education and care.

“Early education”, full-day education and care programming for pre-school and kindergarten-aged students.

(b) School districts in the Commonwealth may, by December 31, 2024, submit to the departments a plan to provide for ongoing access to age-appropriate early education for all students residing within the district. Such a plan shall include, where relevant and feasible, the use, expansion, and quality improvement of any previously existing public and private early education delivery systems, including those programs developed and implemented pursuant to section 13A of chapter 15D. No plan submitted to the departments pursuant to this section shall include user fees for attendance.

The Departments shall promulgate joint regulations to provide for the process of submission, review, and approval of such plans. The departments shall also promulgate joint regulations to provide for monitoring of quality and fidelity of implementation of a district’s plan and a process of probationary status and potential revocation of approval in the event of poor implementation. The departments shall provide notice of said regulations to the clerks of the

House and Senate, the chairs of the joint committee on education, and the chairs of the joint committee on ways and means, at least 90 days before approval by the boards.

Districts who do not submit such a plan by the aforementioned date may submit a plan after said date. However, any such district may be prioritized after districts whose plans were received by said date.

(c) For all districts whose plan has been approved by the department, the following definition shall replace the corresponding definition in section 2 of this chapter, while all non-corresponding definitions in said section 2 shall continue to apply:-

“Pre-school enrollment”, the number of students enrolled in pre-school programs; provided, however, that in any district in which pre-school students funded by the district attend school for a full day, the foundation pre-school enrollment used to calculate the foundation enrollment, staff, and budget amounts described in this section shall be two times the number that would be otherwise used for said calculations.

SECTION 3. Section 2 of said chapter 70, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the word “students”, in line 425, the following words:- “, to the extent that kindergarten and pre-school students in a district are attending a half-day program. If a district is operating approved full-day pre-school or kindergarten programs, students in such full-day programs shall be counted at one hundred percent of the preceding year’s actual number of low-income kindergarten and pre-school students.”

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 523
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to achieve universal pre-kindergarten
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Antonio Cabral of New Bedford
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.436 in 193 <sup>rd</sup> Session; attached to S2697 and passed in SWM; HWM and no further action.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D:13 pertains to the Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program.  MGL 152:10 (c) of the Acts of 1997 pertains to expenditures from the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center Fund.

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 15D:1 by establishing the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Commission for the purpose of making an investigation and study relative to how to expand pre-kindergarten to provide pre-kindergarten for all age-eligible children in the Commonwealth. It requires the commission to report its findings and any legislation necessary to implement findings to the governor and the legislature by December 31, 2026.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 523

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## 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 achieve universal pre-kindergarten.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>4/23/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 523**

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By Representative Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 523) of Antonio F. D. Cabral for legislation to establish universal pre-kindergarten commission and dedicate funding for pre-kindergarten offerings. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 436 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to achieve universal pre-kindergarten.

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

An Act to achieve universal pre-kindergarten

Section 13 of chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following subsections: -

(e) The Universal Pre-Kindergarten Commission.

(1) Establishment of the Commission. There shall be a special commission for the purpose of making an investigation and study relative to how to expand universal pre-kindergarten to provide pre-kindergarten to every pre-kindergarten aged child in the Commonwealth, which shall be known as the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Commission (in this subsection referred to as the ‘commission’).

(2) Members. The commission shall be chaired by the commissioner of the department of early education and care or the commissioner's designee. The secretary of education or the secretary's designee and the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education or the commissioner's designee shall be members. The governor shall appoint 6 members, one of whom shall be nominated by Head Start Massachusetts, one of whom shall have experience operating a private preschool, one of whom shall be a member of a teachers' union or association, one of whom shall be nominated by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. and one of whom shall be nominated by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. The speaker of the house and the senate president shall each appoint one member.

(3) Report Recommending Legislation.

(i) Deadline. The commission shall report its findings and any legislation necessary to implement said findings to the governor, the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the senate and house of representatives committees on ways and means, the joint committee on children, families, and persons with disabilities and the joint committee on education by December 31, 2026.

(ii) Contents of the Report. The commission report shall include an analysis of how to best expand quality pre-kindergarten offerings in Massachusetts such that every 3- and 4-year-old child would be able to attend; how to pay for expanding pre-kindergarten offerings; the appropriate ratio and combination of various types of pre-kindergarten programs to best serve children throughout the state; and the best way to promote high quality educational curriculum, child development and safety standards. In making its recommendations the commission shall consider among other issues:

(A) the advantages and disadvantages including cost, parental preference and ease of expansion of pre-kindergarten as provided by Head Start, public schools, programs licensed or subsidized by the department of early education and care and private programs.

(B) the cost of expanding pre-kindergarten offerings according to the different program models that are available, for example Head Start, public schools, programs licensed or subsidized by the department of early education and care and private programs.

(C) the financial benefits of universal pre-kindergarten for education readiness and greater employment opportunities for parents.

(D) the possibility of including pre-kindergarten students when calculating the distribution of chapter 70 education funds.

(E) how to appropriately increase pre-kindergarten offerings over time while ensuring quality of care and safety; and

(F) the optimum way to expand participation in the Quality Rating Information System (or 'QRIS') or other curriculum standards programs adopted by Massachusetts, including providing grants or other financial incentives for participation.

(f) Universal Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Funding. Notwithstanding subsection (c) of section 10 of chapter 152 of the acts of 1997 or any other general or special law to the contrary, no later than June 30 of each year, that portion of the balance in the Convention Center Fund which the state treasurer has determined to exceed the amount necessary to satisfy the requirement of sufficiency under said subsection (c) of said section 10 of said chapter 152, shall be transferred to the department of early education and care to be used solely for the purpose of expanding pre-kindergarten offerings.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 618
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten
<b><u>SPONSOR(S)</u></b>	Representatives Patrick Joseph Kearney of Scituate and Danillo Sena of Acton
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.514 of 2023-2024 Session; attached to S.2697; reported favorably to SWM: Passed the Senate: Reported to HWM.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 29 pertains to state finance.  MGL 69:1G pertains to the minimum length of school day and school year.  MGL 70:2 pertains to definitions related to school finance.  MGL 71 pertains to public schools.

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 29 by inserting a new section—Section 2LLLLL—which establishes a Universal Full-Day Kindergarten Trust Fund to provide financial aid to school districts for the implementation and maintenance of tuition-free full-day kindergarten programs. The bill would provide amend definitions for “foundation enrollment”, “elementary school”, and “tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten program”. It also amends MGL 71 by inserting a new section—Section 3B which requires each district not currently implementing universal full-day kindergarten to report to BESE on the funds necessary to implement a full-day program within 90 days of the effective date of the Act. It requires BESE to report to the legislature the use of funds by October 1 on an annual basis and on the necessary funds required to implement tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten within 180 days of the effective date of the Act.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 618

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Patrick Joseph Kearney*

*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 tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/7/2025</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>3/19/2025</i>
<i>William J. Driscoll, Jr.</i>	<i>Norfolk, Plymouth and Bristol</i>	<i>4/7/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 618**

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By Representative Kearney of Scituate, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 618) of Patrick Joseph Kearney and Danillo A. Sena relative to tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 514 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten.

*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. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 2KKKKK, as inserted by section 1 of chapter 254 of the acts of 2020, the following section:-

Section 2LLLLL. (a) There shall be a Universal Full-Day Kindergarten Trust Fund, hereinafter called the fund, for the purposes of providing financial aid to school districts to implement and maintain tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten programs, as defined in section 4B of chapter 71. The fund shall be administered by the board of elementary and secondary education.

(b) There shall be credited to the fund: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii) interest

earned on such revenues; and (iii) funds from public and private sources, including, but not limited to, gifts, grants and donations. Amounts credit to the fund that are unexpended at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

(c) Amounts credited to the fund may be expended, without further appropriation, by the board of elementary and secondary education to assist cities and towns and regional school districts that do not offer a tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten as of January 1, 2021 in implementing and maintaining tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten programs.

(d) School committees of cities and towns and regional district school committees may request reimbursement from the fund for up to 100 per cent of the funds required to implement and maintain a tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten program.

(e) Annually, not later than October 1, the board of elementary and secondary education shall report to the clerks of the house of representatives and senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on education on the fund's activity. The report shall include, but shall not be limited to: (i) the source and amount of funds received; (ii) the amounts distributed and recipients; and (iii) anticipated revenue and expenditure projections for the next year.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 70 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out the definition of "Foundation enrollment" in, as appearing in section 6 of chapter 132 of the acts of 2019, and inserting in place thereof the following definition:-

"Foundation enrollment", in a fiscal year, the number of students on October 1 for whom the district is financially responsible, including students attending programs outside of the district for whom the district is required to pay tuition; provided, however, that each student shall

be assigned to 1 of the following categories: (i) preschool; (ii) kindergarten; (iii) elementary school; (iv) junior high school or middle school; (v) high school; or (vi) vocational school.

SECTION 3. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 4A, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, the following section:-

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

“Elementary school”, a school providing instruction to grades 1 through 5, 6, 7, or 8, and, where so designated by a school committee prior to the commencement of a school year, may also include a middle school or other intermediate level school providing instruction to grades 5 through 6 or any combination thereof.

“Tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten program”, a universally accessible, high-quality education program for kindergarten-aged children in the commonwealth offered without charge for tuition that operates for the full length of a school day for elementary schools established pursuant to section 1G of chapter 69.

(b) All school districts may offer a tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten program to each student that is subject to the same minimum requirements that the board establishes for length of a school day and number of days in a school year for elementary schools pursuant to section 1G of chapter 69. School districts shall not charge any fee for the tuition of a tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten program.

School districts may apply for reimbursement from the Universal Full-Day Kindergarten Trust Fund established in section 2LLLLL of chapter 29.

SECTION 4. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, each school committee of a city or town or regional school district without a universal full-day kindergarten program shall report to the board of elementary and secondary education on the necessary funds required to implement tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten. Within 180 days of the effective date of this act, the board of elementary and secondary education shall report to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on education on the necessary funds required to implement tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten.

SECTION 5. Section 4B of chapter 71 of the General Laws shall apply to each school year beginning after July 31, 2022

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 522
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Antonio Cabral of New Bedford
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.435 of 193 <sup>rd</sup> Session; attached to S2697; SWM reprinted as amended, to S2707; reported favorably to HWM, no further action taken.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	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 69:1B by requiring BESE to ensure that each child be required to attend full-day educational program at kindergarten age. The bill amends MGL 76:1 to have attendance requirements apply to any child enrolled in full-day kindergarten.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 522**

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**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 relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Carmin Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 522**

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By Representative Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 522) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and Carmine Lawrence Gentile relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 435 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten.

*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 striking out, in lines 117-120, inclusive, the twenty-first paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:

The board shall establish the permissible and mandatory ages for school attendance provided that each child be required to attend a full-day educational program at kindergarten age.

SECTION 2. Section 1 of chapter 76 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “education”, in line 2, the following words:

“and any child enrolled in full-day kindergarten”

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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**BILL NUMBER** House, No. 510

**TITLE** An Act relative to changing the minimum age requirement for kindergarten

**SPONSORS** Representatives Brian Ashe of Longmeadow

**PRIOR HISTORY** H.428 of the 193rd Session; attached without language to S2619; referred to SWM amended to S2697, reprinted as amended to S2707, reported favorably to HWM, no further action taken.

**CURRENT LAW** MGL 69:1B pertains to the duties of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

**SUMMARY**

Amends MGL 69:1B by adding a new sentence that directs BESE to set the mandatory minimum age for school attendance for a child who is 5 years of old beginning in September of the calendar year. Currently, the minimum age requirement for kindergarten is 6.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 510

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Brian M. Ashe*

*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 changing the minimum age requirement for kindergarten.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>1/13/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 510**

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By Representative Ashe of Longmeadow, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 510) of Brian M. Ashe relative to the mandatory minimum age for children to attend kindergarten. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 428 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to changing the minimum age requirement for kindergarten.

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

The twenty-first paragraph of section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- The mandatory minimum age for attendance of kindergarten shall be for a child 5 years of age for attendance in the school year beginning in September of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of 5.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 615
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to ensure the health and safety of children
<b><u>SPONSOR(S)</u></b>	Representative Hannah Kane of Shrewsbury
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H513 was attached to S2697, passed SWM and went to HWM. No further actions.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D pertains to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).  MGL 15D:1A pertains to the definitions related to EEC.

**SUMMARY**

The bill amends MGL 15D:1A by changing language pertaining to private child care programs to differentiate such programs from child care centers and school-aged child care programs. It further amends MGL 15D by inserting a new section—Section 8A—which requires private child care programs to adopt health and well-being policies in accordance with EEC regulation and have staff complete annual health and safety trainings provided by EEC. It further requires EEC to conduct a comprehensive review of rules and regulations established under the section at least once every 5 years and to collect and publish private child care program information on its website.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 615

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Hannah Kane*

*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 the health and safety of children.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>1/7/2025</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>	<i>1/30/2025</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/22/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 615**

By Representative Kane of Shrewsbury, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 615) of Hannah Kane, Kimberly N. Ferguson and Patrick Joseph Kearney that the Department of Early Education and Care promulgate regulations requiring that private child care programs ensure that license-exempt programs serving infants through kindergarten-age children comply with basic health and safety standards. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 513 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to ensure the health and safety of children.

*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 1A of chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the definition “Preschool-aged” the following definition:-

“Private child care program,” a program or facility operated on a regular basis as part of a private, organized educational system, whether known as a child nursery, nursery school, kindergarten, child play school, progressive school, child development center, preschool or known under any other name, which receives children not of common parentage under 7 years of age, or under 16 years of age if those children have special needs, for nonresidential custody and care during part or all of the day separate from their parents. Such a program may operate before

and after school and may also operate during school vacation and holidays. Private child care program shall not include: services provided as part of a private, organized educational system to children not of common parentage above 6 years of age, or above 15 years of age if those children have special needs; programs or facilities subject to licensure by the department.

SECTION 2. Said section 1A of said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out, in lines 21 and 22, the words “any part of a private” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- a private child care program operated as part of a private.

SECTION 3. Said section 1A of said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the words “system; a” in line 165, the following words:- private child care program operated as.

SECTION 4. Said chapter 15D is hereby amended by inserting after section 8 the following section:-

Section 8A. (a) Every private child care program shall adopt, in accordance with regulations promulgated by the department, policies appropriate for the health and well-being of children in the nonresidential custody and care of the program. A person providing child care or support services in a private child care program shall annually complete health and safety training provided by the department.

(b) The department shall promulgate regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. These regulations shall, at minimum, include appropriate standards for: annual health and safety training for staff in private child care programs; staff-to-child ratios for multiple age and size groupings; limitations on the number of infants in care at one time; and the

imposition of civil fines and sanctions. Fines authorized pursuant to this section shall not exceed a maximum fine of \$250 per violation.

(c) The department shall provide consultation to assist private child care programs in meeting requirements established under this section.

(d) The department shall conduct a comprehensive review of rules and regulations established under this section at least once every 5 years.

(e) Whenever a school committee or superintendent of schools approves a private child care program pursuant to their authority, said school committee or superintendent of schools shall notify the department in writing. A private child care program shall, 30 days prior to the closing of the program, inform in writing: (i) the school committee of the municipality in which it operates; (ii) the department.

(f) The department shall collect and disseminate information, made available through the department's web site, regarding the availability of the full diversity of child care services, including private child care programs, that will promote informed child care choices. The information made available through the department's web site shall include, at minimum: (i) information to assist families in understanding the policies and procedures for child care programs licensed or funded by the department, as well as the policies and procedures for private child care programs; (ii) a localized list of child care providers known to the department; provider, however, that for each provider included, the department shall indicate whether said provider is licensed, funded, or exempt from licensure by the department; and (iii) provider-specific information about compliance with health and safety requirements.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 542/ Senate No. 341
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act to expand access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Marjorie Decker of Cambridge/ Senator Sal DiDomenico of Middlesex and Suffolk
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H456 in 193 <sup>rd</sup> Session; attached with language to S2697, reported favorable to SWM, reported favorably to HWM (Language became a study on FFN Care, which passed in the Budget FY25)  No Senate bill in previous session.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL 15D:1A pertains to definitions related to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).  MGL 15D:2 pertains to the duties of the Department of Early Education and Care.  MGL 30A pertains to state administrative procedure.  MGL 151:1 pertains to oppressive and unreasonable wages as well as the validity of contracts.  MGL 268A pertains to the conduct of public officials and employees.

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 15D:1A by adding definitions for “Family, Friend and Neighbor Care” and “FFN Caregiver.” It amends MGL 15D:2 by requiring early education and care (EEC) to establish a payment structure for FFN caregivers that is accessible to families using vouchers and provides adequate compensation for FFN caregivers. The bill requires EEC to convene a state advisory committee on FFN care within 60 days of the passage of the Act. The advisory committee must file a report with the EEC commissioner, who will forward it to the legislature.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 542

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Marjorie C. Decker*

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 expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>1/30/2025</i>
<i>Donald R. Berthiaume, Jr.</i>	<i>5th Worcester</i>	<i>5/8/2025</i>
<i>Sean Garballey</i>	<i>23rd Middlesex</i>	<i>5/8/2025</i>
<i>Samantha Montañó</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>5/8/2025</i>
<i>Russell E. Holmes</i>	<i>6th Suffolk</i>	<i>5/19/2025</i>
<i>William F. MacGregor</i>	<i>10th Suffolk</i>	<i>5/19/2025</i>
<i>James C. Arena-DeRosa</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>	<i>5/28/2025</i>
<i>Estela A. Reyes</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>5/28/2025</i>
<i>Andres X. Vargas</i>	<i>3rd Essex</i>	<i>6/26/2025</i>
<i>Adrian C. Madaro</i>	<i>1st Suffolk</i>	<i>6/26/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 542**

By Representative Decker of Cambridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 542) of Marjorie C. Decker and Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to expand access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare administered by the Department of Early Education and Care. Education.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare.

*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 1A of Chapter 15D, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following definitions:--

“Family, Friend and Neighbor Care” or “FFN Care” means child care which is exempt from licensure by the department because the individual caregiver either provides care in the child’s own home or is a relative of the child, other than family child care home care.

“FFN Caregiver” means a person providing FFN Care.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (u) the following subsections:--

(v) in addition to the department’s obligations under subsection (e), establish a payment structure for FFN caregivers that (1) ensures families with child care vouchers, or other available funding mechanisms, have full use of the daily value of such vouchers or other mechanisms; (2)

is based on payment at an hourly rate; and (3) provides for a minimum hourly rate of compensation for FFN caregivers that is equal or greater to the minimum hourly wage required by section 1 of chapter 151. A public hearing under chapter 30A and the approval of the board shall be required before the establishment or revision of the payment structure;

### SECTION 3.

(1) The department shall, within 60 days of the passage of this act, convene a state advisory committee on FFN Care, the members of which shall represent a reasonable geographic balance and shall reflect the diversity of the commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Members of the advisory committee shall, at minimum, include one person from each of the following organizations, or their successor organizations, if applicable: Care That Works, Inc., New England United for Justice; Service Employees International Union Local 509; the Child Care Resource and Referral Network; and three or more FFN caregivers chosen by the commissioner.

(2) Additional committee members may also be recommended by the commissioner and appointed by the board. All appointees shall have special expertise, experience or interest in FFN care and shall represent a mix of representatives of the FFN community, the civic, labor, and business communities, academics, parents, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers.

(3) Members of the committee shall not, by virtue of their membership, be considered state employees under chapter 268A. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to appropriation, for expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred in the performance of their responsibilities. Members shall be appointed for a 1 year period, after which the committee shall be disbanded by the department.

(4) The committee shall hold at least 4 public hearings and 4 public meetings in its first year of establishment to collect information on, discuss, and consider the following with respect to FFN care:

a. Ensure adequate representation of FFN care in the department's governance and decision-making;

b. Ensuring adequate resources for FFN care including but not limited to regional child care resource and referral agencies for program administration and supportive services;

c. Accessible application process timelines and requirements for reimbursement of FFN care;

d. Models to extend reimbursable voucher hours for children to access formal group programs, even if also using the voucher for off-hour care with FFN caregivers;

e. Adjusting existing resource programs to be relevant to and accessible to FFN caregivers and creating new resources and programs as needed to address needs and challenges unique to FFN caregivers;

f. Goals, objectives, and reporting requirements pertaining to FFN caregivers for inclusion in the department's next 5-year strategic action plan;

g. Definitions and indicators of quality appropriate to FFN care and culturally responsive approaches to quality improvement for FFN caregivers;

h. Inclusion of FFN care in career ladder and workforce development frameworks and programs;

i. Effective outreach and communication practices to inform the public about FFN care, requirements, and resources;

j. Legislative and regulatory amendments to further support FFN care in the Commonwealth; and

k. Department structures, representation and expertise required to effectively implement and oversee and evaluate changes recommended by the committee relative to FFN care.

(5) The advisory committee shall file a report with the commissioner which shall be forwarded to the clerks of the house and the senate, and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on education, with respect to the committee's findings on the issues considered under subsection 4.

**SENATE . . . . . No. 341**

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**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 expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>	<i>3/27/2025</i>
<i>Liz Miranda</i>	<i>Second Suffolk</i>	<i>6/23/2025</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 341**

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By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 341) of Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to expand access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare administered by the Department of Early Education and Care. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 456 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act expanding access to family, friend, and neighbor-provided childcare.

*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 1A of Chapter 15D, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following definitions:-

“Family, Friend and Neighbor Care” or “FFN Care” means child care which is exempt from licensure by the department because the individual caregiver either provides care in the child’s own home or is a relative of the child, other than family child care home care.

“FFN Caregiver” means a person providing FFN Care.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (u) the following subsections:--

(v) in addition to the department's obligations under subsection (e), establish a payment structure for FFN caregivers that (1) ensures families with child care vouchers, or other available funding mechanisms, have full use of the daily value of such vouchers or other mechanisms; (2) is based on payment at an hourly rate; and (3) provides for a minimum hourly rate of compensation for FFN caregivers that is equal or greater to the minimum hourly wage required by section 1 of chapter 151. A public hearing under chapter 30A and the approval of the board shall be required before the establishment or revision of the payment structure;

SECTION 3. (1) The department shall, within 60 days of the passage of this act, convene a state advisory committee on FFN Care, the members of which shall represent a reasonable geographic balance and shall reflect the diversity of the commonwealth in race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Members of the advisory committee shall, at minimum, include one person from each of the following organizations, or their successor organizations, if applicable: Care That Works, Inc., New England United for Justice; Service Employees International Union Local 509; the Child Care Resource and Referral Network; and three or more FFN caregivers chosen by the commissioner.

(2) Additional committee members may also be recommended by the commissioner and appointed by the board. All appointees shall have special expertise, experience or interest in FFN care and shall represent a mix of representatives of the FFN community, the civic, labor, and business communities, academics, parents, teachers, social service providers, and health care providers.

(3) Members of the committee shall not, by virtue of their membership, be considered state employees under chapter 268A. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to appropriation, for expenses necessarily and

reasonably incurred in the performance of their responsibilities. Members shall be appointed for a 1 year period, after which the committee shall be disbanded by the department.

(4) The committee shall hold at least 4 public hearings and 4 public meetings in its first year of establishment to collect information on, discuss, and consider the following with respect to FFN care:

a. Ensure adequate representation of FFN care in the department's governance and decision-making;

b. Ensuring adequate resources for FFN care including but not limited to regional child care resource and referral agencies for program administration and supportive services;

c. Accessible application process timelines and requirements for reimbursement of FFN care;

d. Models to extend reimbursable voucher hours for children to access formal group programs, even if also using the voucher for off-hour care with FFN caregivers;

e. Adjusting existing resource programs to be relevant to and accessible to FFN caregivers and creating new resources and programs as needed to address needs and challenges unique to FFN caregivers;

f. Goals, objectives, and reporting requirements pertaining to FFN caregivers for inclusion in the department's next 5-year strategic action plan;

g. Definitions and indicators of quality appropriate to FFN care and culturally responsive approaches to quality improvement for FFN caregivers;

h. Inclusion of FFN care in career ladder and workforce development frameworks and programs;

i. Effective outreach and communication practices to inform the public about FFN care, requirements, and resources;

j. Legislative and regulatory amendments to further support FFN care in the Commonwealth; and

k. Department structures, representation and expertise required to effectively implement and oversee and evaluate changes recommended by the committee relative to FFN care.

(5) The advisory committee shall file a report with the commissioner which shall be forwarded to the clerks of the house and the senate, and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on education, with respect to the committee's findings on the issues considered under subsection 4.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House, No. 541 / Senate, No. 373
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Marjorie Decker of Cambridge/ Senator Adam Gomez of Hampden
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	H.453 in 193 <sup>rd</sup> Session; reported favorably to HWM.
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	<p>MGL 71:37H pertains to policies relative to the conduct of teachers or students as well as student handbooks.</p> <p>MGL 71:37H ½ pertains to suspension, expulsion, and the 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>

**SUMMARY**

This bill amends MGL 71:37H ¾ to prohibit the suspension or expulsion of pre-k through fifth grade students enrolled in a public school for discipline infractions. It also requires the department of elementary and secondary education (DESE) to provide guidance and best practices on how to respond to concerns related to student behavior including alternatives to suspension and expulsion such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and collaborative problem solving.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 541

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Marjorie C. Decker*

*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 learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in public prekindergarten through 3rd grade.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>4/8/2025</i>
<i>Estela A. Reyes</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>5/28/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 541**

By Representative Decker of Cambridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 541) of Marjorie C. Decker for legislation to ban school exclusion from prekindergarten through 3rd grade in public schools. Education.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in public prekindergarten through 3rd grade.

*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. The General Court hereby finds and declares that:

(1) to give students, especially the most vulnerable, the ability to be prepared for post third grade—an important educational milestone—students must be in school to learn during the prekindergarten to third grade years;

(2) the department of elementary and secondary education must give enhanced attention, tools and resources to create effective responses to the disciplinary challenges that educators face in teaching students in prekindergarten to third grade;

(3) fourth and fifth grade students require sufficient time in school, as their final years in elementary school similarly represent an important educational milestone; and

(4) these steps will enhance equal educational opportunity because disparities in school discipline lead to disparate educational outcomes for students.

(5) these steps are especially important as young students continue to struggle after experiencing learning loss and traumatic experiences due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SECTION 2. Section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting before paragraph (a) the following paragraph:

This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) and (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

SECTION 3. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade or third grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 4. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade or fourth grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 5. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade or fifth grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 6. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by adding the following subsection:

(g) The department shall provide guidance and support to school districts to provide school staff with best practices to respond to concerns related to student behavior including, but not limited to, alternatives to suspension and expulsion such as (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

SECTION 7. Section 4 shall take effect 1 year after passage of this act.

SECTION 8. Section 5 shall take effect 2 years after passage of this act.

**SENATE . . . . . No. 373**

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**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 enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Adam Gómez*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Hampden*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 373**

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By Mr. Gomez, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 373) of Adam Gomez for legislation to enhance learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade. Education.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 289 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act enhancing learning in the early school years through a ban on school exclusion in pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade.

*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. The General Court hereby finds and declares that:

(1) to give students, especially the most vulnerable, the ability to be prepared for post third grade—an important educational milestone—students must be in school to learn during the prekindergarten to third grade years;

(2) the department of elementary and secondary education must give enhanced attention, tools and resources to create effective responses to the disciplinary challenges that educators face in teaching students in prekindergarten to third grade;

(3) fourth and fifth grade students require sufficient time in school, as their final years in elementary school similarly represent an important educational milestone; and

(4) these steps will enhance equal educational opportunity because disparities in school discipline lead to disparate educational outcomes for students.

(5) these steps are especially important as young students continue to struggle after experiencing learning loss and traumatic experiences due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SECTION 2. Section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting before paragraph (a) the following paragraph:

This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) and (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

SECTION 3. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade or third grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 4. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade or fourth grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 5. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out paragraph (a) and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:

(a) A student enrolled in a public prekindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade or fifth grade may not be suspended or expelled from school in response to discipline infractions.

SECTION 6. Said section 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of said chapter 71, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by adding the following subsection:

(g) The department shall provide guidance and support to school districts to provide school staff with best practices to respond to concerns related to student behavior including, but not limited to, alternatives to suspension and expulsion such as (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

SECTION 7. Section 4 shall take effect 1 year after passage of this act.

SECTION 8. Section 5 shall take effect 2 years after passage of this act.

**Joint Committee on Education**

**Bill Summary**

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<b><u>BILL NUMBER</u></b>	House No. 275/ Senate No. 113
<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	An Act relative to child care cost transparency.
<b><u>SPONSORS</u></b>	Representative Tram T. Nguyen of Andover/Senator Julian Cyr of Cape and Islands
<b><u>PRIOR HISTORY</u></b>	New file
<b><u>CURRENT LAW</u></b>	MGL Chapter 15D, Section 6 pertaining to the advertisement or notice for placement of child under 16 years of age.

**SUMMARY**

The bill amends the MGL 15D:6 by inserting language that requires all private early education and care (EEC) programs, including school-aged child care programs, child care centers, family child care homes and large family child care homes, licensed by DESE to display their per child per level rate charged by said EEC program, on their website. Exceptions are made only when programs do not have public websites, in which case these programs must disclose the required information when requested. Programs can disclose that said required information is provisional or subject to change. This required change must take effect one year after the bill passes.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 275**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESENTED BY:

*Tram T. Nguyen*

\_\_\_\_\_

*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 child care cost transparency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>1/17/2025</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/21/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 275**

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By Representative Nguyen of Andover, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 275) of Tram T. Nguyen and Vanna Howard relative to child care cost transparency. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to child care cost transparency.

*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 6 of chapter 15D, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following paragraph:-

(f) All private early education and care programs licensed by the department, including school-aged child care programs, child care centers, family child care homes and large family child care homes, with a standard rate of attendance and a publicly available website shall clearly display such rate, per child, per level, through said website, provided that programs licensed under this section with no such publicly available website shall disclose the standard rate of attendance upon reasonable inquiry. All such programs reserve the right to disclose the stated price as subject to change or other terms or services, provided that such listed price is a reasonably accurate estimate.

SECTION 2. Section 1 shall take effect one year following enactment of this act.

**SENATE . . . . . No. 113**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESENTED BY:

*Julian Cyr*

\_\_\_\_\_

*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 child care cost transparency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Julian Cyr*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Cape and Islands*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 113**

By Mr. Cyr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 113) of Julian Cyr for legislation to require all private early education and care programs to publicly display child care rates on their website. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to child care cost transparency.

*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 6 of chapter 15D, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following paragraph:-

(f) All private early education and care programs licensed by the department, including school-aged child care programs, child care centers, family child care homes and large family child care homes, with a standard rate of attendance and a publicly available website shall clearly display such rate, per child, per level, through said website, provided that programs licensed under this section with no such publicly available website shall disclose the standard rate of attendance upon reasonable inquiry. All such programs reserve the right to disclose the stated price as subject to change or other terms or services, provided that such listed price is a reasonably accurate estimate.

SECTION 2. Section 1 shall take effect one year following enactment of this act.

