

HOUSE No. 4421

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 20, 2020.

The committee on Higher Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1238) of Alice Hanlon Peisch for legislation to establish an early college education program to increase postsecondary completion rates and participation in career pathways, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4421) ought to pass.

For the committee,

JEFFREY N. ROY.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to early college high schools.

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 15A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 39 the following section:

3 Section 39A. (a) There shall be a Massachusetts Early College Education Program which
4 shall be administered jointly by the commissioner of the department of higher education and the
5 commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education, herein the
6 commissioners. The purpose of the Massachusetts Early College Education Program, herein the
7 program, shall be to help increase postsecondary education participation and completion. The
8 program shall consist of partnerships among public secondary institutions and institutions of
9 higher education in the commonwealth designated as Massachusetts Early College Schools by
10 the commissioners. The commissioners shall jointly promulgate any rules, regulations, or
11 guidelines they deem necessary for the implementation of the program.

12 (b) Public secondary schools designated as Massachusetts Early College Schools, herein
13 early college schools, shall provide programs open to all enrolled students, on a space available

14 basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender
15 identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, special
16 needs, proficiency in the English language, or academic achievement. A lottery shall be held if
17 more students apply than can be accommodated. There shall be no application fee or tuition
18 charge for students participating in the program.

19 (c) The program shall allow for a minimum accumulation of 12 transferable college
20 credits. Academic courses that count for college credit shall be those agreed to by the institutions
21 of higher education participating in the partnership with the postsecondary school. Courses shall
22 be taught by postsecondary faculty or secondary teachers credentialed to teach postsecondary
23 courses and approved by the participating institution of higher education, and shall include the
24 transfer of any advanced placement courses taken by participating students who earn a qualifying
25 score on the advanced placement examination.

26 (d) The commissioners shall establish the information and requirements they deem
27 necessary to be included in any application for designation as a Massachusetts Early College
28 School in order to ensure a high-quality and rigorous early college program, including, but not
29 limited to, the following:

30 (i) the primary entry point grade and at least one later entry point opportunity for other
31 students and a plan for introducing the early college program and for preparing students for the
32 transition into the program;

33 (ii) the potential student academic pathways, which shall include the sequence of
34 courses and other curricular experiences, including, but not limited to, internships, necessary to
35 fulfill both secondary and postsecondary requirements;

36 (iii) the process and guidance support by which students will be exposed to sufficient
37 information to select the pathway best suited for them and provide options to change
38 pathways during the course of study;

39 (iv) the institutions of higher education the school will partner with to provide
40 academic courses taught on postsecondary campuses, or where not logistically feasible, a plan to
41 provide postsecondary experiences;

42 (v) the plan to offer personalized academic advising and tutoring around the pathway
43 to postsecondary completion, which shall include specific provisions to address the particular
44 needs of limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and lower academic
45 achievers, and may include strategies to provide non-academic supports including, but not
46 limited to, guidance counseling and financial literacy; and

47 (vi) the approaches to supporting participating students' exposure to a variety of
48 career opportunities and workforce and career skills development, including, but not limited to,
49 collaboration, teamwork, intercultural understanding, written and oral communication, critical
50 and creative thinking, quantitative literacy, real-world-problem solving, interview preparation,
51 career counseling, as well as experiential and workplace learning opportunities, including, but
52 not limited to, internships and mentorships,

53 (e) Each early college school shall enter into and maintain a memorandum of
54 understanding with at least one institution of higher education in the commonwealth, which shall
55 include, but not be limited to, how the program is sustainable on current funding plus anticipated
56 annual state supplement for designated early college schools, and the designated duties for each

57 institution, in the areas of program coordination, student support, faculty support, career
58 partnership coordination and performance monitoring.

59 (f) There shall be an early college education joint advisory committee, herein the joint
60 advisory committee, to advise the commissioners on the designation of early college schools and
61 to assist in setting and monitoring overall performance requirements and targeted enrollments for
62 all participating programs. The joint advisory committee shall consist of: the secretary of the
63 executive office of education or a designee; 2 members of the board of elementary and secondary
64 education, who shall be appointed by the chair of the board of elementary and secondary
65 education; and 2 members of the board of higher education, who shall be appointed by the chair
66 of the board of higher education. Individual programs may negotiate further requirements with
67 the commissioners.

68 (g) Designation as an early college school shall be for an initial period of five years,
69 subject to review after the first three years, and renewable subject to performance. The
70 department of elementary and secondary education shall, subject to appropriation, provide
71 additional funding to participating programs for each participating student.

72 (h) Annually, by July 1, early college schools shall file a report with the commissioners,
73 and the senate and house chairs of the joint committee on higher education and the joint
74 committee on education, on performance measures, including, but not limited to the following
75 categories:

76 (1) high school graduation rates of participating students;

77 (2) percentage of participating students who complete the program;

- 78 (3) percentage of participating students who gain any postsecondary credits;
- 79 (4) percentage of participating students who gain at least 12 postsecondary credits;
- 80 (5) percentage of participating students in a 6-year cohort who attain postsecondary
- 81 degrees; and
- 82 (6) college and career outcomes of participating students.

83 SECTION 2. The commissioners of the department of elementary and secondary

84 education and the department of higher education shall promulgate any rules, regulations, or

85 guidelines necessary to implement the Massachusetts Early College Education Program

86 established in section 1 of this act no later than December 31, 2020.

87 SECTION 3. The first annual report required by section 1 of this act, shall be submitted

88 no later than July 1, 2022.