

HOUSE No. 530

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Alice K. Wolf

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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to early education and care.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Alice K. Wolf	25th Middlesex
Frank I. Smizik	15th Norfolk
Denise Provost	27th Middlesex
William N. Brownsberger	24th Middlesex
Bill Bowles	2nd Bristol
Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.	34th Middlesex
John W. Scibak	2nd Hampshire
Ellen Story	3rd Hampshire
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.	26th Middlesex
Bruce E. Tarr	First Essex and Middlesex
Jennifer M. Callahan	18th Worcester
James B. Eldridge	Middlesex and Worcester
Steven A. Tolman	Second Suffolk and Middlesex
Robert L. Rice, Jr.	2nd Worcester
Richard J. Ross	9th Norfolk
Sean Garballey	23rd Middlesex
Cynthia Stone Creem	First Middlesex and Norfolk

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT RELATIVE TO EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE.

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 4 of Chapter 15D of the General Laws, as most recently amended by
2 Section 34 of Chapter 215 of the Acts of 2008, is hereby amended by striking out the eighth and ninth
3 paragraphs and inserting in place thereof the following three paragraphs:--

4 The commissioner shall analyze the present and future goals, needs and requirements of early childhood
5 education and care in the commonwealth and recommend to the board comprehensive means to achieve a
6 well-coordinated system that promotes positive social and emotional development, high education
7 achievement and quality care in the commonwealth.

8 The commissioner shall prepare and, following consultation with the board and advisory council and after
9 a public hearing, shall submit to the secretary, for the secretary's review and approval, a 5-year master
10 plan for achieving such a coordinated system. The master plan along with an annual progress report shall
11 reflect the goals and standards established by the board and the secretary. The master plan shall include,
12 but not be limited to: enrollment projections, identification of measures for age-appropriate child
13 development and school readiness, expulsion rate projections, utilization of existing facilities, promotion
14 of research, programmatic excellence, recommendations for construction or acquisition of new facilities,
15 program distribution, the addition of new programs, the elimination of existing programs, the need for
16 program revisions and the role of the public schools in the delivery of early education and care programs,
17 services and quality enhancements. The plan shall be reported to the Joint Committee on Education no
18 later than December 31, 2009. Updates shall also be reported to the Joint Committee on Education.

19 The commissioner shall receive reports, undertake research, and facilitate coordination among and
20 between all entities delivering programs or services under this chapter. The commissioner shall promote
21 the partnership of providers of early education and care programs and services with elementary and
22 secondary schools, institutions of higher education and business and civic organizations.

23 SECTION 2. Section 4A of Chapter 15D, as most recently amended, is hereby amended by striking
24 subsection (b) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:--

25 (b) In order to ensure local coordination and to maximize local participation in the programs and services
26 of the department, the department shall support and work with local early education and care councils in
27 the development of community plans that address how the councils and communities will:

28 (1) build on the local array of services and improve access to services for additional families or increased
29 services for families already receiving services; (2) increase quality of early education and care
30 programming; (3) support comprehensive services for children and families; (4) collaborate across
31 agencies; (5) provide services for hard to reach populations; (6) promote the school readiness, healthy
32 development and emotional well being of children participating in early education and care programs or
33 services; and (7) assist local programs in meeting the quality standards of the universal pre-kindergarten
34 program established in Chapter 15D, Section 13. Said local plans shall be developed by the local early
35 education and care council into comprehensive city- or town-wide proposals for funding, each of which
36 shall be reviewed and evaluated using board approved criteria to assess the quality of collaborative and
37 coordinated planning, the effectiveness of the plan in addressing the early education and care needs of
38 children and families and the quality and cost-effectiveness of proposed services. Local lead agencies
39 may include, but not be limited to, a school district, a Head Start agency, or a child care agency licensed
40 by the department. Each city or town may submit only one said city- or town-wide proposal to the
41 department for each grant program funded through the department. Proposals for funding that encompass
42 multiple cities and towns must demonstrate support of local councils for said proposals.

43 SECTION 3. Section 4A of Chapter 15D, as most recently amended, is hereby further amended in
44 subsection (d) by adding at the end thereof, the following words:-- ; provided, however, that nothing
45 herein shall require the regionalization of particular programs or services and the department's goal shall
46 be to preserve local decision-making by city or town.