

HOUSE No. 545

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Christine P. Barber

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 improve augmentative and alternative communication opportunities for children with disabilities.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/28/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>3/6/2021</i>
<i>Paul J. Donato</i>	<i>35th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Patricia A. Haddad</i>	<i>5th Bristol</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Marcos A. Devers</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/16/2021</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>3/16/2021</i>
<i>John J. Lawn, Jr.</i>	<i>10th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/16/2021</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>	<i>3/16/2021</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>3/25/2021</i>
<i>Christina A. Minicucci</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>	<i>3/25/2021</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>4/8/2021</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/8/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 545

By Ms. Barber of Somerville, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 545) of Christine P. Barber and others for legislation to require training and preparation in the use of augmentative and alternative communication for students who are nonverbal or who have limited speech for certain educator licenses. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act to improve augmentative and alternative communication opportunities for children with disabilities.

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 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting at the end of section 38G the following paragraph:-

3 All teachers who apply for an initial Massachusetts educator license on or after December
4 31, 2022 shall receive training and preparation in the use of augmentative and alternative
5 communication for students who are nonverbal or who have limited speech, as a requirement for
6 such licensure. Such training and preparation shall include coursework in augmentative and
7 alternative communication and practical experience in the classroom with children who use
8 augmentative and alternative communication, including but not limited to children with Autism
9 Spectrum Disorder, acquired brain injury, cerebral palsy and other disabilities that result in
10 limited or no verbal abilities; provided that practical experience for regular education teachers
11 shall include experience in the classroom with students who use augmentative and alternative

12 communication, and if classroom settings are unavailable practical experience may include other
13 types of interactions with and observations of individuals who use augmentative and alternative
14 communication. Teacher and specialist teacher licensure requirements, subject matter knowledge
15 requirements, professional standards for teachers, and educator preparation program approval
16 requirements shall adequately address augmentative and alternative communication
17 competencies to educate students with disabilities who are nonverbal or have limited verbal
18 abilities; provided that a teacher shall not be subject to such requirements if they are applying for
19 a second or subsequent licenses. The board shall require that the individual professional
20 development plans required under section 38G of Chapter 71 address the learning needs of
21 students who are nonverbal or have limited speech.