

HOUSE No. 246

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James J. Dwyer

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 the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

James J. Dwyer

Dylan Fernandes

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

30th Middlesex

Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket

HOUSE No. 246

By Mr. Dwyer of Woburn, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 246) of James J. Dwyer and Dylan Fernandes relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students and the establishment of a task force to investigate self certification. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

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

1 In order to improve the identification of low-income students for the purposes of
2 expanding eligibility for free or reduced price lunch under the National School Lunch Act of
3 1945, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall provide two means of
4 calculation to certify students; (1) Direct Certification (DC) under the Community Eligibility
5 Provision (CEP) Pilot Program, and (2) a run of the Chapter 70 formula for the fiscal year that
6 calculates low-income enrollment by using the most recent free/reduced price meal data
7 available for each district. This calculation shall be conducted either be free/reduced enrollment
8 on October 1 of the previous calendar year, if the district collected forms for that year, or
9 estimated by multiplying free/reduced percentages from the most recent prior year in which
10 forms were collected by enrollment totals for October 1, in the immediate prior year said
11 calculation(s) are performed.

12 Districts shall be allowed the option of choosing the formula calculation that they believe
13 most accurately captures the cohort of students considered to be “economically disadvantaged”.

14 Provided further, by no later than September 1, 2017, There shall be a cross-agency
15 Economically Disadvantaged Student Calculation task force appointed to address and solve the
16 multiple complex challenges surfacing with the implementation of direct certification. The task
17 force shall make recommendations for revising the commonwealths approach to these
18 calculations as appropriate.

19 The task force shall consist of 9 members: 2 of whom shall be appointed by the president
20 of the senate, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker
21 of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; the secretary of education
22 or a designee; the secretary of health and human services or a designee; the secretary of
23 administration and finance or a designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of
24 School Committees, Inc.; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School
25 Superintendents, Inc. The issues to be address shall include but not be limited to: quality of data
26 entered into the DESE, DTA, or MassHealth databases; changes that could be made to the
27 computer matching algorithms; and changes that could be made to the data output reviewed by
28 local school district personnel.

29 The task force shall issue a final report and recommendations for legislation, if any, to the
30 clerks of the house of representatives and senate not later than January 1, 2018.