

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4015**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen**  
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An Act expanding inclusive transition programs for students with severe 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 71B of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
2 Section 16 the following section: -

3           Section 17: Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment

4           (a) Subject to appropriation, the executive office of education shall develop and  
5 administer a discretionary grant program to provide monies to school committees and state  
6 public institutions of higher education partnering together to offer inclusive concurrent  
7 enrollment program options for school aged children with disabilities ages 18 to 22, inclusive;  
8 provided:

9           (1) that the grant program shall be limited to said students who are considered to have  
10 severe disabilities; and

11           (2) in the case of students aged 18-19, shall be further limited to students with severe  
12 disabilities who have been unable to achieve the competency determination necessary to pass the  
13 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exam.

14           (b) The goal of the grant program shall be for school committees to partner with  
15 institutions of higher education to provide a free appropriate public education in the least  
16 restrictive environment that meets the transition needs of students with severe disabilities, and to  
17 support academic success, participation in student life of the college community, competitive  
18 employment. This shall be achieved by fully including students in higher education institutions  
19 by requiring the following:

20 (1) development of partnerships between institutions of higher education and school  
21 committees which also include any relevant agency serving students with intellectual disabilities,  
22 including but not limited to a vocational rehabilitation agency;

23 (2) enrollment in credit-bearing and non-credit courses that include students without  
24 disabilities including enrollment in credit-bearing courses in audit status for students who may  
25 not meet course pre-requisites;

26 (3) participation in on-campus student life activities;

27 (4) adequate preparation for competitive employment;

28 (5) waiver of tuition for all courses by the institution of higher education;

29 (6) provision of supports and services necessary to facilitate a student's enrollment  
30 and support inclusion in academic courses, extracurricular activities, internships, work  
31 experiences, and other aspects of the institution of higher education's regular postsecondary  
32 program;

33 (7) training and technical assistance for teachers, faculty and personnel regarding  
34 strategy and teaching methodology to achieve successful inclusion of individuals with severe  
35 intellectual disabilities;

36 (8) that students with severe intellectual disabilities be socially and academically  
37 integrated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent possible; and institutions of higher  
38 education may choose to engage students pursuing study in the areas of special education,  
39 general education, vocational rehabilitation, assistive technology, psychology, or related fields;  
40 in the administration of the program.

41 (c) The executive office of education, in consultation with the department of elementary  
42 and secondary education, the department of higher education and the inclusive concurrent  
43 enrollment advisory board, shall develop guidelines to ensure that the grant program meets this  
44 goal.

45 (d) Subject to appropriation, the executive office of education shall designate an inclusive  
46 concurrent enrollment coordinator to manage grant administration and coordinate reporting. The  
47 executive office of education shall notify all participating school committees and institutions of  
48 higher education of the name and contact information for the inclusive concurrent enrollment  
49 coordinator.

50 (e) The executive office of education shall establish an inclusive concurrent enrollment  
51 advisory board to evaluate and to advise the executive office of education on efforts to  
52 implement inclusive concurrent enrollment and to participate in educational outreach efforts on  
53 inclusive concurrent enrollment. The inclusive concurrent enrollment advisory board shall

54 include representatives of school districts and colleges and universities where the inclusive  
55 concurrent enrollment program has been successfully implemented, 2 former or current students  
56 that have participated in an inclusive concurrent enrollment program, the co-chairs of the joint  
57 committee on education or designees, the co-chairs of the joint committee on higher education or  
58 designees, the commissioner of higher education or designee, the commissioner of elementary  
59 and secondary education or designee, the secretary of education or designee, the commissioner  
60 of the department of development disability services or designee, the commissioner of the  
61 Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission or designee, a representative of Massachusetts  
62 Advocates for Children, a representative of the Federation for Students with Special Needs, a  
63 representative of the Institute for Community Inclusion, and the inclusive concurrent enrollment  
64 coordinator. The inclusive concurrent enrollment advisory board shall meet quarterly.

65 (f) The inclusive concurrent enrollment coordinator, in consultation with the department  
66 of elementary and secondary education, the department of higher education and the inclusive  
67 concurrent enrollment advisory board, shall develop strategies and procedures designed to assist  
68 institutions of higher education in sustaining, expanding and replicating inclusive concurrent  
69 enrollment partnerships established through the executive office of education's discretionary  
70 grant program. Strategies and procedures shall include but not be limited to:

71 (1) provision of continued grant funding for partnerships between institutions of  
72 higher education and school committees that have developed inclusive concurrent enrollment  
73 programs in order to sustain the existing programs and to retain employment specialists to assist  
74 students in meeting competitive employment and other transition-related goals;

75 (2) adoption of procedures and funding mechanisms to ensure that new partnerships  
76 providing inclusive concurrent enrollment programs fully utilize the models and expertise  
77 developed in existing partnerships to ensure that all programs are successful and sustainable;

78 (3) development of a mechanism to encourage existing and new partnerships to  
79 expand capacity to respond to individual parents and school committees, who are not currently  
80 benefitting from those partnerships and who request an opportunity for their children to  
81 participate in inclusive concurrent enrollment;

82 (4) outreach to institutions of higher education and school committees that are not  
83 currently participating in inclusive concurrent enrollment with intent to encourage such  
84 institutions of higher education and school committees to offer inclusive concurrent enrollment  
85 programming;

86 (5) addressing of challenges frequently faced by institutions of higher education and  
87 newly created inclusive concurrent enrollment programs and a compilation of best practices to  
88 address these difficulties

89 (g) The executive office of education shall distribute strategies and procedures developed  
90 by subsection (f) to all public colleges and universities in the Commonwealth annually.

91 (h) The executive office of education shall select grant recipients no later than July 15 of  
92 each year.

93 (i) The executive office of education, in consultation with the department of elementary  
94 and secondary education and the department of higher education, shall make a report available  
95 online on the status of the grant program annually, no later than March 15. The report shall  
96 include, but not be limited to the following components:

97 (1) enrollment data that details the number of students enrolled in inclusive concurrent  
98 enrollment each semester and the unduplicated count of total students served at each institution

99 (2) a list of all full-time and part-time employment positions supported by the grant  
100 program that are dedicated to supporting students with severe disabilities through the inclusive  
101 concurrent enrollment program and the average salary for those positions including but not  
102 limited to:

103 (i) educational coaches;

104 (ii) educational specialists;

105 (iii) job coaches and vocational specialists;

106 (iv) program specialists;

107 (v) program director;

108 (vi) peer mentors, note-takers, and tutors;

109 (vii) contracted employees;

110 (viii) parent and school committee liaisons.

111 (3) a list of all courses taken by all students participating in the inclusive concurrent  
112 enrollment program during the academic year with indication as to whether the student attempted  
113 the course for credit or for audit and whether the student passed or completed the course

114 (4) a summary of unique and creative ideas implemented at each institution of higher  
115 education that helped foster their relationships with school committees or helped students  
116 succeed

117 (5) employment data for students and graduates, obtained to the best of the ability of the  
118 school committee and the institution of higher education.

119 (6) a report detailing the amount of grant funds allocated to each institution of higher  
120 education in the planning and implementation phases, the amount allocated to the department of  
121 elementary and secondary education and the department of higher education, and the amount  
122 allocated to the executive office of education.

123 SECTION 2. The executive office of education shall promulgate guidelines pursuant to  
124 section 17 of chapter 71B of the General Laws on or before January 1, 2015.

125 SECTION 3. Section 2 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
126 amended by inserting after the word “department”, in line 50, the following words:-

127 ; and (12) For older students ages 18-22, options including continuing education,  
128 enrollment in credit and noncredit courses that include students without disabilities in an  
129 institution of higher education, development of independent living skills, development of skills  
130 necessary for seeking, obtaining, and maintaining jobs, development of skills to access  
131 community services, and development of skills for self-management of medical needs.