

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4399

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 20, 2024.

The committee on Education, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 440) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and others relative to admissions to vocational-technical schools or vocational-technical programs to provide for equitable workforce development, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 444) of Manny Cruz, Estela A. Reyes and others for legislation to expand the use of career and academic plans, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 450) of Josh S. Cutler and others relative to state reimbursement for non-district vocational school transportation costs, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 505) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr., and others relative to the advisory board to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 524) of Michael P. Kushmerek and others relative to discriminatory outcomes in vocational school admissions, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 531) of Kate Lipper-Garabedian, Jessica Ann Giannino and others for legislation to increase student access to career technical education schools and programs which are aligned with regional labor market needs, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 538) of Frank A. Moran, Adam Scanlon and others for legislation to provide for a program of capital investments for vocational-technical education programs and regional vocational-technical schools, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 564) of Jeffrey N. Roy and others relative to industry-recognized certification awards paid by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 592) of Chynah Tyler and others for legislation to establish within the office of the Governor a workforce skills cabinet to expand student pathways to success, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4245) of Jeffrey Rosario Turco for legislation to authorize schools and students participating in certain athletic programs to seek arbitration to review athletic programs eligibility decisions, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4399) ought to pass.

For the committee,

DENISE C. GARLICK.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4399**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
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An Act to expand access to career technical education and other alternative pathways that improve student opportunities and outcomes.

*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 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following  
2 sections:-

3           Section 38. For the purposes of sections 39 through 42, inclusive, the following terms  
4 shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:-

5           “Career technical education”, shall have the same meaning as vocational-technical  
6 education pursuant to section 1 of chapter 74.

7           “Career technical education program”, shall mean a vocational technical education  
8 program approved by the department pursuant to chapter 74.

9           “District of residence”, shall mean the school district of the city or town where a student  
10 resides.

11          “Office”, shall mean the office of career technical education.

12           “School of residence”, shall mean the middle school or junior high school a student  
13 attends within their district of residence. “School of residence”, shall mean the middle school or  
14 junior high school a student attends within their district of residence.

15           Section 39. There shall be established within the department of elementary and  
16 secondary education an office of career technical education, whose purpose is to develop and  
17 implement policies and promulgate regulations to promote, enhance, and expand career technical  
18 education programs in the commonwealth and which shall be under the supervision and  
19 management of the deputy commissioner of career technical education. The deputy  
20 commissioner shall be appointed by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education,  
21 with the approval of the board. It shall be the duty of said deputy commissioner to improve and  
22 maximize career technical education throughout the commonwealth, and to collaborate with the  
23 board to promulgate regulations and develop and implement polices to enhance the  
24 commonwealth’s career technical education programs, including but not limited to the ensuring  
25 the enforcement of regulations relative to certificates of occupational proficiency.

26           Section 40. The office shall promote and support with available resources innovative and  
27 collaborative career technical education demonstration programs in which students split time  
28 between their comprehensive high school and a school offering programs under chapter 74;  
29 provided, that under such programs, participating students’ daily schedule shall include required  
30 academic classes and vocational courses when the equipment is available.

31           Section 41. (a) The office shall oversee all Chapter 74 approved programs and ensure  
32 compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 74 and related regulations.

33 (b) The office shall develop credentials for students graduating from high quality career  
34 technical education programs in applied knowledge, effective relationships, and workplace skills  
35 as described in the federal Employability Skills Framework.

36 (c) The office shall ensure instructional ability and competence of career technical  
37 education instructors through the utilization of occupational advisory boards and nationally  
38 validated teacher competency testing.

39 (d) The office shall utilize both pre- and post-technical assessment in both cognitive and  
40 psychomotor domains to determine what students know and are able to do.

41 (e) The office shall collaborate with recognized industry credential providers to develop  
42 state-customized credentials to measure career readiness through skill assessments appropriate to  
43 each tier of career technical education.

44 (f) The office shall consider the use of the 21st Century Skills for Workplace Success  
45 Credential, including but not limited for use in validation of basic competencies prior to  
46 participation in externships or school-based enterprises and as a graduation or completion  
47 requirement for post-graduate and postsecondary chapter 74 programs.

48 (g) The office shall support the use of Industry Recognized Credentials, known as IRCs,  
49 in chapter 74 programs.

50 (h) The office shall support the use of both longitudinal and pre- and post-student  
51 assessment as a means of obtaining meaningful data for curricular improvement. Data may be  
52 utilized for facilities improvement, equipment investments, mission success, and professional  
53 development.

54 (i) The office shall engage in statewide data sharing agreements with credential providers  
55 that include a variety of access portals for a variety of levels of personnel, including but not  
56 limited to state, local career technical education administration, career technical education  
57 teachers, parents, and students, giving access to stakeholders to assess program effectiveness.

58 (j) The office shall encourage and work to increase the use of articulation agreements  
59 with community colleges and public universities and other dual credit programs to allow career  
60 technical education students to earn credit and stacked credentials that lead to an associate's  
61 degree.

62 (k) The office shall implement and promote efforts, including those related to student  
63 outreach and retention, to ensure that career technical education programs are accessible to all  
64 students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and student populations  
65 traditionally underrepresented in career technical education programs. Such efforts shall include,  
66 but not be limited to (i) establishing a statewide marketing campaign to promote the success of  
67 vocational-technical education and careers in Massachusetts and to raise the level of awareness  
68 and understanding of such education among parents, students, businesses, labor unions, and the  
69 general public, and (ii) working to increase awareness of vocational-technical education and  
70 career opportunities among students in elementary schools, junior high schools, and middle  
71 schools.

72 (l) The office shall develop a model policy for public schools that ensures reasonable and  
73 equitable access for Chapter 74 programs to provide students enrolled in public schools with  
74 information about career technical programs. The model policy will include, but not be limited  
75 to: (i) providing schools offering Chapter 74 programs reasonable access during the school day at

76 schools of residence to meet with all students and distribute information about vocational-  
77 technical education and careers to students, including English language learners, students with  
78 disabilities, students of color, and other student populations, to ensure that such information is  
79 provided equitably to all learners; (ii) providing schools offering Chapter 74 programs the  
80 opportunity to provide middle and junior high school students with information about vocational-  
81 technical programs and careers through mail and email; (iii) providing all middle school students  
82 an opportunity to tour, during regular middle school hours, the regional vocational-technical high  
83 school and/or county agricultural school of which the middle school's city or town is a member,  
84 if applicable; and (iv) additional policies as the office deems reasonable and necessary to  
85 promote equitable access by all students to information about career technical education.

86           Section 42. The office shall work with the Regional Workforce Boards on an annual basis  
87 to determine the labor market needs in their region and, using that information, shall actively  
88 promote and facilitate the introduction of career technical education programs that align with  
89 regional demand. The office shall work with the regional workforce boards to ensure curricular  
90 alignment to both local employers' needs and expected national standards for labor market  
91 needs.

92           SECTION 2. Section 3A of Chapter 70B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022  
93 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking the number "17" and inserting "19" in place  
94 thereof, and further by inserting, after "Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts, Inc." the  
95 following:- ", Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, Inc., Alliance for  
96 Vocational Technical Education,"

97 SECTION 3. Subsection (c) of section 14B of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as  
98 appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the third sentence and  
99 inserting in place thereof the following 2 sentences:-

100 “Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a city or town may  
101 simultaneously be a member of a vocational regional school district and any other type of  
102 regional school district. A city or town that belongs to a regional vocational school district may  
103 offer a vocational technical education program in its municipal high school; provided, however,  
104 that the program is approved under section 2 of chapter 74 of the General Laws; provided,  
105 further, that a vocational regional school district and any other type of regional school district  
106 serving the same town shall collaborate through the office of career technical education in  
107 offering reciprocal non-competitive programs under chapter 74 of the General Laws; provided,  
108 further, that said programs meet the labor market needs in a community’s region as determined  
109 by Regional Workforce Boards.”

110 SECTION 4. The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish and  
111 administer a pilot program to incentivize collaboration between high school faculty and guidance  
112 counselors of schools offering chapter 74 programs and those that do not to utilize resources  
113 developed by career technical education to provide access to skill-training and career options for  
114 all students. The pilot program shall be administered for 2 years from the date the program is  
115 initiated. At the end of the 2-year period, the department shall submit a report on the effects of  
116 the program and the feasibility of continuing such program to the clerks of the house of  
117 representatives and the senate, and to the house and senate co-chairs of the joint committee on  
118 education.



119 SECTION 5. (a) The department of elementary and secondary education shall (i) study  
120 ways to incentivize the awarding of industry recognized credentials to high school students,  
121 including, but not limited to, credentials that align with the annual list from the Executive Office  
122 of Labor and Workforce Development of high demand or high growth industry-recognized  
123 credentials; and (ii) study ways to enhance opportunities and remove barriers to work-based  
124 learning experiences for high school students.

125 (b) The department shall report their findings and recommendations to the clerks of the  
126 house of representatives and senate and the joint committee on education on or before December  
127 31, 2024. The department shall make the report publicly available on its website.

128 SECTION 6. (a) The department of elementary and secondary education shall study  
129 ways to expand the use of student-centered, multi-year planning tools and resources that enhance  
130 college and career readiness, including, but not limited to, MyCAP, to all public schools and  
131 students in the Commonwealth.

132 (b) The department shall report their findings and recommendations to the clerks of the  
133 house of representatives and senate and the joint committee on education on or before December  
134 31, 2024. The department shall make the report publicly available on its website.