

# Public Policy Priorities

MASC's advocacy priorities are determined by a vote of membership at the annual Delegate Assembly. MASC staff, with guidance from the Board of Directors and the Legislative Committee, collaborate to develop a strategic advocacy plan and engage with legislators, state agencies, and education stakeholders to advance these priorities. All priorities established at the Delegate Assembly have a three-year lifespan and must be re-authorized in order to remain an MASC policy priority.



## Passed at the 2025 Delegate Assembly

### Removing BMI Testing From Schools

*Sponsored by the Grafton School Committee*

Called on MASC to urge the removal of the BMI screening requirement from all public schools; and that MASC urge the express banning of BMI screening in all public schools except when a student's health care provider requests the screening with parental/guardian approval.

- Status update: MASC has engaged with Dr. Kiame Mahaniah, Secretary, Massachusetts Department of Public Health regarding *105 CMR 200.000: Physical Examination of School Children* and are hopeful that the Department will take meaningful steps towards achieving the goals of the resolution outlined above.

### Increasing the Maximum Balance for Special Education Reserve Funds

*Sponsored by the Plympton School Committee*

MASC calls upon the MA legislature to amend Chapter 40, section 13E, by deleting "2 percent of the annual net school spending" and by inserting the following "5 percent of the annual net school spending."

- Status update: H2303/S1469 - *An Act relative to special education reserve funds* by Rep. LaNatra and Sen. Oliveira address this issue. S1469 was moved to the Committee on Rules in July 2025 where it currently sits. H2303 was ordered to a 3rd Reading and has been slated for a House Session since September 2025.

### Establishment of a Regional School Assessment Reserve Fund

*Sponsored by the Silver Lake Regional School Committee*

Directed MASC to call upon the Massachusetts Legislature to enact or amend legislation which permits municipalities to establish a Regional School Assessment Reserve Fund. Proposed language for legislation was included in the resolve which set parameters for how the fund is to be established, when monies can be allocated to the fund, percentage thresholds that must be met in order to use said funds, and what the maximum dollar amount of the fund is allowed to be.

- Status update: H2304/S1468 - *An Act relative to a regional school assessment reserve fund* by Rep. LaNatra and Sen. Oliveira were filed to address this resolution. H2304 was ordered to a 3rd reading and has been on the docket since September 2025. S1468 is in the Senate Committee on Rules.

## **Preserving Local Governance of Massachusetts Schools**

### *Sponsored by the Arlington School Committee*

MASC calls on the Commonwealth to restore local governance and accountability for the Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge Public Schools no later than July 1, 2023; and that legislation be enacted to limit any future state takeovers to a term of no more than three years.

- Status update: Holyoke exited state receivership and returned to local control on July 1, 2025, ending a decade of state management. Lawrence and Southbridge remain in receivership. Legislation has been filed that would restore local governance to these school districts and limit future state takeovers to a term of no more than three years. The bills are S374 by Sen. Adam Gomez and HD4328 by Rep. Sam Montano, both entitled *An Act empowering students and schools to thrive*. S374 is awaiting to be reported out by the Education Committee and HD4328 is in the Committee on Rules and has yet to have a hearing or be assigned an official bill number.

## **Personal Financial Literacy Education**

### *Sponsored by the Framingham School Committee*

Directed MASC to file legislation that would have the effect of ensuring that all students have exposure to personal financial literacy curricula and, ultimately, graduate from high school with the lifelong knowledge of how to be fiscally responsible to avoid being deterred by financial woes. This legislation should ensure that the students at various levels would benefit from curriculum in Massachusetts' public schools which would include content in personal financial literacy.

- Status update: MASC has advocated for numerous bills related to this issue. The House passed H4670 - *An Act relative to personal financial literacy education* on October 30, 2025. H4670 is a new draft of the original bill H627 - *An Act relative to the strengthening of financial literacy throughout the commonwealth* originally sponsored by Rep. John Lawn, Jr.. MASC continues to advocate for action in the Senate on a financial literacy bill, most notably in support of S421 by Sen. O'Connor - *An Act requiring financial education in schools*. S421 is awaiting to be reported out by the Education Committee.

## **Membership on the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education**

### *Sponsored by the Arlington School Committee*

MASC calls for the enactment of legislation to repeal the provision of Massachusetts law that prohibits practicing educators and sitting school committee members from serving on the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; and that legislation be passed to reconstitute the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by including members with expertise as licensed educators and members with expertise in public school governance, and inclusive of geographic diversity.

- Status update: H729/S2868 - *An Act relative to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education* by Rep. Ultrino and Sens. Jehlen & Rausch would address this resolution. H729 has been ordered to a third reading and is awaiting a full vote of the House. S2868 (a redraft of bills by Sens. Jehlen and Rausch) has been in the Senate Committee on Ways and Means since December 2025.

**Regarding Sanctuary Rights for Transgender Students**

*Sponsored by the Lexington School Committee and co-sponsored by the Worcester; Somerville; Grafton; and Franklin School Committees*

Directed MASC to advocate for the passage of so-called “sanctuary” laws to ensure such children and their families a safe environment of protections in the areas of HIPPA laws, discrimination, mental health, and medical care, which includes mental health support and resources for students and their families. Provisions also included that such children should have “the power of enjoying, in safety and tranquility, their natural rights and the blessings of life,” as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

- Status update: MASC supports MA laws on the books related to this issue. This includes:
  - Anti-discrimination laws that ensure students have the right to:
    - attend school in safety and free from discrimination and harassment based on gender identity or expression;
    - equal access to all school programs, including extracurricular activities and sports;
    - have their school respect their gender identity, including allowing them to dress and present themselves in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
  - MA also has various protections related to HIPPA, Mental Health, and Medical Care. A significant amount of these protections stem from the Shield Act which was originally passed in 2022 and updated in 2025. This includes:
    - Protecting health care providers and those seeking gender-affirming care in MA from other states’ anti-gender-affirming care laws;
    - Allowing individuals engaged in the provision, facilitation, or promotion of gender-affirming health care to enroll in the Address Confidentiality Program;
    - Excluding certain gender-affirming medications from the state’s drug monitoring programs;
    - Limiting third-party access to related medical records;
    - Forbidding insurance companies from discriminating against or penalizing providers who offer transgender health services; and
    - Prohibiting courts from admitting or considering cases of abuse, neglect, or maltreatment brought against parents because they support their child in seeking reproductive or transgender care.

**Passed at the 2024 Delegate Assembly**

**Development of An Alternative to the High Stakes MCAS Test**

*Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

Resolution urged Massachusetts to develop a wider, more consensus-built strategy for an evaluation system with meaningful input from legitimate stakeholders; urged the state legislature to launch a comprehensive evaluation to investigate the extent of biases pertaining to MCAS testing and making the results public; urged a moratorium on MCAS testing; and urged the development of an alternative to the high-stakes MCAS test.

- Status update: a 2024 Ballot Question removing MCAS as a graduation requirement passed with 59% of the vote. In 2025, Gov. Healey, through Executive Order 639, established the K-12 Statewide Graduation Council which published an Interim Report on potential graduation requirements. MASC had a representative on the Graduation Council. The full report is expected to be released in June 2026.

**Increase Compulsory Attendance Age**

*Sponsored by the Brockton School Committee*

Resolution established that MASC recommends that the legislature increase the compulsory attendance age from sixteen to eighteen.

- Status update: H524 - *An Act to require school attendance up to age 18 or until graduation* was reported out favorably by the Joint Committee on Education and has been referred to HWM. Additional bills on the topic have been filed: H712/S437 - *An Act relative to dropout prevention and student recovery* by Rep. Sousa and Sen. Payano. H712 remains in the Education Committee and S437 accompanied a study order.

**Safe Storage of Firearms**

*Sponsored by the Framingham School Committee*

Resolution directed MASC to recommend to all districts that their Superintendent and staff create an appropriate communication to parents and guardians that explains the importance of secure firearm storage to protect children and teens from unauthorized access to unsecured firearms, and their legal obligations consistent with Massachusetts safe storage law. Additionally urged communities to work with their local law enforcement, health agencies, and non profit organizations to increase efforts to educate the community on safe storage of firearms.

- Status update: MASC has encouraged districts to educate families about secure firearm storage consistent with Massachusetts law and to partner with community organizations to promote safe storage awareness.

**Fully Adjusting Chapter 70 Aid for Inflation**

*Sponsored by the Everett School Committee*

Directed MASC to work with the legislature to ensure in future years where realized inflation is above the 4.5% annual inflation cap that in subsequent years Inflation Index “Catch Ups” are made to Chapter 70 aid and that realized inflation is used in formulas to calculate Chapter 70 aid in perpetuity.

- Status update:
  - MASC identified H678/S388 - *An Act to fix the Chapter 70 inflation adjustment*; and S345 - *An Act eliminating education funding inflation cap* as the legislative package that would have collectively: revised the inflation formula to reflect true cost growth since 2019, and eliminated the outdated 4.5% cap on annual increases.
  - H678 was attached to a favorable report alongside H714 - *An Act to study raising the Chapter 70 inflation cap*, and became H555 - *An Act establishing a legislative commission to study and make recommendations regarding the chapter 70 funding formula*. H555 has been referred to House Ways & Means.
  - S388 and S345 were attached to a favorable report of S400. S400 - *An Act to ensure adequate and equitable funding for public education* consolidated many bills on the topic and is now in Senate Ways & Means.
  - Both H555 and S400 would establish legislative commissions to study Massachusetts’ education funding formula. MASC will continue to advocate for each of these bills’ passage this session.

**Support of Legislation to Improve the Fiscal Health of Rural School Districts**

*Sponsored by the Deerfield, Sunderland, Whately, & Frontier Regional School Committees*

Directed MASC to urge the legislature to pass comprehensive legislation encompassing all recommendations from the Legislative Commission on the Fiscal Health of Rural Schools report: A Sustainable Future for Rural Schools

- Status update: Rep. Natalie Blais and Sen. Jo Comerford filed H.517/S.314 - *An Act to Provide a Sustainable Future for Rural Schools*. S314 was reported out favorably by the Joint Committee on Education in a modified version (and became S2870) that removed the Rural Aid provision among other things. With the unexpected resignation of Rep. Blais as the champion of the House bill, the rural schools bill is facing an uncertain outcome. The Governor’s FY27 budget funds Rural School Aid at \$20M, up \$8M YoY, for the grant program that helps districts facing the challenge of declining enrollment to identify ways to form regional school districts or regionalize certain school services to create efficiencies. The ‘22 Special Commission on Rural Schools recommended \$60M annually.

**Equitable Funding for Non-Regional School Districts with High Transportation Costs**

*Sponsored by the Plymouth School Committee*

Resolution called on the State to recognize the financial challenges presented by many non-regional school districts who have longer transportation routes. Sought the creation of a special fund to provide financial assistance for such districts to allow them to offset costs, including the purchase of buses, fuel costs, and driver salaries.

- Status update: H513/S2682 - *An Act requiring equitable funding for non-regional school districts with high transportation costs* by Rep. Badger and Sen. Fernandes were filed to fulfill the resolution’s directive. The House bill is awaiting to be reported out by committee. The Senate bill accompanied a study order and will not pass this session.

**MSBA Grants Evaluation for Chapter 74**

*Sponsored by the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee*

Directed MASC to call on the MSBA and Legislature to create an evaluated-tiered system to separately assess the cost of elementary; comprehensive high schools; and vocational technical, & agricultural schools, resulting to true cost reimbursement for each category.

- Status update: H676/S366 - *An Act studying the financing of Chapter 74 vocational-technical and agricultural school capital improvements* by Rep. Ramos and Sen. Finegold would take steps towards achieving the resolutions’ directive. H676 is awaiting to be reported out by the Joint Committee on Education. S366 was attached to a favorable report of S403 - *An Act establishing a special commission to review the adequacy and equity of the Massachusetts school building program* alongside S318, S352, and S390. MASC will continue to advocate for the passage of S403 and H676.

**Aligning Taxing Authority with the Required Local Contribution**

*Sponsored by the Arlington School Committee*

Resolution directed MASC to call for the enactment of legislation that would increase a municipality’s levy limit by the amount of increase of the required local contribution in excess of 2.5%, granting the municipality the ability to raise local revenues mandated by M.G.L. CH. 70.

- Status update: MASC has drafted the legislation and continues to seek a commitment from a Representative and Senator to file the legislation in the new 2026-2027 session.

**Banning Polystyrene from Schools**

*Sponsored by the Silver Lake Regional School Committee District including the School Committees of Kingston, Plympton, and Halifax*

Called on MASC to urge the Commonwealth to ban the use of expanded polystyrene foam cups, bowls, plates and trays from Massachusetts Public Schools.

- Status update:
  - H2394/S1477 - *An Act to restrict the use of polystyrene* by Rep. Decker and Sen. Barrett. The legislation phases out the use of polystyrene-based disposable food containers by food and retail establishments (which would include school kitchens). Food establishments would be prohibited from using these containers for dispensing food, and retail establishments may not sell or distribute them. However, food establishments facing significant economic hardship or a lack of viable alternatives can apply for a one-year deferral from compliance through their local health department.
  - H2394 was reported favorably by Joint Committee on Public Health carrying H2521 and referred to HWM. S1477 was reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Public Health and referred to SWM.

**Pertaining to Educator Diversity and Professional Licensure**

*Sponsored by the Arlington School Committee*

Calls for the elimination of the MTEL and MaPAL as licensing requirements for educators, and calls for the governance and licensure of professional educators be vested in a board comprised of licensed educators.

- Status update:
  - Potential new regulations are on the way stemming from the Mass Leads Act that Gov. Healey signed in November 2024. The proposal is expected to be voted on by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in March 2026. The proposed amendments will create an alternative licensure pathway that allows an applicant to waive one of the two tests that comprise the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). The alternative certification process may take into consideration factors such as applicant having: obtained certification in another state or territory; completed a satisfactory portfolio of items that may include student feedback or competency-based projects; obtained a master’s degree or doctorate; successfully completed a department-approved educator preparation program for the role and at the level of the license sought; or successfully completed field-based experience of not less than 2 years in the role and at the level of the license sought.
  - This proposal builds on the action take in May 2025 when the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to establish alternative assessments to the MTEL. The Board’s action made MTEL alternatives permanent. Since 2020, DESE had used a pilot program to offer 26 alternative assessments for educator licensure. The vote made that pilot program permanent.
  - H735/S343 - *An Act fulfilling the promise of education reform* by Rep. Vargas and Sen. DiDomenico. The legislation would establish the Promise Commission to conduct a comprehensive study of 21st-century public education and produce a report re-envisioning the system's power and potential over the next five to ten years, drawing on best practices from other states and countries. The commission would be comprised of 11 members, including a representative from MASC, and would examine (in part) the educator pipeline, educator diversity, and the profession's reputation. The senate bill accompanied a study order and the house bill is awaiting to be reported out of the Joint Committee on Education.

## Full funding of Transportation Costs for Students in Foster Care & State Care

*Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

Called upon the Commonwealth to reimburse transportation funding for children in foster care and state care. DCF and DESE must complete the process to provide proper documentation for the Commonwealth to receive reimbursement for transportation expenses under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Also called on MASC to advocate to the Legislature to properly calculate and assume the full expense of providing educational services to students in foster care and state care including the costs of assessments, regular day and special education services as well as out-of-district placements, transportation and mental health.

- Status update: Massachusetts has made some real progress, but the issue is not fully resolved. On the positive side, the state has increased funding through budget line item 7035-0008, which supports transportation for students covered under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Funding grew to \$28.6M in FY26, and Gov. Healey’s FY2027 budget proposes \$35M, reflecting a move toward more fully covering those specific transportation costs. If a student in foster care qualifies for the Massachusetts Special Education Circuit Breaker Program, districts may receive partial reimbursement for high-cost services, including some transportation—but only in limited cases and not enough to close the overall funding gap. However, that progress is limited to McKinney-Vento students and does not fully extend to students in foster care. Districts can seek partial federal reimbursement for foster care transportation through Title IV-E, but this typically covers only a small share of costs (around 20%). The process to access those funds is complex and inconsistent, meaning not all districts benefit equally. The state has not fully reimbursed districts for foster care transportation or the broader costs of educating these students.

## Poverty and Children

*Sponsored by the Framingham School Committee*

Directed MASC to prioritize, as a matter of its public policy agenda, the eradication of poverty among children and advocate for social and economic justice for students and their families. This includes: support for: a revenue stream that supports social and economic priorities for children and families; state programs and services that serve children at greatest social and emotional risk; nutrition programs that eradicate hunger among children; advocacy for healthcare including vision, hearing, dental, and mental health through accessible service providers; support for pre-k programs for all children; and advocacy for increasing educational opportunities for children inside and outside the classroom.

- Status update: MASC remains committed to prioritizing policies that address poverty and expand opportunities for children and families across the Commonwealth. The Association has supported initiatives that help reduce barriers to student success, including advocacy for universal school meals, expanded access to early childhood education through Governor Healey’s universal pre-K initiative in Gateway Cities, and continued support for the implementation of the Student Opportunity Act. MASC will continue to monitor and support policies that promote the achievement of the ideals outlined in this resolution.

## Charter School Reform

### *Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

Directed MASC to seek legislative action to address the effects of charter school funding on districts and approve a set of forms that includes: establishment of strict guidelines or regulations to require charter schools enroll representative cross-sections of students residing within school service areas; reporting accurate numbers of students who leave charter schools to return to the sending districts/districts of residence; requiring DESE to retain and report data on enrollment of students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, economic disadvantage, emotional disability, and status of racial linguistic minorities; State requirements that all charter schools be funded in full by the state rather than by expropriation of Ch.70 education aid from the sending districts; State funding in full of any mitigation forms created to offset the laws of state funding for students who become students in charter schools.

- Status update: MASC identified multiple bills that would lead to significant progress:
  - S2691 - *An Act updating the charter net school spending cap*. The bill consolidated multiple bills. The new version limits the financial impact of charter schools on districts by capping tuition payments at 9% of a district's budget, restricting new seats in districts above that cap, and requiring the state to cover certain additional costs. It also requires greater consideration of district impact, allows charter schools to prioritize higher-need students with approval, and increases transparency and local input in charter school approvals, expansions and renewals.
  - Additional House bills: H540 - *An Act relative to charter school caps*; H563 - *An Act concerning the fiscal impact of charter schools on public education*; H692 - *An Act relative to local approval for charter schools*; & H746 - *An Act to ensure charter school transparency and public accountability* would make significant strides if passed.
    - H540 lowers the cap on a district's total tuition payments to charter schools from 9% to 5% of net school spending. All exceptions and provisions, including the 18% cap for qualifying districts, would be repealed to implement a universal 5% cap for all school districts. An extension order was adopted for this bill by the Joint Committee on Education, expiring on March 18, 2026.
    - H563 prohibits DESE from approving a charter school's application until a report has been completed on the financial impacts on the sending district(s). It also requires DESE to request full funding of the reimbursement, and if the General Court rejects the request, it would bar the Board from approving any new charter school or charter expansion the following year. The matter is still before the Joint Committee on Education with no action taken.
    - H692 requires that charter schools require local approval to receive funding. Should the Board approve a charter school that does not receive local approval, it must fund the school without using local funds or state education aid. The matter is still before the Joint Committee on Education with no action taken.
    - H746 creates greater public oversight of charter schools by overhauling governance structure and labor protections as well as transparency practices. The matter is still before the Joint Committee on Education with no action taken.

## Prohibiting use of Native American Mascots

### *Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

MASC supports legislation calling for regulations prohibiting public schools from using an athletic team name, logo or mascot which names, refers to, represents, or is associated with Native Americans, including aspects of Native American cultures and specific tribes.

- Status update: H575/S312 - *An Act prohibiting the use of Native American mascots by public schools in the Commonwealth* by Rep. Fluker-Reid and Sen. Comerford are in HWM & SWM.

## School Committee Anti-Racism

### *Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

Set a goal that all school districts in Massachusetts should guarantee that racist practices are eradicated, and diversity, equity, and inclusion is embedded and practiced for our students, families, faculty, and staff; and school committee members should ensure that our school culture is anti-racist, and acknowledges that all lives cannot matter until black lives matter.

- Status update: MASC continues to assess potential opportunities to support school committees in addressing the issues identified. Division X leadership has hosted webinars in recent years to provide resources to members interested in this work.

## Full Funding for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

### *Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

MASC calls on the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to reintroduce and promote the passage of the IDEA Full Funding Act

- Status update from the National School Boards Association (NSBA): While IDEA mandates that the federal government cover 40% of special education costs, current funding stands at just 14%, leaving local districts to absorb the shortfall. Fully funding IDEA would allow districts to enhance services, hire more special education teachers, and provide needed classroom resources. NSBA has called to support the IDEA Full Funding Act ([S. 1277](#) and [H.R. 2598](#)); the Funding Early Childhood is the Right IDEA Act (H.R. 5141 in the 118th Congress) to restore funding for early intervention services under IDEA Part C and Section 619; and the Keep Our PACT Act ([S. 343](#) and [H.R. 869](#)), which would put Congress on a fiscally responsible path to fully fund Title I and IDEA.

## Mandatory Recess

### *Sponsored by the MASC Board of Directors*

Established that MASC supports legislation calling for at least 20 minutes of uninterrupted, supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess per day which cannot be excluded from structured learning time requirements and may not increase the total number of hours required in the school year for Massachusetts elementary school students.

- Status update: H543/S417 - *An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school students* by Rep. Decker and Sen. O'Connor were identified as the legislative package that fulfilled this resolution. The House bill has been ordered to a third reading and is awaiting a full vote of the House. The Senate bill accompanied a study order and will not pass this session.

## Access to Menstrual Supplies

### *Sponsored by the MASC Resolutions Committee*

Directed MASC to work with state and federal legislatures to provide additional funding to provide free access to menstrual products from the school nurse and in restrooms and locker rooms.

- Status update: H4611/S2640 - *An Act to increase access to disposable menstrual products* by Rep. Livingstone and Sen. Jehlen requires disposable menstrual products to be provided at no cost and in a convenient, non-stigmatizing manner to individuals who menstruate in state and local holding facilities, temporary housing assistance, and K-12 schools. S2640 passed unanimously in the senate, was sent to the house, and is now in the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. H4611 is currently in the House Committee on Ways and Means. Neither of the bills provides funding to local districts to carry out their directives.

**School Bus Stop Arm Surveillance Act and Enforcement Penalties**

*Sponsored by the Peabody School Committee*

Resolution directed MASC to call upon the legislature to enact legislation allowing municipalities to install live digital video detection monitoring systems on all school buses for the purpose of enforcing violations against the owner of a motor vehicle whose vehicle failed to stop for a school bus when required to do so by law.

- Status update: Gov. Healey signed a bill, passed by the Legislature on Dec. 31, 2024 that gives communities the option to use video monitoring systems for school bus traffic violations. The law allows cities and towns to use cameras on school buses to record motor vehicles that fail to stop for a school bus.

**Climate Change**

*Sponsored by the MASC Resolutions Committee*

Directed MASC to call upon Congress to take swift and effective action on climate change to protect current and future students, and that MASC advocate for infrastructure needs and state and federal emergency funding for disaster relief caused by natural catastrophes and extreme weather events.

- Status update: MASC has engaged in advocacy related to the goals outlined in this resolution and continues to monitor opportunities to support federal action addressing climate change and infrastructure needs that impact public schools. MASC also continues to work alongside the National School Boards Association in monitoring federal developments and advocating for resources that support school districts in responding to natural disasters and extreme weather events.

**Expansion in Capacity in Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Programs**

*Sponsored by the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee*

Directed MASC to call on the Governor and Legislature to support the expansion of capacity at current Chapter 74 schools, and to convene a special commission to consider changes to current law relating to MSBA and varying levels of funding needs for elementary, middle schools, comprehensive high schools, and vocational technical and agricultural high schools.

- Status update:
  - MASC identified H651/S358 - *An Act to improve access, opportunity, and capacity in Massachusetts vocational-technical education* by Rep. Moran and Sen. Feeney as a pathway to achieve this resolutions' directive. The legislation would establish a \$300M competitive grant program for Ch. 74 programs, increased construction reimbursement, ensure better middle school access/outreach to prospective students, and allow for more district flexibility and collaboration.
  - H651 was reported favorably as amended by the Joint Committee on Education and became H5176. S358 was reported favorably as amended by the Joint Committee on Education and became S2690.
  - H5176/S2690 each removed the sections related to the grant program and reimbursement rates; although they did keep sections related to DESE promulgating new regulations that ensure wider access to middle schools for Chapter 74 programs. Each bill is in their respective Ways & Means Committee.

# Passed at the 2023 Delegate Assembly

## **Changes to the MSBA to Increase Grants and Restore the Accelerated Repair Cap**

*Sponsored by the Wachusett Regional School Committee*

Called on MASC to request the Legislature to amend MGL 70B section 7 by removing the \$1.2B cap; to reinstate the Accelerated Repair program for 2024 applications; and allow public preschools to be included in the Accelerated Repair Program and Core Program.

- Status update: MSBA reinstated the Accelerated Repair Program and maintains an alternating schedule to have Statements of Interest every two years. Public Preschools may be included in the Accelerated Repair Program and Core Program so long as the building does not exclusively serve Preschool. The cap has remained at \$1.2B (not taking into account year over year adjustments as outlined in MGL 70B section 7). In the FY24 budget, the legislature made adjustments related to the cap. This included raising the cap to \$1.2B; ensuring funding for the accelerated repair program would not count towards this cap; and allowed for the cap to rise year over year by as much as 6.5% up from 4.5%.

## **Full Funding of the METCO Program**

*Sponsored by the Arlington School Committee*

Directed MASC to call upon the Governor and the Legislature to create a stable funding structure to support METCO and its partner districts that fully funds the support provided by METCO, and the cost of providing services delivered by METCO's partner districts.

- Status update: MASC has repeatedly made it known to the Governor and Legislature that METCO deserves a stable funding structure. We have supported METCO's advocacy efforts for funding in the annual budget via line item 7010-0012. In the FY26 Budget we joined them in their effort to be fully funded at \$33M. Similarly in FY27 we are seeking full funding at \$35M - up from Governor Healey's nearly \$30M proposal.

## **Investigating Transportation Bidding Practices**

*Sponsored by the Southeastern Vocational Technical School Committee*

Called on MASC to prevail upon the Office of the Attorney General and the state Inspector General, to investigate the bidding practices of school transportation providers, and to present such findings and recommendations as may be necessary to contain costs and make more efficient transportation services for public schools.

- Status update: MASC successfully lobbied the legislature, via an FY25 Supplemental Budget, to direct the Office of the Inspector General to produce a Special Education Transportation Study. The findings of that study were published in February 2026. Among the findings are: (1) Massachusetts is an outlier in its use of a reimbursement model to fund student transportation, which puts significant administrative and financial burdens on local districts; (2) Vendors are not required to provide school districts with detailed invoices, making it impossible for districts to understand what they are paying for; and (3) There is no central repository for school transportation bids and contracts, depriving districts of helpful information when procuring these services. The report makes recommendations to address these issues and others. It also makes note that school transportation costs have been studied at least four times in the last 20 years with varying levels of success on follow-through of those studies' recommendations.