

HOUSE No. 552

By Mr. Sannicandro of Ashland, petition of Tom Sannicandro for legislation to require English in classrooms for high school English learners. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LEARNERS.

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. Section 2 of Chapter 71A, as so appearing, is hereby
2 amended by striking out the second paragraph and inserting in place
3 thereof the following paragraph:—

4 (b) “English language classroom” means a classroom in which
5 teachers instruct overwhelmingly in English, and in which such
6 teachers are fluent and literate in English. English language class-
7 rooms encompass English language mainstream classrooms, shel-
8 tered English immersion classrooms, and English as a second
9 language classrooms.

1 SECTION 2. Section 2 of Chapter 71A, as so appearing, is hereby
2 amended by inserting after the fifth paragraph the following para-
3 graph:—

4 (f) “English as a second language classroom” means a classroom
5 in which teachers instruct primarily in English and focus on acquisi-
6 tion of English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of
7 English learners. Local schools shall group by proficiency level
8 English learners within English as a second language classrooms..

1 SECTION 3. Section 3 of Chapter 71A, as so appearing, is hereby
2 amended by inserting after the first and only sentence the following
3 sentence:—

4 Local school committees shall additionally ascertain the profi-
5 ciency level of English learners in grades nine through twelve, based

6 on the English as a second language classroom that the English
7 learner attends.

1 SECTION 4. Chapter 71A is hereby amended by striking out
2 Section 4, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, and inserting in
3 place thereof the following section:—

4 Section 4. English language education.

5 (a) Subject to the exceptions provided in Section 5 of this chapter,
6 all children in Massachusetts shall be taught English by being taught
7 in English and local schools shall place all children in English lan-
8 guage classrooms. Local schools may place in the same classroom
9 English learners of different ages but whose degree of English profi-
10 ciency is similar. Local schools shall be encouraged to mix together
11 in the same classroom English learners from different native-
12 language groups but with the same degree of English fluency.

13 (b) Local schools shall place English learners in sheltered English
14 immersion classrooms during a temporary transition period not nor-
15 mally intended to exceed one school year. Kindergarten English
16 learners shall be educated either in sheltered English immersion
17 classrooms or in English language mainstream classrooms with
18 assistance in English language acquisition, including, but not limited
19 to, English as a second language.

20 (c) Local schools shall place English learners in grades nine
21 through twelve in English as a second language classrooms for 3
22 hours per full school day. Local schools shall place English learners
23 in classrooms according to their proficiency level. Teachers of Eng-
24 lish as a second language classrooms must hold an ESL license.

25 (d) Once English learners acquire a good working knowledge of
26 English and are able to do regular school work in English, local
27 schools shall transfer them to English mainstream classrooms and no
28 longer classify them as English learners.

29 (e) This section shall not affect foreign language classes for chil-
30 dren who already know English, 2-way bilingual programs, and
31 special education programs for physically and mentally impaired
32 students.