

HOUSE No. 574

By Ms. Spiliotis of Peabody, petition of Joyce A. Spiliotis relative to establishing parent advisory councils on special education. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT TO REFORM PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION.

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 71 is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 1C the following section:—
3 Section 1D. Workshop on Information and Treatment Options for
4 Students with Disabilities that Qualify for Special Education
5 Benefits.

1 SECTION 2. Section 9A of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is
2 hereby amended, by after the second sentence, inserting the
3 following:—
4 The department of education shall provide a workshop curriculum
5 on medication information and alternatives to medication treatment
6 options for students with disabilities that qualify for special educa-
7 tion benefits to each school district in the Commonwealth to be used
8 by such school districts in conducting the workshops required by
9 Section 1D of Chapter 71.

1 SECTION 3. The second sentence of the second paragraph of
2 Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is hereby amended,
3 by inserting after the phrase “The department shall further take any
4 and all steps necessary to monitor and enforce compliance with all
5 other provisions of this chapter, including but not limited to” the
6 following:— “the requirement that school committees establish and
7 monitor parent advisory committees;”

1 SECTION 4. The third sentence of the twentieth paragraph of
2 Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is hereby amended,
3 by inserting after the phrase “The parent advisory council duties
4 shall include but not be limited to:” the following: “holding monthly
5 council meetings;”

1 SECTION 5. The third sentence of the twentieth paragraph of
2 Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is hereby amended,
3 by striking the words “meeting regularly” and inserting in place
4 thereof, “meet no less than every other month”

1 SECTION 6. Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is
2 hereby amended, by inserting after the fourth sentence of the twen-
3 tieth paragraph, the following new sentences:—
4 The parent advisory council shall make reasonable efforts to pub-
5 licize its existence to all parents of children with disabilities. Such
6 efforts shall include but not be limited to:— creating an informa-
7 tional brochure about the organization which shall accompany the
8 Notice of Procedural Safeguards given to parents; provide notice of
9 meetings times and locations not less than a month in advance
10 through several mediums which may include web-sites, e-mail, bul-
11 letin boards and newsletters; and communication with other school
12 committees and councils such as school councils, parent teacher
13 organizations and leadership teams. The parent advisory council
14 shall post agendas on local web-sites, bulletin boards and in newslet-
15 ters. The parent advisory council shall report bi-annually to the
16 school committee. Such reports shall include but not be limited to; a
17 summary of all efforts made to publicize the council; a summary of
18 the minutes for all meetings held which shall include the council’s
19 goals for the upcoming months; and the status of the goals included
20 in the previous report.

1 SECTION 7. Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is
2 hereby amended, by inserting after the last sentence of the twentieth
3 paragraph, the following new sentence:—
4 Such assistance shall include but not be limited to: — assistance
5 in applying for funding grants from the Secretary of Education under
6 Title 20 of the United States Code §1471; assistance in applying to
7 funding from any known available source; access to classrooms for

8 meetings; access to the district experts who evaluate children
9 referred for special education; supply materials and resources for use
10 in mailings, brochures and other efforts to publicize the parent
11 advisory council.

1 SECTION 8. Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the General Laws is
2 hereby amended, by inserting after the twentieth paragraph, the
3 following new paragraph:—

4 The school committee shall review the parent advisory council's
5 bi-annual reports. If the school committee finds that the parent advi-
6 sory council is non-compliant with the provisions of this chapter the
7 school committee shall issue a warning to the parent advisory
8 council.