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New Legislation Would Build Education Pathways, Grow Skilled Workforce, Improve Economic Mobility

"Student Pathways to Success" Bill Introduced in Massachusetts Legislature

February 2, 2023 (Boston) – Taking urgently-needed action to bolster student learning and improve economic opportunity, Rep. Chynah Tyler and Sen. John Cronin have introduced *An Act to Create and Expand Student Pathways to Success* (HD.1568/SD.2172). The legislation includes many of the priorities of the Student Pathways to Success coalition, a cross-sector partnership of organizations committed to educational equity and that represent students, parents, educators, and employers.

"High school needs to evolve to become more of a launching pad for future careers whether those careers require a college degree, which the vast majority do, or apprenticeships, certificates, or industry-recognized credentials. We can do so much more to get students started on this journey and this bill contains all of the foundational pieces, including governance, funding, and policy reforms, to create a first-in-the-nation student pathways policy framework allowing us to greatly increase the number of high school students who receive meaningful preparation for college and career," said [Ed Lambert](#), Executive Director of the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education.

The *Student Pathways to Success* bill would expand opportunities for students to earn college credit and valuable credentials:

- Create a new Workforce Skills Cabinet in the governor's office to coordinate the state's workforce development strategies
- Create new incentives to help high school students earn industry recognized career credentials
- Expand student access to Early College, Innovation Pathways, STEM Tech Career Academies, and MyCAP (dedicated career counseling)
- Require DESE to conduct a study aimed at removing the barriers to work-based learning experiences for students

"The best investment we can make in our young people is a commitment to growing career-connected learning programs," Sen. Cronin said. "For students, it's a pathway to careers with high wages that can allow them to build a bright future in the communities where they grew up. For the region, we're providing the workforce they need to make sure 21st-century businesses thrive here and fuel our economy and commercial tax base. This *Student Pathways to Success* legislation will create a rising tide that truly lifts all boats."

"Investing in career-connected learning is critical to ensuring the success of our next generation of workers and the businesses that depend on their smarts, skills, and creativity," said Rep. Tyler. "This legislation reimagines our economic development engine, aligning what students are learning with the incredible opportunities available to today's workforce."

[Student Pathways to Success](#) aims to universalize access to a meaningful and relevant high school education for all students that puts them on a pathway to college and career success. Members include Associated Industries of Massachusetts, Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, EdTrust Massachusetts, Educators for Excellence, Latinos for Education, Massachusetts Biotechnology Council (MassBio), Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Massachusetts Business Roundtable, Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, Massachusetts High Technology Council, Massachusetts Parents United, Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, Teach Plus, and Urban League of Springfield.

"This bill is a critical step in broader efforts to close wage, wealth and opportunity gaps. By giving our young people more pathways to economic opportunity – starting in high school – we set them up for great success and promote a more equitable Commonwealth" said [Robert Lewis, Jr.](#), Nicholas President and CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston."

Nearly 70% of Massachusetts voters agree we must ensure that every high school student in every community has good choices that are right for every student, including 2- and 4-year college degrees, technical and vocational education, according to a recent poll conducted by Lincoln Park Strategies. Nine in ten voters say Gov. Maura Healey must make improving educational opportunities one of her top priorities (88%) with two in ten saying it must be her top priority (20%).

"Whether it's college, vocational education, or entering the workforce directly, we need to support all students on their own pathways to success. This legislation will deliver for students from all walks of life and in every corner of our Commonwealth," said Keri Rodrigues, Founder of Massachusetts Parents United.

About Student Pathways to Success

[Student Pathways to Success](#), a cross-sector coalition of organizations committed to educational equity and that represent students, parents, educators, and employers, aims to expand access to a meaningful and relevant high school experience that puts students on a path to college and career success.