



An Act Enhancing the Educational Outcomes of Expectant and Parenting Students SD574 & HD 2704

Sponsored by Senator Sal DiDomenico and Representative Kay Khan

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All young people in Massachusetts deserve equitable access to a quality education. When we offer tailored supports to students who face added obstacles, communities across the commonwealth benefit because young people are positioned to be the best parents and citizens they can be. Like ELL students and those with disabilities, expectant and parenting students also need tailored supports to have equitable access to a quality education.

What is the Problem?: Insufficient supports are resulting in poor outcomes: **26%** of young people who drop out each year in the U.S. report teen pregnancy as a leading reason why they left school.ⁱ

What Will this Bill Do?:

- **Establish the expectant and parenting student liaison model** in schools with grades 7 or higher in municipalities with the highest numbers or percentages of parenting students: Holyoke, Chelsea, Southbridge, Springfield, New Bedford, Lawrence, Lynn, Fall River, Brockton, Lowell, Worcester and Boston. The liaisons will work with students to create individualized graduation plans and link them to supports that promote academic success. *This model has demonstrated results (see below).*
- **Require the department of elementary and secondary education (DESE) to track and report** on the academic success of the known number of students in each district who are parents.

Why Support this Bill?:

- **It is cost effective:** A part time liaison in Chelsea, a municipality with the 2nd highest teen birth rate, only cost **\$25,000** per year to serve 58 expectant and parenting students.ⁱⁱ
- **The model works:** The dropout rate among pregnant and parenting students at Chelsea High School (CHS) declined by **27%** in their first year implementing the liaison model. **Eighty nine percent** of students who stayed at CHS for this first year graduated or achieved on-time promotion.
- **Districts show support:** CHS has chosen to pay for the model itself since its initiation. Boston Public Schools updated its expectant and parenting students policy and included a version of this model.
- **We set up our next generation for success:** The children of teen parents are more likely to have academic success when their mothers succeed academically.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **We target youth who are motivated to succeed but often lack the necessary supports to graduate:** Many teen parents are more motivated to succeed in school *after* becoming parents.^{iv} Among students who drop out, those who do so because of parenthood are “the most likely to say that they would have worked harder if their schools had demanded more of them and provided the necessary supports.”^v

Find our case study on the Chelsea High School expectant and parenting student liaison model [here](http://www.massteenpregnancy.org/sites/default/files/MATP-Chelsea-Report-2012-12.pdf):
<http://www.massteenpregnancy.org/sites/default/files/MATP-Chelsea-Report-2012-12.pdf>.

Jacqueline Raetz’s Story:

As a recent college graduate I have a phenomenal job in the medical field and am able to financially support my family. I didn’t fit what you may think of as a stereotypical “teen parent”; I was involved in extracurricular activities, education was always something I was strong in, and my grades were above

average. However, as a junior in high school, I was already a parent and homeless. During this challenging time continuing high school became increasingly difficult.

Fortunately, I had two incredible women that stood behind me; my high school guidance counselor and the high school social worker. Together, we determined the most efficient plan for graduation and then college. It is because of their faith in my ability to succeed that I was able to graduate high school in the top 25% of my class and graduate with a 3.3 G.P.A. I continued on to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Medical Laboratory Science at UMASS Dartmouth and then national certification by the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) as a Medical Laboratory Scientist.

Every teen parent should have access to such dedicated student liaisons. By funding the expectant and parenting student liaison model in districts with high teen birth rates you create the opportunities and environment I had.

-Jacqueline Raetz, former teen parent and resident of Norwood

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ⁱ Bridgeland, J.M., DiOulio, J.J., Morison, K.B. (2006). The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts. Civic Enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.ignitelearning.com/pdf/thesilentepidemic3-06FinAl.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy (2012). Not the Exception: Making Teen Parent Success the Rule. Retrieved from <http://www.massteenpregnancy.org/sites/default/files/MATP-Chelsea-Report-2012-12.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ The National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, Magnuson, K.A. & McGroder, S. M. Northwestern University & Child Trends. (2008). The Effect of Increasing Welfare Mothers' Education on Their Young Children's Academic Problems and School Readiness.

^{iv} Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy (2010). Expecting Success: How Educators and Policymakers Can Help Teen Parents Stay in School. Retrieved from http://www.massteenpregnancy.org/sites/default/files/Expecting%20Success_1.pdf.

^v Bridgeland, J.M., DiOulio, J.J., Morison, K.B. (2006). The Silent Epidemic Perspectives of High School Dropouts. Civic enterprises in association with Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.ignitelearning.com/pdf/thesilentepidemic3-06FinAl.pdf>.