

**ATTACHMENT: [G.L. c. 76, § 12B](#)**

Section 12B. (a) As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

"Above foundation reimbursement amount", (i) for fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-four, fifty percent of the net losses due to the provisions of this section; provided, however, that if the amount lost by said district pursuant to subsection (f) is greater than two percent of the total school budget of said district, the amount of said reimbursement shall be equal to seventy-five percent of the net losses due to the provisions of this section; (ii) beginning in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-five, twenty-five percent of the net losses due to the provisions of this section.

"Receiving district", any city, town or regional school district within the commonwealth in which a child does not reside, but in which that child attends public school under the provisions of this section.

"Sending district", any city, town or regional school district within the commonwealth in which a child resides, but in which that child does not attend public school under the provisions of this section.

"State school choice limit", in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-four, one percent of the total number of students attending public schools in the commonwealth; in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-five, one and one-half percent of the total number of students attending public schools in the commonwealth; in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-six, one and three-quarters percent of the total number of students attending public schools in the commonwealth; in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-seven and thereafter, two percent of the total number of students attending public schools in the commonwealth; provided, however, that students enrolled under the program for the elimination of racial imbalance as provided in section twelve A shall not be counted toward these limits.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section twelve, or any other special or general law to the contrary, any child may attend a public school, in a city or town where he does not reside; provided, however, that the receiving district shall be paid by the commonwealth a tuition rate as established in subsection (f).

(c) Not later than May first of every year, the school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall submit a report to the department stating:

(1) The capacity of each school in said city, town or regional school district for the following academic year.

(2) The number of students expected to attend each school in said city, town or regional school district in the following academic year.

(3) The number of students attending said school district under the terms of this section in the prior school year and the number of those students who are expected no longer to be attending said school district in the next school year.

(4) The number of additional seats therefore available to non-resident students reduced by the number of students enrolled under the program for the elimination of racial imbalance as provided in section twelve A, in said charter school or each school in said city, town or regional school district. The board may require every district to update this report in whatever manner is required to effectuate the objectives of this section.

(d) Each city, town or regional school district shall enroll non-resident students at the school of such non-resident student's choice; provided, however, that such receiving district has seats available as stated in said report; provided, however, that this obligation to enroll non-resident students shall not apply to a district for a school year in which its school committee, prior to June first, after a public hearing, adopts a resolution withdrawing from said obligation, for the school year beginning the following September. Any such resolution of a school committee shall state the reasons therefor, and such resolution with said reasons shall be filed with the department of education; provided, however, that said department shall have no power to review any such decision by a school committee. If the city, town or regional school district operates an intra-district choice plan, non-resident students may apply for schools on the same basis as resident students, but the intra-district choice plan may give preference to resident students in assigning students to schools.

(e) Not later than the first day of July, each city, town or regional school district shall each year submit a non-resident attendance report to the board and to the state treasurer, certifying the number of non-resident applicants for each available seat in each school, the disposition of their applications, how many of said applicants will be attending the district in the next school year, the identity of the sending districts for those students, the annual amount of tuition for each such child and the total tuition owed to the district based on full or partial attendance, itemized by the amount attributable to each city or town of residence. The board may review said certification to determine that the amount of the individual tuition charged for each child is in accordance with the provisions of this section and shall inform the state treasurer of any errors. The department may also, on a post-audit basis, verify the admission and attendance of the number of children certified by each school district. In addition to the foregoing, all said districts shall, on October first and April first, report to the board and certify to the state treasurer accurate and up to date reports of all the information required in the non-resident attendance report. If the total number of students admitted to receiving districts pursuant to this section is greater than the state school choice limit, the board shall notify all districts that no more students may be accepted pursuant to this section.

(f) For each student enrolling in a receiving district, there shall be a school choice tuition amount. Said tuition amount shall be equal to seventy-five percent of the actual per pupil spending amount in the receiving district for such education as is required by such non-

resident student, but not more than five thousand dollars; provided, however, that for special education students whose tuition amount shall remain the expense per student for such type of education as is required by such non-resident student. The state treasurer is hereby authorized and directed to deduct said school choice tuition amount from the total education aid, as defined in chapter seventy, of said student's sending district, prior to the distribution of said aid and to deposit said aid in the School Choice Tuition Trust Fund established by section twelve C. In the case of a child residing in a municipality which belongs to a regional school district, the school choice tuition amount shall be deducted from said chapter seventy education aid of the school district appropriate to the grade level of the child. If, in a single district, the total of all such deductions exceeds the total of said education aid, this excess amount shall be deducted from other aid appropriated to the city or town. If, in a single district, the total of all such deductions exceeds the total state aid appropriated, the commonwealth shall appropriate this excess amount; provided, however, that if said district has exempted itself from the provisions of chapter seventy by accepting section fourteen of said chapter, the commonwealth shall assess said district for said excess amount.

(g) The state treasurer is further directed to disburse to the receiving district, from the School Choice Tuition Trust Fund established by section twelve C, an amount equal to each student's school choice tuition as defined in subsection (f); provided, however, that each public school district which admits children under the provisions of this section shall certify to the state treasurer the number of such children attending its public schools, the city or town of residence of each such child, the annual amount of tuition for each such child and the total tuition owed to the district based on full or partial attendance, itemized by the amount attributable to each city or town of residence; and, provided further, that such certification shall be made on October first of each year and April first of each year. Each school district submitting a certification to the state treasurer shall also submit a copy of said certification to the department of education. Said department may review said certification to determine that the amount of the individual tuition charged for each child is in accordance with the provisions of this section and shall inform the state treasurer of any errors. The department may also, on a post-audit basis, verify the admission and attendance of the number of children certified by each school district.

(h) There shall be a parent information system established, maintained and developed by the board of education to disseminate to parents detailed and comparable information about each school system participating in the school choice program, so-called, which shall include, but not be limited to, information on special programs offered by the school, philosophy of the school, number of spaces available, transportation plans, class sizes, teacher/student ratios, and data and information on school performance that indicate its quality. Said information shall include the school profiles, so-called, developed pursuant to section one B of chapter sixty-nine. The board may include information regarding regional choice initiatives as deemed appropriate. The system shall have as its primary goal to ensure that all parents have an equal opportunity to participate in the program of interdistrict choice. The board of education, when disseminating this information shall encourage the parent and student to make at least one visit to the school of choice as part of the application procedure.

(i) Subject to appropriation, the board of education shall develop and administer a school

choice transportation reimbursement program for the purpose of providing reimbursement for the transportation of pupils enrolled under the provisions of this section. Pupils eligible for said reimbursement must be eligible to receive free or reduced cost lunches under eligibility guidelines promulgated by the federal government under 42 USC section 1758. The board may limit said reimbursement to a yearly amount. The types of transportation to be reimbursed pursuant to said program shall include, but need not be limited to, the following: (1) transportation by school buses provided by the sending or receiving district; (2) transportation provided by the parent or guardian of the child; (3) transportation provided by public transportation. All eligible pupils who attend a school district contiguous to the school district of residence of such pupil shall be eligible for said reimbursement. If cost-effective transportation alternatives exist for pupils who attend districts not contiguous to the school districts of residence of such pupil, the board may provide a transportation reimbursement. Said reimbursements may be paid to the district in which the pupil is enrolled, the district of residence of the student, or the parent, guardian or person acting as guardian of the student; provided, however, that said district or parent provide documentation of the transportation expenditure. The board of education shall promulgate regulations for the program to be placed on file with the joint committee on education, arts and humanities of the general court. The board of education shall disseminate information to parents and school systems detailing the availability of said transportation reimbursements. A full description of said school choice transportation reimbursement program shall be submitted to the house and senate committees on ways and means and shall not become effective until ninety days after said submission. Notwithstanding the second paragraph of section one, nothing in this section shall confer upon any student attending a private school any right to transportation or reimbursement therefor.

(j) School committees may establish terms for accepting non-resident students; provided, however, that if the number of non-resident students applying for acceptance to said district exceeds the number of available seats, said school committee shall select students for admission on a random basis; provided, further, that said school committee shall conduct said random selection twice: one time prior to July first and one time prior to November first; provided, further, that no school committee shall discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special need or academic performance or proficiency in the English language. The Massachusetts commission against discrimination, established by section fifty-six of chapter six, shall have jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of this section; provided, however, that all students described in subsection (m) shall be entitled to remain in the receiving districts they are attending or have been accepted to attend. Any school committee that accepts non-resident students under the provisions of this section shall notify each district from which it has accepted a non-resident student of its acceptance of that student; provided, however, that a school committee may not publicly release the names of students leaving or entering a district under the provisions of this section. Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this paragraph, any sibling of a student already enrolled in the receiving district shall receive priority for admission to said district.

(k) Any child accepted to attend a public school in a community other than the one in which he resides pursuant to this section shall be permitted to remain in that school system until his high school graduation, unless there is a lack of funding of the program as authorized by said sections.

(l) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section or any general or special law to the contrary, any school district which admitted children on a private tuition basis prior to June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and ninety-one may continue, on that basis, to admit any child who attended its school system prior to that date, as well as any sibling or step-sibling of such child and any foster child residing in the home of such child.

(m) Any student who, pursuant to the provisions of this section, has been attending or has been admitted to attend a public school of a city or town in which he does not reside and for whom the commonwealth has been paying tuition or, in the case of a student recently admitted, would be required to pay tuition in the coming year, shall be deemed to be a student admitted pursuant to paragraph (j), and shall be subject to all of the provisions of this section; provided, however, that said students shall be allowed to remain in said school notwithstanding any determination of capacity or decision by the receiving district to withdraw made pursuant to this section.

(n) Subject to appropriation, any sending district for which the provisions of subsection (f) result in a reduction in state aid shall be eligible to apply for a school choice reimbursement from the commonwealth. If net school spending in a sending district is greater than said foundation budget as defined in chapter seventy, the amount of said reimbursement shall be the above foundation reimbursement amount for that fiscal year. If net school spending in a sending district is less than said foundation budget, the amount of said reimbursement shall be equal to one hundred percent of the positive difference, if any, between (i) the amount transferred pursuant to subsection (f), and (ii) the product of the number of students leaving the sending district and the average per pupil expenditure in the sending district for such education as is required by such nonresident student, for the period the child shall attend; provided, however, that if any district has exempted itself from the provisions of said chapter seventy by accepting section fourteen of said chapter seventy, the district shall be ineligible for a reimbursement under this subsection; provided, further, that if any district in which net school spending is greater than the foundation budget becomes a sending district for the first time in fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-five or any year thereafter, the reimbursement amount for that district in the first year that it is a sending district shall be the fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-four reimbursement amount; the reimbursement amount for the district in its second year as a sending district shall be the fiscal year nineteen hundred and ninety-five reimbursement amount. Said reimbursement application shall be submitted to the department of education on or before October first of each year together with an educational corrective action plan containing information, recommendations and suggestions relative to: (1) areas needing improvement within the school system of the applicant; (2) methods of improvement to be employed; (3) goals and objectives of said improvement; (4) evaluation and control methods to be used; (5) personnel to be engaged in such improvement; (6) results intended to be accomplished within one year from the

date of application; and (7) methods of increasing parental involvement to be employed; provided, however, that any community or regional school district that has a previously approved plan need not refile said plan; and, provided further, that approval of said plan by said board shall act as a condition precedent to the distribution of said reimbursement to the applicant community or regional school district. Under no circumstances shall the total amount expended pursuant to subsections (h) and (i) and to reimburse sending districts pursuant to this paragraph, be greater than twenty million dollars. If, in any year, the total amount that would be required to reimburse said cities at said rates would be greater than twenty million dollars, then the reimbursement rates shall be reduced proportionately to those rates at which the total cost does not exceed twenty million dollars.

(o) The commonwealth and the school committee of any town may accept funds from the federal government for the purposes of this section. Any amounts received by the school committee of any town from the federal government, from the commonwealth or from a charitable foundation or private institution shall be deposited with the treasurer of such town and held as a separate account, and may be expended by said school committee without further appropriation, notwithstanding the provisions of section fifty-three of chapter forty-four. Whenever such funds are received after the submission of the annual school budget, all or any portion thereof may be expended by the school committee without further appropriation, but shall be accounted for in the next annual school budget.

If the student attends the public schools of another town and it is anticipated that the student shall need the services of a private day or residential school, an individual education plan team meeting shall be convened by the school district in which the child is attending school. The school district in which the student attends school shall notify the school district where the student resides of the team meeting at least five school days prior to the meeting. Personnel from the district in which the child resides shall be allowed to participate in the team meeting concerning future placement of the child.