

## Final FY23 Budget on Gov. Baker's desk Includes Provisions to Provide Access to College for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism

- The final FY23 budget includes provisions that remove barriers precluding persons with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and autism from participating in state colleges and universities. Individuals with ID and autism who cannot pass MCAS and who do not obtain a regular high school diploma can participate as non-matriculating students in courses with their nondisabled peers and participate in extracurricular activities and other aspects of campus life, with supports and services necessary to facilitate inclusion. (**Outside Sections 12, 22, 35, 36, 165, 168 of H 5050**)
- These provisions ensure state colleges and universities establish guidelines governing selection of individuals with ID and autism as well as course selection. Supports and services to facilitate inclusion can be provided by the local school district, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Developmental Services, or private funding. The outside sections also codify the MAICEI grant program and allow the special education process to consider higher education as an option for students with disabilities.
- Since 2007, hundreds of youths with severe disabilities have been successfully included in college through the state's groundbreaking grant program called Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (MAICEI). A legislative Task Force composed of legislators, higher education leaders, education experts, and state officials reviewed the MAICEI grant program and concluded that higher education provides an important pathway to integrated competitive employment and independent living for individuals with ID and autism. Similarly, national research data indicate that more than 64% of adults with ID who attended college found paid employment compared to an employment rate of 18% for those who did not.
- The final budget also provides increased funding, with a total of \$4 million for the Massachusetts Inclusive concurrent Enrollment Initiatives (**MAICIE**) **line item (#7066-9600)**, including at least \$1.5 million for the new MAICEI Trust Fund to cover planning, implementation, coordination, staffing, and administrative costs to support students in college with services they need to be successful. This **cost-effective initiative** increases school and work success for adults with disabilities
- According to the Department of Higher Education, almost half of our state colleges and universities are currently partnering with approximately 100 school districts, collaboratives, charter schools and 766 private schools. Last year over 220 young adults with ID and autism were included through MAICIE, with participation at the following colleges: UMass Amherst, UMass Boston, Bridgewater State University, Framingham State University, Westfield State University, Salem State University and Bristol, Holyoke, MassBay, Massachusetts College of Art and Design Middlesex, Northern Essex, Massasoit and Cape Cod community colleges. It is important to provide inclusive opportunities in additional public institutions of higher education for students with disabilities throughout the state.
- MAICEI increases school and work for individuals with severe disabilities, the majority who have not passed MCAS—a vulnerable group of individuals who too often are left behind.

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