HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 639 FILED ON: 1/18/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 135

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bruce J. Ayers

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to inquiry-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics education..

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Bruce J. Ayers	*1st Norfolk*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 135

By Mr. Ayers of Quincy, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 135) of Bruce J. Ayers relative to inquiry-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE
HOUSE
, NO. *350* OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to inquiry-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics education..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Whereas, Massachusetts, and the nation as a whole, is falling behind in STEM (Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering) education, as compared to global statistics, the Massachusetts DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) has recently supported the need to enhance 21st Century Skills training in STEM fields within public schools; therefore, this bill establishes the STEM inquiry course of instruction, during or outside of school hours, and authorizes school districts to obtain and utilize funds from outside sources.

Section 1. Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws is hereby amended by adding Section 90, as follows:

Each school district shall develop and implement a plan to include inquiry based instruction for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related fields taught in public schools; such plans may include required involvement in extracurricular programs or projects outside of normal school hours. These programs may be funded from sources outside of town or school budgets, such as non-profit grants or donations from local businesses. Inquiry based instruction projects may include science fairs, robotics fairs and other programs involving creative thinking, communications skills and other inquiry 21st Century Skills, as defined by the MA DESE.

School districts shall supplement their professional development programs, as defined in Chapter 71, Section 38Q, with relevant courses and workshops offered by various institutions

throughout the state, e.g. the course 'Teaching Science through the Inquiry Process,' offered by the Massachusetts State Science & Engineering Fair through the University of Massachusetts.