

2023 -- H 5170

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**STRONGLY URGING THE PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE
RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REVERSE THE DECISION TO
CLOSE THE ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, THE CARL G. LAURO
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND THE GILBERT STUART MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Introduced By: Representatives Sanchez, Morales, Slater, Ajello, Kislak, Batista, Diaz,
Caldwell, Handy, and Potter

Date Introduced: January 19, 2023

Referred To: House Education

1 WHEREAS, In November of 2019, the state assumed control of the school budget,
2 program and personnel of the Providence School District's 41 schools, an intervention that is
3 extended for at least five years; and

4 WHEREAS, In December of 2022, the state-run Providence Public School District and
5 the Rhode Island Department of Education announced plans to shut down two elementary
6 schools, Alan Shawn Feinstein at Broad Street and Carl G. Lauro School at the end of the 2023-
7 2024 school year, and the Gilbert Stuart Middle School at the end of the 2024-2025 school year;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The three schools to be closed are neighborhood schools, defined as
10 “schools that were assigned according to boundaries drawn up by the school board. Children were
11 assigned a school according to their physical address”; and

12 WHEREAS, Neighborhood schools not only serve families because of the close
13 proximity of the school to their homes, but also serve to support a sense of community; and

14 WHEREAS, Former Governor Raimondo once stated, “Only by working together to
15 strengthen our neighborhood schools will we be able to create opportunities for everyone to make
16 it in Rhode Island”; and

17 WHEREAS, In direct conflict to the School Department’s existing policy concerning the
18 need to consult with the affected community prior to making a decision, the pronouncement to

1 close these three schools was originally made without including members of the Providence
2 School Board, the Providence Teachers Union, and most importantly, without the support or input
3 of the students or parents who will be ultimately affected; and

4 WHEREAS, The reasons cited was that “the schools are old and would cost too much to
5 fix” and “are part of a larger plan to modernize aging school facilities”; and

6 WHEREAS, While the State has oversight on the Providence Schools budget, the School
7 Department maintains managerial responsibility in conjunction with the Rhode Island Department
8 of Education and the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education; and

9 WHEREAS, Alternatives to these imminent closures, that would potentially lessen the
10 impact on the children and families, have not been publicly vetted and are essential to the
11 educational welfare of hundreds of Providence school children and their families; now, therefore
12 be it

13 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
14 strongly urges the Providence Public School District and the Rhode Island Department of
15 Education to reverse the decision to close the Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School, the Carl
16 G. Lauro Elementary School, and the Gilbert Stuart Middle School; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
18 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to State Education Commissioner Angélica
19 Infante-Green, members of the Providence School Board, and Members of the Council on
20 Elementary and Secondary Education.

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