

2024 -- S 2546

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LC004822
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- FOUNDATION LEVEL SCHOOL SUPPORT

Introduced By: Senators Valverde, Pearson, DiPalma, Gallo, and Murray

Date Introduced: March 01, 2024

Referred To: Senate Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-7-40 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-7 entitled "Foundation
2 Level School Support [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is
3 hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-7-40. Increased school housing ratio.**

5 (a)(1) In the case of regional school districts, the school housing aid ratio shall be increased
6 by two percent (2%) for each grade so consolidated.

7 (2) Regional school districts undertaking renovation project(s) shall receive an increased
8 share ratio of four percent (4%) for those specific project(s) only, in addition to the combined share
9 ratio calculated in § 16-7-39 and this subsection.

10 (b) In the case of projects undertaken by districts specifically for the purposes of school
11 safety and security, the school housing aid share ratio shall be increased by five percent (5%) for
12 these specific projects only, in the calculation of school housing aid. The increased share ratio shall
13 continue to be applied for as long as the project(s) receives state housing aid. In order to qualify for
14 the increased share ratio, seventy-five percent (75%) of the project costs must be specifically
15 directed to school safety and security measures. The council on elementary and secondary
16 education shall promulgate rules and regulations for the administration and operation of this
17 section.

18 (c) For purposes of addressing health and safety deficiencies as defined by the school
19 building authority, including the remediation of hazardous materials, the school housing aid ratio

1 shall be increased by five percent (5%) so long as ~~the construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~ is
2 approved by June 30, 2024, is completed by June 30, 2029, and a two hundred fifty million dollar
3 (\$250,000,000) general obligation bond is approved on the November 2018 ballot. In order to
4 qualify for the increased share ratio, twenty-five percent (25%) of the project costs or a minimum
5 of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) must be specifically directed to this purpose.

6 (d) For purposes of educational enhancement, including projects devoted to the
7 enhancement of early childhood education and career and technical education, the school housing
8 aid ratio shall be increased by five percent (5%) so long as ~~construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~
9 is approved by June 30, 2024, is completed by June 30, 2029, and a two hundred fifty million dollar
10 (\$250,000,000) general obligation bond is approved on the November 2018 ballot. In order to
11 qualify for the increased share ratio, twenty-five percent (25%) of the project costs or a minimum
12 of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) must be specifically directed to these purposes.

13 (e) For replacement of a facility that has a facilities condition index of sixty-five percent
14 (65%) or higher, the school housing ratio shall be increased by five percent (5%) so long as
15 ~~construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~ is approved by June 30, 2024, is completed by June 30,
16 2029, does not receive a bonus pursuant to subsection (f) or subsection (g), and a two hundred fifty
17 million dollar (\$250,000,000) general obligation bond is approved on the November 2018 ballot.
18 In order to qualify for the increased share ratio, twenty-five percent (25%) of the project costs or a
19 minimum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) must be specifically directed to this purpose.

20 (f) For any new construction or renovation that increases the functional utilization of any
21 facility from less than sixty percent (60%) to more than eighty percent (80%), including the
22 consolidation of school buildings within or across districts, the school housing aid ratio shall be
23 increased by five percent (5%) so long as ~~construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~ is approved by
24 June 30, 2024, is completed by June 30, 2029, and a two hundred fifty million dollar (\$250,000,000)
25 general obligation bond is approved on the November 2018 ballot. In order to qualify for the
26 increased share ratio, twenty-five percent (25%) of the project costs or a minimum of five hundred
27 thousand dollars (\$500,000) must be specifically directed to this purpose.

28 (g) For any new construction or renovation that decreases the functional utilization of any
29 facility from more than one hundred twenty percent (120%) to between eighty-five percent (85%)
30 to one hundred five percent (105%), the school housing ratio shall be increased by five percent
31 (5%) so long as ~~construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~ is approved by June 30, 2024, is completed
32 by June 30, 2029, and a two hundred fifty million dollar (\$250,000,000) general obligation bond is
33 approved on the November 2018 ballot. In order to qualify for the increased share ratio, twenty-
34 five percent (25%) of the project costs or a minimum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)

1 must be specifically directed to this purpose.

2 (h) For consolidation of two (2) or more school buildings, within or across districts into
3 one school building, the school housing aid ratio shall be increased by five percent (5%) so long as
4 ~~construction of~~ the project ~~commences~~ is approved by June 30, 2024, is completed by June 30,
5 2029, a two hundred fifty million dollar (\$250,000,000) general obligation bond is approved on the
6 November 2018 ballot, and does not receive a bonus pursuant to subsection (f) or subsection (g).
7 In order to qualify for the increased share ratio, twenty-five percent (25%) of the project costs or a
8 minimum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) must be specifically directed to this purpose.

9 (i) Any regionalized and/or non-regionalized school district receiving an increased share
10 ratio for a project approved prior to July 1, 2018, shall continue to receive the increased share ratio
11 for as long as the project receives state housing aid.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO EDUCATION -- FOUNDATION LEVEL SCHOOL SUPPORT

1 This act would modify the current law to allow for approval of construction projects within
2 school districts, rather than needing the project to be commenced by a certain date, permitting the
3 municipality to take advantage of the state's enhanced school bonuses and extending the time limits
4 for the municipality to contract with the general contractors performing such work.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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