

2025 -- H 5389

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING EDUCATION -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE.

Introduced By: Representatives Slater, and Diaz

Date Introduced: February 07, 2025

Referred To: House Finance

(City of Providence)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-7.1-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-7.1 entitled "The Paul
2 W. Crowley Rhode Island Student Investment Initiative [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode
3 Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-7.1-5. Intervention and support for failing schools.**

5 (a) The board of regents shall adopt a series of progressive support and intervention
6 strategies consistent with the Comprehensive Education Strategy and the principles of the “School
7 Accountability for Learning and Teaching” (SALT) of the board of regents for those schools and
8 school districts that continue to fall short of performance goals outlined in the district strategic
9 plans. These strategies shall initially focus on: (1) technical assistance in improvement planning,
10 curriculum alignment, student assessment, instruction, and family and community involvement; (2)
11 policy support; (3) resource oversight to assess and recommend that each school has adequate
12 resources necessary to meet performance goal; and (4) creating supportive partnerships with
13 education institutions, business, governmental, or other appropriate nonprofit agencies. If after a
14 three (3) year period of support there has not been improvement in the education of students as
15 determined by objective criteria to be developed by the board of regents, then there shall be
16 progressive levels of control by the department of elementary and secondary education over the
17 school and/or district budget, program, and/or personnel. This control by the department of
18 elementary and secondary education may be exercised in collaboration with the school district and

1 the municipality. If further needed, the school shall be reconstituted. Reconstitution responsibility
2 is delegated to the board of regents and may range from restructuring the school's governance,
3 budget, program, personnel, and/or may include decisions regarding the continued operation of the
4 school. The board of regents shall assess the district's capacity and may recommend the provision
5 of additional district, municipal and/or state resources. If a school or school district is under the
6 board of regents' control as a result of actions taken by the board pursuant to this section, the local
7 school committee shall be responsible for funding that school or school district ~~at the same level as~~
8 ~~in the prior academic year increased by the same percentage as the state total of school aid is~~
9 ~~increased.~~ at the same nominal amount as in the prior academic year increased by twenty percent
10 (20%) of the increase of taxes issued by the municipality or town where the school or school district
11 is located. The commissioner of elementary and secondary education may not use § 16-5-30 to
12 order the general treasurer to deduct any amounts owed by the local school committee under this
13 section.

14 (b) For FY 2007, the department shall dedicate one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000)
15 from funds appropriated to support progressive support and intervention and SALT visits to support
16 the Rhode Island Consortium for Instructional Leadership and Training. This consortium is
17 engaged in training school leaders to be more effective instructional leaders in the standards based
18 instruction environment.

19 (c) The director of revenue shall appoint a fiscal overseer if a school or school district is
20 under the board of regents' control as a result of actions taken by the board pursuant to this section.
21 The fiscal overseer shall without limitation:

- 22 (1) Supervise all financial services and activities;
- 23 (2) Advise the assessors, director of finance, city or town treasurer, fire district board of
24 directors, purchasing agent, and employees performing similar duties but with different titles;
- 25 (3) Review all proposed contracts and obligations;
- 26 (4) Monitor the expenditures of all funds;
- 27 (5) Approve the budget for the school or school district; and
- 28 (6) Report monthly to the director of revenue, the auditor general, the governor, the chief
29 executive of the municipality where the school or school district is located, and the chairpersons of
30 the house finance and senate finance committees on the use of funds for the benefit of the school
31 or school district.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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1 This act would remove the authority of the commissioner of elementary and secondary
2 education to withhold funds from a debtor community through the general treasurer. It also limits
3 the increase of contributions by the school or school district to twenty percent (20%) of the
4 legislative increase in any levy by the city or town where the school or school district is located.
5 Further, it requires the appointment by an auditor by the general assembly to review and report on
6 expenditures performed by the Rhode Island department of education for the school district which
7 is the subject of any intervention.

8 This act would take effect upon passage.

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