

2025 -- S 0392

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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 TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Senators Tikoian, Patalano, LaMountain, Ciccone, Burke, Felag, Urso,
Dimitri, Rogers, and Thompson

Date Introduced: February 26, 2025

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-21 of the General Laws entitled "Health and Safety of Pupils" is
2 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **16-21-43. Basic emergency and response skills for teachers.**

4 (a) At least eighty percent (80%) of teachers in each district shall have been trained in the
5 basic emergency and response skills ("BEARS") curriculum, including, hands-only
6 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Heimlich maneuver, and bleeding control, within the last three (3)
7 years.

8 (b) In the school year 2025-2026, the BEARS curriculum will also include safety training
9 related to SARS-COV-2.

10 (c) The BEARS training requirements shall phase into effect over a three (3) year
11 timeframe. One third (1/3) of all teachers shall be required to complete "BEARS" teacher training
12 every year, until at least eighty percent (80%) of teachers in each district have been trained once
13 during the school years 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028.

14 (d) Time spent by teachers receiving initial and refresher training in BEARS shall count
15 towards professional development requirements.

16 (e) The department of education shall verify that the required percentage of teachers in
17 each school district have been trained in the BEARS curriculum; however, each individual school
18 district shall have autonomy over how the curriculum is implemented within each district.

19 (f) A teacher or other school personnel, who has completed BEARS training, who renders

1 emergency care on school grounds, school buildings, or during school functions, shall not be liable
2 to the person assisted, for civil damages for any injuries which result from acts or omissions by the
3 person rendering the emergency care of administration of subjects covered by the BEARS
4 curriculum, which may constitute ordinary negligence. The immunity provided in this subsection
5 does not apply to acts or omissions constituting gross, willful or wanton negligence.

6 (g) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to require any teacher or other
7 school personnel to render emergency first aid.

8 (h) Each school district shall, from funds not otherwise allocated during the fiscal year,
9 provide funding for each faculty member trained, at a rate determined in the state budget.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

1 This act would require that one third (1/3) of all Rhode Island teachers, each year, for the
2 next three (3) years, be trained in the basic emergency and response skills curriculum ("BEARS"),
3 specifically in hand-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Heimlich maneuver, and bleeding control.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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