

=====
LC003625
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Hopkins, Roberts, Paplauskas, Nardone,
Quattrocchi, Chippendale, and Fascia
Date Introduced: January 16, 2026
Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-22-32 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-22 entitled "Curriculum
2 [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read
3 as follows:

4 **16-22-32. High quality curriculum and materials.**

5 (a)(1) The council on elementary and secondary education (the “council”) shall direct the
6 commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the “commissioner”) to institute a process
7 for reviewing and identifying curriculum and materials for mathematics, English language arts, and
8 science and technology that meet the following requirements:

- 9 (i) Is aligned with the academic standards provided in § 16-22-30;
10 (ii) Is aligned with the curriculum frameworks provided in § 16-22-31;
11 (iii) Is aligned with the RICAS, or any other test that is adopted as a statewide standardized
12 test; and
13 (iv) Is of high quality.

14 (2) The commissioner shall identify at least five (5) examples each of curricula for
15 mathematics and English language arts pursuant to this section by no later than January 1, 2021,
16 for science and technology pursuant to this section by no later than January 31, 2026, and again as
17 required by the council’s procedures set forth in subsection (a)(8) of this section. Once identified,
18 the curricula shall be made available to the public, subject to copyright considerations.

19 (3) The commissioner shall direct all local education agencies (“LEAs”) to select one of

1 the identified high-quality curricula and materials by the time of their next adoption cycle, but in
2 any case, no later than June 30, 2023, for mathematics and English language arts, and no later than
3 June 30, 2026, for science and technology. LEAs shall select curriculum and materials that are
4 responsive to the LEA's cultural and linguistic needs, and support culturally responsive practices.
5 LEAs shall implement the high-quality curricula and materials at the start of the school year that
6 immediately follows the selection. If an LEA is unable to implement the high-quality curricula and
7 materials fully due to financial hardship, the commissioner may grant the LEA an extension of
8 time, provided that the LEA demonstrates continued efforts to complete the implementation.

9 (4) The commissioner shall institute a waiver process for LEAs that would like to use a
10 curriculum other than any identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section. Part of that
11 process may include, but is not limited to, asking the LEA to:

12 (i) Develop local curriculum goals;

13 (ii) Communicate the rationale for selecting the proposed curriculum over any of the
14 curricula identified by the commissioner; and

15 (iii) Engage a third-party reviewer that has a proven track record of curriculum audits to
16 review the proposed curriculum to ensure it aligns with state standards, establishes the scope and
17 sequence of instruction, is of high quality, is culturally relevant, and to discuss any other strengths
18 and weaknesses.

19 (5) Waiver determinations made pursuant to subsection (a)(4) of this section shall be
20 appealable to the board of education. Any LEA may petition the commissioner to use a lower-cost
21 curriculum program, if the program is substantially similar to other programs identified and
22 approved by the commissioner. In order to petition for the lower-cost curriculum, the LEA shall
23 present to the commissioner evidence that the LEA's proposed alternative curriculum is also of high
24 quality and would be appropriate for the LEA's students.

25 (6) Any LEA that has at least seventy-five percent (75%) of its students meeting
26 expectations on state assessments and also has no student subgroup identified for targeted
27 assistance under Rhode Island's accountability process may select and use curricula and materials
28 other than any identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section for that subject area, only;
29 provided, however, that if the LEA no longer has at least seventy-five percent (75%) of its students
30 meeting expectations on state assessments, or if any student subgroup is identified for targeted
31 assistance under Rhode Island's accountability process, the LEA must select and implement one of
32 the curricula identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section.

33 (7) LEAs shall develop and execute a curriculum implementation plan that includes
34 professional development to ensure that all teachers and administrators are prepared to implement

1 the new curriculum with the necessary skill and knowledge.

2 (8) The council shall develop procedures for updating the identification of curricula and
3 materials pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall include
4 a requirement that the council review and evaluate the identified curricula and materials regularly
5 to ensure that the high quality of the curricula and materials is maintained. The review cycle shall
6 begin in 2025, with subsequent reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years
7 thereafter.

8 (b) On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the
9 commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,
10 regarding the progress toward fulfilling the requirements of this section, including, but not limited
11 to, the high-quality curricula and materials identified, selected, and implemented by LEAs pursuant
12 to this section.

13 (c) The state shall establish a professional development fund to provide professional
14 learning to LEAs that elect to use prioritized curricula and materials in mathematics and English
15 language arts as identified by the commissioner.

16 (d) For the purposes of this section, “local education agencies” (“LEAs”) shall include all
17 of the following within the state of Rhode Island:

- 18 (1) Public school districts;
19 (2) Regional school districts;
20 (3) State-operated schools;
21 (4) Regional collaborative schools; and
22 (5) Charter schools.

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

=====
LC003625
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

- 1 This act would allow any LEA to petition the commissioner to use a lower-cost curriculum
- 2 program, if the program is of high quality.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC003625
=====