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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

Introduced By: Representatives O'Brien, McNamara, Solomon, Furtado, Messier,
Kazarian, Slater, Giraldo, Voas, and Casey

Date Introduced: February 11, 2026

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-11-2.3 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-11 entitled
2 "Certification of Teachers [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]"
3 is hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-11-2.3. Standardized testing — Issuance of certificates.**

5 (a) No person who obtained an initial certificate prior to January 8, 2002 shall be barred
6 from certification under this chapter solely because of his or her score on any standardized teacher's
7 examination; provided, however, that he or she successfully completes an assessment, based on
8 criteria established by the board of regents for elementary and secondary education, in accordance
9 with 34 CFR § 200.56.

10 (b) The board of regents for elementary and secondary education may administer a written
11 examination to prospective teachers seeking certification.

12 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, until July 1,
13 2028, the requirement of completion of a standardized teacher's examination as a prerequisite to
14 obtaining a teaching certificate under this chapter shall be suspended. No applicant for a teaching
15 certification under this chapter shall be required to take any standardized teacher's examination or
16 assessment designated by the board of elementary and secondary education or the department of
17 elementary and secondary education prior to July 1, 2028. Provided, however, this subsection shall
18 not apply to any testing that is required as part of an accredited post-secondary teacher preparation
19 program.

1 SECTION 2. Section 16-11-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-11 entitled "Certification
2 of Teachers [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
3 amended to read as follows:

4 **16-11-3. Certificates without examination.**

5 (a) The board of regents for elementary and secondary education may, in its discretion,
6 issue certificates of qualification without examination to persons who may present evidence of
7 qualification and shall comply with the regulations of the board. Provided, that any teacher who is
8 certified in two (2) fields or subjects of science, other than general science, shall also be
9 automatically certified in the field or subject of general science without the need for examination
10 or other proof of qualifications in the subject of general science.

11 (b) Until July 1, 2028, the requirement of completion of a standardized teacher's
12 examination as a prerequisite to obtaining a teaching certificate under this chapter shall be
13 suspended. No applicant for a teaching certification under this chapter shall be required to take any
14 standardized teacher's examination or assessment designated by the board of elementary and
15 secondary education or the department of elementary and secondary education prior to July 1, 2028.
16 Provided, however, this subsection shall not apply to any testing that is required as part of an
17 accredited post-secondary teacher preparation program.

18 SECTION 3. 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 -- CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

1 This act would provide that until July 1, 2028, an applicant for a teaching certificate in
2 Rhode Island would not be required to complete a standardized teacher's examination as a
3 prerequisite to obtaining a teaching certificate.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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