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LC003286
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Senator E Morgan

Date Introduced: February 13, 2026

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-22-30, 16-22-31, 16-22-32 and 16-22-33 of the General Laws in
2 Chapter 16-22 entitled "Curriculum [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the Rhode Island Board of
3 Education Act]" are hereby repealed.
- 4 ~~**16-22-30. Statewide academic standards.**~~
- 5 ~~(a) 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 ~~to develop statewide academic standards for the core subjects of mathematics, English language~~
8 ~~arts, science and technology, history and social studies, world languages, and the arts. This process~~
9 ~~shall:~~
- 10 ~~(1) Be open and consultative;~~
- 11 ~~(2) Include, but need not be limited to, a culturally and racially diverse group of classroom~~
12 ~~teachers and students; and~~
- 13 ~~(3) Include, but need not be limited to, reviewing and revising current standards, as well as~~
14 ~~adopting new ones, if deemed appropriate.~~
- 15 ~~(b) The commissioner shall develop the statewide academic standards pursuant to this~~
16 ~~section by no later than December 31, 2019, and again as required by the council's procedures set~~
17 ~~forth in subsection (f) of this section. The standards shall:~~
- 18 ~~(1) Cover grades prekindergarten through grade twelve (PK-12);~~
- 19 ~~(2) Clearly set forth the skills, competencies, and knowledge expected to be demonstrated~~

1 ~~by all students at the conclusion of individual grades or grade spans;~~

2 ~~(3) Be formulated so as to set high expectations for student performance;~~

3 ~~(4) Provide clear and specific examples that embody and reflect these high expectations;~~

4 ~~(5) Be constructed with due regard to the established research and recommendations of~~

5 ~~national organizations, to the best of similar efforts in other states, and to the level of skills,~~

6 ~~competencies, and knowledge possessed by typical students in the most educationally advanced~~

7 ~~nations. The skills, competencies, and knowledge set forth in the standards shall define the~~

8 ~~performance outcomes expected of both students directly entering the workforce and of students~~

9 ~~pursuing higher education. In addition, the skills, competencies, and knowledge set forth in the~~

10 ~~standards shall inform the design and implementation of the Rhode Island comprehensive~~

11 ~~assessment system (“RICAS”) in mathematics, English language arts, and science and technology.~~

12 ~~The RICAS shall align with federal law, be in place for no fewer than ten (10) years, and facilitate~~

13 ~~comparisons of students of other states and nations;~~

14 ~~(6) Be designed to instill respect for the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of this state,~~

15 ~~and for the contributions made by diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial groups to the life of this state;~~

16 ~~(7) Be designed to avoid perpetuating gender, cultural, ethnic, or racial stereotypes;~~

17 ~~(8) Reflect sensitivity to different learning styles;~~

18 ~~(9) Reflect sensitivity to impediments to learning, which may include issues related to, but~~

19 ~~not limited to, cultural, financial, emotional, health, and social factors; and~~

20 ~~(10) Be in a form readily comprehensible by the general public.~~

21 ~~(c) This section shall not require the abandonment of any standards already in place, so~~

22 ~~long as the commissioner determines that these standards meet the statewide goals contained~~

23 ~~herein.~~

24 ~~(d) The commissioner shall submit a copy of the standards to the council for approval at~~

25 ~~least sixty (60) days prior to the standards taking effect.~~

26 ~~(e) Upon approval, the council shall make the standards available to the public.~~

27 ~~(f) The council shall develop procedures for updating, improving, or refining standards~~

28 ~~pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall include a~~

29 ~~requirement that the council review and evaluate the standards regularly to ensure that the high~~

30 ~~quality of the standards is maintained. The review cycle shall begin in 2025, with subsequent~~

31 ~~reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years thereafter.~~

32 ~~(g) On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the~~

33 ~~commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,~~

34 ~~regarding the standards developed and reviewed pursuant to this section.~~

1 ~~16-22-31. Curriculum frameworks.~~

2 ~~(a)(1) The council on elementary and secondary education (the “council”) shall direct the~~
3 ~~commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the “commissioner”) to institute a process~~
4 ~~to develop curriculum frameworks for mathematics, English language arts, science and technology,~~
5 ~~history and social studies, world languages, and the arts. This process shall:~~

6 ~~(i) Be open and consultative;~~

7 ~~(ii) Include, but need not be limited to, a culturally and racially diverse group of classroom~~
8 ~~teachers and students; and~~

9 ~~(iii) Include, but need not be limited to, reviewing and revising current frameworks, as well~~
10 ~~as developing new ones, if deemed appropriate.~~

11 ~~(2) The process may include, but need not be limited to, community groups, cultural~~
12 ~~organizations, parents, teacher preparation programs, and leading college and university figures in~~
13 ~~both subject matter disciplines and pedagogy.~~

14 ~~(b) The commissioner shall develop the curriculum frameworks pursuant to this section by~~
15 ~~no later than September 1, 2021, and again as required by the council’s procedures set forth in~~
16 ~~subsection (c) of this section. The curriculum frameworks developed by the commissioner shall:~~

17 ~~(1) Present broad, research-based pedagogical approaches and strategies to assist students~~
18 ~~develop the skills, competencies, and knowledge called for by the statewide standards provided in~~
19 ~~§ 16-22-30;~~

20 ~~(2) Provide sufficient detail to guide and inform processes for the education, professional~~
21 ~~development, certification, and evaluation of both active and aspiring teachers and administrators;~~

22 ~~(3) Provide sufficient detail to guide the implementation of student assessment instruments;~~

23 ~~(4) Be constructed to guide and assist teachers, administrators, publishers, software~~
24 ~~developers, and other interested parties in the development and selection of curricula, textbooks,~~
25 ~~technology, and other instructional materials, and in the design of pedagogical approaches and~~
26 ~~strategies for use in elementary, secondary, and career and technical schools;~~

27 ~~(5) Be aligned with the state’s commitment to college and career readiness;~~

28 ~~(6) Encourage demanding real-world application, multidisciplinary problem-solving,~~
29 ~~integration of academic and career and technical education curriculum, project-based learning,~~
30 ~~performance assessment, team teaching, and alignment of classroom instruction with work-based~~
31 ~~learning opportunities;~~

32 ~~(7) Promote better alignment with postsecondary curriculum and instruction, including, but~~
33 ~~not limited to, the expansion and/or use of dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities for high~~
34 ~~school students that help them with the postsecondary transition, persistence, and attainment of a~~

1 credential;

2 ~~(8) Encourage capstone projects and associated performance assessments that provide~~

3 ~~students the opportunity to demonstrate holistic proficiency with respect to research, cross-~~

4 ~~disciplinary problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and oral defense;~~

5 ~~(9) Present specific, pedagogical approaches and strategies to meet the academic and~~

6 ~~nonacademic needs of English learner, economically disadvantaged, special education, and~~

7 ~~academically advanced students;~~

8 ~~(10) Be designed to avoid perpetuating gender, cultural, ethnic, or racial stereotypes;~~

9 ~~(11) Reflect sensitivity to different learning styles;~~

10 ~~(12) Reflect sensitivity to impediments to learning, which may include issues related to,~~

11 ~~but not limited to, cultural, financial, emotional, health, and social factors; and~~

12 ~~(13) Be in a form readily comprehensible by the general public.~~

13 ~~(c) The commissioner shall submit a copy of the frameworks to the council for approval at~~

14 ~~least sixty (60) days prior to the frameworks taking effect.~~

15 ~~(d) Upon approval, the council shall make the frameworks available to the public.~~

16 ~~(e) The council shall develop procedures for updating, improving, or refining curriculum~~

17 ~~frameworks pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall~~

18 ~~include a requirement that the council review and evaluate the frameworks regularly to ensure that~~

19 ~~the high quality of the frameworks is maintained. The review cycle shall begin in 2025, with~~

20 ~~subsequent reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years thereafter.~~

21 ~~(f) On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the~~

22 ~~commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,~~

23 ~~regarding the curriculum frameworks developed and reviewed pursuant to this section.~~

24 **16-22-32. High quality curriculum and materials.**

25 ~~(a)(1) The council on elementary and secondary education (the “council”) shall direct the~~

26 ~~commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the “commissioner”) to institute a process~~

27 ~~for reviewing and identifying curriculum and materials for mathematics, English language arts, and~~

28 ~~science and technology that meet the following requirements:~~

29 ~~(i) Is aligned with the academic standards provided in § 16-22-30;~~

30 ~~(ii) Is aligned with the curriculum frameworks provided in § 16-22-31;~~

31 ~~(iii) Is aligned with the RICAS, or any other test that is adopted as a statewide standardized~~

32 ~~test; and~~

33 ~~(iv) Is of high quality.~~

34 ~~(2) The commissioner shall identify at least five (5) examples each of curricula for~~

~~mathematics and English language arts pursuant to this section by no later than January 1, 2021, for science and technology pursuant to this section by no later than January 31, 2026, and again as required by the council's procedures set forth in subsection (a)(8) of this section. Once identified, the curricula shall be made available to the public, subject to copyright considerations.~~

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

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

~~(i) Develop local curriculum goals;~~

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

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

~~(5) Waiver determinations made pursuant to subsection (a)(4) of this section shall be appealable to the board of education.~~

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

~~(7) LEAs shall develop and execute a curriculum implementation plan that includes~~

1 professional development to ensure that all teachers and administrators are prepared to implement
2 the new curriculum with the necessary skill and knowledge.

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

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

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

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

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

24 **16-22-33. Curriculum implementation accountability.**

25 (a) ~~Once local education agencies (“LEAs”) select high quality curriculum and materials~~
26 ~~pursuant to § 16-22-32, the department of elementary and secondary education (the “department”)~~
27 ~~shall identify an LEA assistance partner from within the department to provide any and all support~~
28 ~~requested by the LEA or individual schools within the LEA regarding access to, implementation~~
29 ~~of, and professional development for the curriculum and materials.~~

30 (b) ~~The LEA assistance partner shall meet with teachers, principals, administrators, or other~~
31 ~~school officials of the LEA to which they are assigned at a school within the LEA on a regular~~
32 ~~basis, which shall be no less frequently than every three (3) months, to discuss the progress toward~~
33 ~~implementing the curriculum and materials effectively. Areas of discussion may include, but are~~
34 ~~not limited to:~~

- 1 ~~(1) Barriers to learning and plans to eliminate said barriers;~~
- 2 ~~(2) Best practices regarding pedagogical techniques given the diversity of the student~~
- 3 ~~population being served;~~
- 4 ~~(3) Where to locate additional professional development resources; and~~
- 5 ~~(4) Implementation strategies that have been successful to share with other LEAs that are~~
- 6 ~~using the same curriculum and materials.~~
- 7 ~~(c) The LEA assistance partner shall tour all schools within its assigned LEA with at least~~
- 8 ~~one teacher and the principal or assistant principal:~~
- 9 ~~(1) To observe challenges teachers are facing while implementing the curriculum and~~
- 10 ~~materials;~~
- 11 ~~(2) To discuss with the teacher and principal or assistant principal ideas to help resolve~~
- 12 ~~those challenges; and~~
- 13 ~~(3) To answer any questions regarding the curriculum or implementation thereof.~~
- 14 ~~(d) The LEA assistance partner shall have follow up meetings at schools within their~~
- 15 ~~assigned LEA as often as requested by an individual school or the entire LEA to ensure all educators~~
- 16 ~~are comfortable implementing the curriculum effectively.~~
- 17 ~~(e) The LEA assistance partner shall report to the department no less frequently than every~~
- 18 ~~three (3) months regarding the status of curriculum implementation at the schools within their~~
- 19 ~~assigned LEA.~~
- 20 ~~(f) The commissioner is hereby authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary~~
- 21 ~~to implement the provisions of this section.~~
- 22 ~~(g) For the purposes of this section, “local education agencies” (“LEAs”) shall include all~~
- 23 ~~of the following within the state of Rhode Island:~~
- 24 ~~(1) Public school districts;~~
- 25 ~~(2) Regional school districts;~~
- 26 ~~(3) State operated schools;~~
- 27 ~~(4) Regional collaborative schools; and~~
- 28 ~~(5) Charter schools.~~

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

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LC003286
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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

1 This act would repeal in their entirety sections 16-22-30, 16-22-31, 16-22-32 and 16-22-
2 33, all of which relate to the establishment of statewide academic standards in mathematics, English
3 language arts, science and technology, history, social studies, world languages and the arts and their
4 implementation into the curriculum of all public schools.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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