

2026 -- S 2783

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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 -- MAYORAL ACADEMIES

Introduced By: Senators Pearson, Gallo, Murray, and Zurier

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-77.4-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-77.4 entitled "Mayoral
2 Academies [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
3 amended to read as follows:

4 **16-77.4-1. Entities eligible to apply to become, or for the expansion of, a mayoral**
5 **academy.**

6 (a) A "mayoral academy" means a charter school created by a mayor of any city or town
7 within the State of Rhode Island, acting by, or through, a nonprofit organization established for
8 said purpose (regardless of the time said nonprofit organization is in existence), that enrolls students
9 from more than one city or town, including both urban and non-urban communities, and that offers
10 an equal number of enrollments to students on a lottery basis; provided, further, that such mayoral
11 academies shall have a board of trustees or directors that is comprised of representatives from each
12 included city or town and is chaired by a mayor of an included city or town. Provided further, that
13 the only voting members of the board of trustees or directors of a mayoral academy shall be the
14 mayor or, if there is no mayor, the town administrator, from each included city or town. The boards
15 of trustees or directors may have other nonvoting members, from each included city or town, who
16 shall serve in an advisory capacity. The mayor from each city or town, or in the absence of a mayor,
17 the city or town council via a resolution or ordinance, shall approve the participation in the mayoral
18 academy's catchment area for a proposed charter or an amendment to a charter for expansion. For
19 purposes of this chapter, the term "mayor" shall include any elected town administrator.

1 (b) No child shall be required to attend a mayoral academy, nor shall any teacher be
2 required to teach in a mayoral academy. The school committee of the district in which a mayoral
3 academy is located shall make accommodations to facilitate the transfer of students who do not
4 wish to participate in a mayoral academy into other public schools. It shall also make
5 accommodations for those students who wish to transfer into the mayoral academy as space
6 permits. If the total number of students who are eligible to attend and apply to a mayoral academy
7 is greater than the number of spaces available, the mayoral academy shall conduct a lottery to
8 determine which students shall be admitted.

9 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 -- MAYORAL ACADEMIES

1 This act would provide that only a mayor or town administrator could be a voting member
2 of the board of directors or trustees for a mayoral academy. The act would also authorize other
3 nonvoting members on the board of directors and trustees, from each included city or town that the
4 mayoral academy serves.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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