

2026 -- S 3009

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY SHARED SERVICES
AND THE POTENTIAL FOR REGIONALIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Acosta, Felag, DiPalma, Quezada, Gu, E Morgan, Ujifusa,
DiMario, McKenney, and Zurier

Date Introduced: March 05, 2026

Referred To: Senate Education

1 WHEREAS, Public school enrollment in Rhode Island has trended downward since
2 2019, and is projected to continue declining due to lower birth rates, reduced immigration, and
3 increased enrollment in charter schools; and

4 WHEREAS, Rising per-pupil and total costs of providing public education in Rhode
5 Island have placed increasing fiscal pressure on state and local education budgets; and

6 WHEREAS, When student enrollment declines or shifts between districts, funding
7 reductions may occur without a corresponding ability to proportionally reduce fixed educational
8 costs, including facilities, transportation, staffing, and administrative functions; and

9 WHEREAS, The operation of multiple school districts, each requiring administrative
10 structures and operational systems, may result in duplicative costs and limit opportunities to
11 achieve economies of scale; and

12 WHEREAS, Shared services and regionalization of school districts may present
13 opportunities to improve administrative efficiency, align resources with student needs, and
14 strengthen educational and extracurricular programming; and

15 WHEREAS, Any consideration of shared services or regionalization must ensure
16 educational equity, preserve community voice, and protect the interests of students, families, and
17 educators across municipalities of varying size and character; and

18 WHEREAS, A focused and data-driven review of school district shared services and
19 regionalization would assist policymakers in evaluating feasibility, fiscal impact, governance

1 implications, and educational outcomes; now, therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That a special legislative study commission be and the same is hereby
3 created consisting of nine (9) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate, at
4 least one of whom shall be a member of the minority party, and including one representing a
5 municipality characterized as urban, one representing a municipality characterized as suburban,
6 and one representing a municipality characterized as rural, to be appointed by the President of the
7 Senate; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the National Education Association
8 Rhode Island (NEARI), or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the American
9 Federation of Teachers Rhode Island, (AFT Rhode Island), or designee; one of whom shall be the
10 Executive Director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, or designee; one of whom
11 shall be the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Rhode Island
12 Department of Education (RIDE), or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode
13 Island Association of School Committees (RIASC), or designee; and one of whom shall be of the
14 Executive Director of the Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association (RISSA), or
15 designee.

16 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a legislative study
17 commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly resolution, the appointing
18 authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu of a legislator.

19 The purpose of said commission shall be to study and prepare a report including, but not
20 limited to, addressing:

- 21 • Existing shared service arrangements among Rhode Island school districts;
- 22 • The fiscal, administrative, and governance implications of district regionalization;
- 23 • The impact of shared services or regionalization on educational equity and student
24 outcomes;
- 25 • Potential cost savings or efficiencies;
- 26 • Any statutory or regulatory changes that may be necessary to facilitate shared services
27 or regionalization; and
- 28 • Recommendations, if any, for legislative or administrative action.

29 By August 2026, upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall
30 be appointed and shall meet at the call of the President of the Senate and shall organize, and the
31 Senate President shall appoint a chair.

32 Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

33 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

34 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,

1 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or
2 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution; and, be it further
3 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
4 Senate on or before April 15, 2027, and said commission shall expire on submission of its report,
5 and said report may be submitted electronically and made publicly available.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
SENATE RESOLUTION
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

- 1 This resolution would create a nine (9) member special legislative commission whose
2 purpose it would be to study shared services and the potential for regionalization of school
3 districts, and who would report back to the Senate on or before April 15, 2027, and whose life
4 would expire once its report is issued.

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