

2022 -- S 2309

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LC004673  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT  
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Introduced By: Senators Pearson, Gallo, Cano, Acosta, and Murray

Date Introduced: February 15, 2022

Referred To: Senate Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Subject to the conditions, limitations and restrictions hereinafter contained in  
2 this act, the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) is hereby appropriated to Rhode Island college  
3 in addition to amounts previously appropriated and shall be paid out of any money in the treasury  
4 not otherwise appropriated to be extended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, to fulfill the  
5 provisions of § 16-7.1-10(d) and (e). For purposes and functions hereinafter mentioned, the state  
6 controller is hereby authorized and directed to draw his or her orders upon the general treasurer for  
7 the payment of such sums or such portions thereof as may be required from time to time upon  
8 receipt by him or her of properly authenticated vouchers.

9           SECTION 2. The general assembly from money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated,  
10 shall make an annual appropriation to Rhode Island college in an amount sufficient to cover the  
11 full cost of certifying teachers for teaching English to speakers of other languages, bilingual  
12 education, in multilingual learning, and/or English as a second language through programs offered  
13 at Rhode Island college. For FY 2023, the appropriation amount shall be equal to the appropriation  
14 provided in section 1 of this act.

15           SECTION 3. Section 16-7.1-10 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-7.1 entitled "The Paul  
16 W. Crowley Rhode Island Student Investment Initiative [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode  
17 Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read as follows:

18           **16-7.1-10. Professional development investment fund.**

1 (a) In order to continue developing the skills of Rhode Island's teachers, administrators and  
2 staff, the general assembly establishes a Professional Development Investment Fund. The general  
3 assembly shall annually appropriate some sum and distribute it based on a pupil-teacher ratio that  
4 shall be adjusted annually by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. School  
5 districts, including collaboratives established pursuant to chapter 3.1 of this title, may use funds  
6 received under this category of education aid to replace up to, but no more than, fifty percent (50%)  
7 of the amount the school district spent for professional development programs in the previous fiscal  
8 year. The expenditure of these funds shall be determined by a committee at each school consisting  
9 of the school principal, two (2) teachers selected by the teaching staff of the school, and two (2)  
10 parents of students attending the school. Schools that enroll students in the early grades  
11 (kindergarten through grade three (3)) must expend these funds on the development of scientific  
12 research based, as described in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title 1, Part B, Section 1208  
13 [20 U.S.C. § 6368], reading instruction to improve students reading performance.

14 Schools that have met their performance targets in reading for the current academic year  
15 and are not designated as a school in need of improvement, may expend their Professional  
16 Development Investment Funds on professional development in the core academic subjects of  
17 mathematics, writing, or reading to improve student performance.

18 Collaborative programs between schools are encouraged. These resources shall be used to  
19 close student performance gaps in accordance with the school's and district's strategic plan pursuant  
20 to § 16-7.1-2. Additional funds shall be allocated to the department of elementary and secondary  
21 education to support teacher and administrator professional development in all districts, including,  
22 but not limited to:

23 (1) Supporting mentoring systems;

24 (2) Providing school districts with program support to assist teachers in local school  
25 districts to improve reading instruction and enhance the integration of reading throughout the  
26 curriculum with the goal of improving student performance to high standards;

27 (3) Support for the design and implementation of leadership development for the teacher  
28 to assume leadership roles or ultimately prepare for administrator;

29 (4) Development of a plan for formal training of school leaders in standards based  
30 instruction, school improvement planning, effective use of data in the decision-making process,  
31 community involvement and creation of governance structures;

32 (5) Support for national board certification of teachers, application fees for a certificate of  
33 clinical competence issued by the American speech-language hearing association, and grants for  
34 coordination and support of school based teacher professional development; and

1 (6) The practice of scientific research based reading instruction to improve reading  
2 performance.

3 ~~(b) In FY 2003, the additional funds allocated to the department of elementary and~~  
4 ~~secondary education pursuant to this section shall be used only to support the activities described~~  
5 ~~in subdivisions (a)(2) and (a)(5) of this section.~~

6 ~~(e)~~(b) Out of the funds appropriated by the general assembly for professional development  
7 in subsection (a) of this section, twenty-five percent (25%) shall be set aside for district-wide  
8 professional development activities. The expenditure of this district-wide professional development  
9 set-aside shall be determined by a committee in each district consisting of the superintendent or his  
10 or her designee, three (3) teachers appointed by the collective bargaining agent, and one member  
11 of the Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary education field service team servicing  
12 that school district designated by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. The  
13 expenditure must be aligned with the district strategic plan as well as ongoing professional  
14 development programs approved by the department of elementary and secondary education.  
15 Collaborative programs between school districts are permissible.

16 ~~(d)~~(c) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, Beginning beginning in FY  
17 2006, professional development funds shall only be spent with the prior approval of the  
18 commissioner of elementary and secondary education upon submission of a district level plan  
19 which incorporates the school level plans and which details the use of the funds. These plans shall  
20 to the extent possible call for professional development activities that are embedded or do not  
21 otherwise encroach upon student instruction time. The requirements of this paragraph shall apply  
22 to both district-wide professional development activities and professional development activities  
23 determined by the school-level committees.

24 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any school where the  
25 employer imposes a requirement on any certified teacher to obtain a certification or further  
26 education in teaching English to speakers of other languages, bilingual education, in multilingual  
27 learning, and/or English as a second language that the teacher did not already have, upon pain of  
28 adverse job action or consequences related to employment, and such certification is offered at  
29 Rhode Island college:

30 (1) The teacher shall not be required to pay any cost for application to the program at Rhode  
31 Island college;

32 (2) The teacher shall not be charged any tuition, fees, or expenses for any aspect of the  
33 course of study to obtain the certification or education; and

34 (3) No adverse job action shall be taken against the teacher on the basis of lacking the new

1 certification or education as long as:

2 (i) Less than one year has elapsed since the announcement of the new certification or  
3 education requirement;

4 (ii) The teacher has submitted an application to Rhode Island college to pursue the  
5 certification or educational program;

6 (iii) The teacher remains on a waitlist for enrollment in the program or any class necessary  
7 to complete the program; or

8 (iv) The teacher is enrolled at Rhode Island college in pursuit of the certification or  
9 educational program.

10 (e) The terms "adverse job action" and "consequences related to employment" in subsection  
11 (d) of this section, shall be read liberally in order to effectuate the purposes of this section and shall  
12 include, but not be limited to, reassignment to a different grade level, reassignment to a different  
13 school, changes in seniority, changes in pay, changes in benefits, changes in availability of  
14 discretionary funding, or other changes impacting the teacher personally or their chosen method of  
15 providing instruction.

16 ~~(e) In FY 2009 payments from the professional development investment fund are hereby~~  
17 ~~suspended through June 30, 2009. Notwithstanding, school districts may continue to maintain~~  
18 ~~professional development programs and may reduce other education programs to achieve savings.~~

19 ~~(f) In FY 2010 payments from the professional development investment fund are hereby~~  
20 ~~suspended through June 30, 2010. Notwithstanding, school districts may continue to maintain~~  
21 ~~professional development programs and may reduce other education programs to achieve savings.~~

22 SECTION 4. 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 -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT  
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

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1           This act would provide for a one-time appropriation of one million dollars (\$1,000,000)  
2   and an annual appropriation thereafter to Rhode Island college, for providing at no cost,  
3   certification and educational programs to teachers that are teaching English to speakers of other  
4   languages, bilingual education, or in multi-bilingual learning and for English as a second language.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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