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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Introduced By: Representatives Tomasso, Amore, Walsh, McNamara, and Ferri

Date Introduced: February 27, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 16-97 of the General Laws entitled “The Rhode Island Board of  
2 Education Act” is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3           **16-97-8. Establishment of executive office of education.** – (a) There shall be  
4 established an executive office of education, which shall be under the supervision and control of a  
5 secretary of education, in this section called (“the secretary”). The secretary shall be appointed  
6 by and serve at the pleasure of the governor, shall receive such salary as the governor determines,  
7 and shall devote full time to the duties of the office.

8           (b) The secretary shall have the following duties and powers:

9           (1) Analyze the present and future goals, needs, and requirements of public education in  
10 the state of Rhode Island;

11           (2) Review and approve mission statements and five (5) year master plans encompassing  
12 each sector of the public education system, including early education and care, elementary and  
13 secondary education, and public higher education. These mission statements and master plans  
14 shall take into account the secretary’s analysis of goals, needs and requirements and shall be  
15 designed to achieve a well-coordinated system of education from early childhood through the  
16 university level and beyond;

17           (3) Approve the appointments of the board of education;

18           (4) Make recommendations to the governor concerning the funding of education in the  
19 state and assist in preparing budget proposals to be submitted to the legislature on behalf of the

1 board of education;

2 (5) Serve as the governor’s advisor on educational issues and represent the interests of  
3 education in the governor’s cabinet;

4 (6) Serve as an ex officio voting member of the board of education;

5 (7) Manage all information technology resources employed by the board of education  
6 including, but not limited to, all resources necessary to implement a longitudinal data system to  
7 coordinate the collection and analysis of educational data from pre-kindergarten programs  
8 through highest education and oversee the departments’ compliance with all standards and  
9 policies of the information technology division;

10 (8) The secretary may, subject to appropriation, appoint such other employees as deemed  
11 necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities, shall be provided with adequate offices, and  
12 may expend sums for other necessary expenses of the executive office.

13 (9) Nothing in this section shall be construed as conferring any powers upon the secretary  
14 with respect to the board of education or its department except as set forth in this section or as  
15 otherwise expressly provided by law.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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RELATING TO EDUCATION - SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

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1           This act would establish an executive office of education headed by a secretary of  
2 education, for the purpose of overall management of the public education system.

3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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