

2014 -- H 7836

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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 - BOARD OF REGENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AND  
SECONDARY EDUCATION

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, E Coderre, Ferri, Amore, and O`Grady

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 16-60-6 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-60 entitled "Board of  
2 Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **16-60-6. Commissioner of elementary and secondary education.** -- The regents shall  
4 appoint a commissioner of elementary and secondary education who shall serve at the pleasure of  
5 the regents, provided that the commissioner's initial engagement by the regents shall be for a  
6 period of not more than three (3) years. For the purpose of appointing, retaining, or dismissing a  
7 commissioner, the governor shall serve as an additional voting member of the board of regents,  
8 and provided that in the case of a tie, the president of the senate shall cast the deciding vote. The  
9 position of commissioner shall be in the unclassified service of the state and he or she shall serve  
10 as the chief executive officer of the board of regents and as the chief administrative officer of the  
11 department of elementary and secondary education. The commissioner of elementary and  
12 secondary education shall have the duties that are defined in this section and in this title and any  
13 other additional duties that may be determined by the regents, and shall perform any other duties  
14 that may be vested in the commissioner by law. In addition to the general supervision of the  
15 department of elementary and secondary education and the appointment of the several officers  
16 and employees of the department, it shall be the duty of the commissioner of elementary and  
17 secondary education:

18           (1) To develop and implement a systematic program of information gathering,

1 processing, and analysis addressed to every aspect of elementary and secondary education in the  
2 state, especially as that information relates to current and future educational needs.

3 (2) To prepare a master plan for elementary and secondary education in the state; to  
4 coordinate the goals and objectives of the public elementary and secondary education sector with  
5 the activities of the nonpublic elementary and secondary education sector where feasible.

6 (3) To communicate with and seek the advice of those concerned with and affected by  
7 the board of regents' determinations.

8 (4) To implement broad policy as it pertains to the goals and objectives established by  
9 the regents; to enforce standards and to exercise general supervision over public elementary and  
10 secondary education in the state and over all elementary and secondary nonpublic education in  
11 the state as provided in subdivision (8) of this section; to establish secondary school graduation  
12 requirements which shall be based on a holistic assessment of each student's readiness for  
13 graduation, made by a qualified group of professionals in each secondary school, and having  
14 reference, without limitation, to each student's course record, senior project or portfolio, and  
15 performance state wide on assessments; to assist in the preparation of the budget for elementary  
16 and secondary education and to be responsible upon direction of the regents for the allocation of  
17 appropriations, the acquisition, holding, disposition, and general management of property.

18 (5) To be responsible for the coordination of the various elementary and secondary  
19 educational functions among the educational agencies of the state including local school districts  
20 and to encourage and to assist in the cooperation among them so that maximum efficiency and  
21 economy may be achieved.

22 (6) To assist the regents in the preparation and presentation annually to the state budget  
23 officer, in accordance with section 35-3-4, of a total state elementary and secondary educational  
24 budget which shall include, but not be limited to, the budget of the department of elementary and  
25 secondary education, subcommittees and agencies, and state aid to local school districts.

26 (7) To supervise the operation of the department of elementary and secondary education,  
27 to have the duties as defined in section 16-1-5 and in this title or in law wherever outlined, and  
28 other additional duties and responsibilities that may be assigned by the regents.

29 (8) To perform the duties vested in the board of regents with relation to nonpublic  
30 elementary and secondary educational institutions within the state under the terms of chapter 40  
31 of this title, and other laws that affect nonpublic elementary and secondary education in the state.

32 (9) To supervise the following specific functions:

33 (i) To recommend the basic subjects and courses of study to be taught and instructional  
34 standards to be maintained in the public elementary and secondary schools in the state.

- 1           (ii) To recommend standards and qualifications of teachers and to issue certificates upon  
2 approval of standards and qualifications by the regents.
- 3           (iii) To distribute state school funds in accordance with law and regulations of the board  
4 of regents.
- 5           (iv) To certify as to the necessity of school construction and that standards and design  
6 are in accordance with law and regulations of the regents and to approve a design for school  
7 construction throughout the state.
- 8           (v) To certify that school library standards and services are in accordance with law and  
9 regulations of the board of regents.
- 10          (vi) To recommend to the board of regents matters relating to the transportation of pupils  
11 to school.
- 12          (vii) To require the observance of all laws relating to elementary and secondary schools  
13 and education.
- 14          (viii) To interpret school law and to decide any controversies that may be appealed to  
15 him or her from decisions of local school committees.
- 16          (ix) To prepare and recommend standard forms for the use of local schools when  
17 reporting to the department of elementary and secondary education.
- 18          (x) To prepare standard accounting and auditing procedures for local school districts,  
19 except for the purposes of subdivision (3) of section 16-24-2 which shall be done in conjunction  
20 with the auditor general.
- 21          (xi) To prepare uniform budgeting procedures for local school districts.
- 22          (xii) To determine when special purpose grants made to local school districts shall be  
23 eligible for reimbursement through the school operations aid formula in accordance with chapter  
24 7 of this title, and to designate the purpose(s) for which the local school district may use the  
25 school operations aid reimbursement, including reimbursement on local matching funds used to  
26 support the special purpose grant. The commissioner shall promulgate and adopt rules and  
27 regulations to carry out the intent of this subsection.
- 28          (10) To approve and accredit elementary and secondary schools in accordance with the  
29 policy and regulations of the board of regents.
- 30          (11) To be responsible for the administration of policies, rules, and regulations of the  
31 board of regents with relation to the entire field of elementary and secondary education within the  
32 state not specifically granted to any other department, board, or agency and not incompatible with  
33 law.
- 34          (12) To receive from law enforcement agencies a list periodically of the names of Rhode

1 Island missing children and to disseminate these lists to local school districts.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would direct the board of regents for elementary and secondary education to  
2 establish school graduation requirements based on a holistic assessment of each student's  
3 readiness for graduation, made by a qualified group of professionals in each secondary school,  
4 and having reference, without limitation, to each student's course record, senior project or  
5 portfolio, and performance on statewide assessments.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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