

2018 -- H 8275

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LC005840
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Giarrusso, Serpa, McEntee, and Lombardi

Date Introduced: June 01, 2018

Referred To: House Labor

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-22 of the General Laws entitled "Curriculum [See Title 16
2 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding thereto
3 the following section:

4 **16-22-26.1. Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program.**

5 (a) Not later than July 1, 2019, the department of children, youth and families in
6 collaboration with the Rhode Island department of education, shall identify or develop a state-
7 wide sexual abuse, assault and harassment awareness and prevention program for use by local
8 and regional boards of education. Such program shall be implemented in each local and regional
9 school district and shall include:

10 (1) For teachers, instructional modules that may include, but not be limited to:

11 (i) Training regarding the prevention and identification of, and response to, child sexual
12 abuse and assault, and sexual harassment identification, prevention, reporting and addressing; and

13 (ii) Resources to further student, teacher and parental awareness regarding child sexual
14 abuse and assault and the prevention of such abuse and assault.

15 (2) For students, age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in grades
16 kindergarten to twelve (12), inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse, assault and sexual
17 harassment awareness and prevention that may include, but not be limited to:

18 (i) The skills to recognize:

19 (A) Child sexual abuse and assault and sexual harassment;

1 (B) Boundary violations including sexual rumors and unwanted forms of flirting,
2 touching and contact; and
3 (C) Ways offenders groom or desensitize victims; and
4 (ii) Strategies to:
5 (A) Promote disclosure;
6 (B) Reduce self-blame;
7 (C) Mobilize bystanders; and
8 (D) Maintain freedom from retaliation.
9 (3) A uniform child sexual abuse, assault and sexual harassment response policy and
10 reporting procedure that may include, but not be limited to:
11 (i) Actions that child victims of sexual abuse, assault and sexual harassment may take to
12 obtain assistance;
13 (ii) Intervention and counseling options for child victims of sexual abuse, assault and
14 sexual harassment to succeed in school; and
15 (iii) Uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse, assault and sexual
16 harassment to school staff members.
17 (b) Not later than October 1, 2021, each local and regional board of education shall
18 implement the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program identified or
19 developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.
20 (c) No student in grades kindergarten to twelve (12), inclusive, shall be required by any
21 local or regional board of education to participate in the sexual abuse, assault, sexual harassment
22 awareness and prevention program offered within the public schools. A written notification to the
23 local or regional board of education by the student's parent or legal guardian shall be sufficient to
24 exempt the student from such program in its entirety or from any portion thereof so specified by
25 the parent or legal guardian.
26 (d) If a student is exempted from the sexual abuse, assault and sexual harassment
27 awareness and prevention program pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the local or regional
28 board of education shall provide, during the period of time in which the student would otherwise
29 be participating in such program, an opportunity for other study or academic work.

30 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 -- CURRICULUM

1 This act would require the DCYF and the department of education to identify or develop
2 a program of age appropriate sexual abuse and sexual awareness education.

3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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