

2020 -- S 2186

LC003755

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION

Introduced By: Senators Quezada, Crowley, Bell, Euer, and Valverde

Date Introduced: February 04, 2020

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended  
2 by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 110

4 THE 2020 ONE STATE FOUR DISTRICT ACT

5 **16-110-1. Legislative findings.**

6 The General Assembly finds and declares the following:

7 (1) Rhode Island's economic future relies on the successful education of its children.

8 (2) Rhode Island's small geographic size in comparison to the other forty-nine (49) states  
9 is an asset which the state can utilize to its advantage in regard to education.

10 (3) Consolidation of the state's school districts as proposed in this one state four districts  
11 act would allow the state to mobilize the state's limited resources in a way that would optimize  
12 the educational opportunities offered by our state.

13 **16-110-2. Consolidation of school districts.**

14 (a) As used in this chapter, the term "public school district" means local educational  
15 agencies in Rhode Island operated by municipalities or the state, or any combination thereof, and  
16 those charter schools established pursuant to chapters 77.2, 77.3, and 77.4 of title 16. Mayoral  
17 academies are considered charter schools for purposes of this chapter.

18 (b) Effective August 1, 2023:

19 (1) All public school districts in this state shall be consolidated into one of four (4) school

1 districts aligned and organized by county, except that all public school districts within the  
2 counties of Newport and Bristol shall be consolidated into one district.

3 (2) The council on the department of elementary and secondary education shall maintain,  
4 publish, and annually review and update as necessary at least three (3) model curricula in the  
5 subjects of:

6 (i) Language arts;

7 (ii) Mathematics;

8 (iii) Science; and

9 (iv) Social studies and history. The curricula shall indicate the proposed grade and age-  
10 appropriate levels at which the curricula is expected to be taught; provided, that these grade and  
11 age levels shall be models and may be modified by teaching staff based upon the needs of  
12 particular students.

13 (3) Cities and towns and charter schools shall adopt one of the model curricula for use in  
14 the schools located within their municipal boundaries or in the charter schools. The state shall  
15 adopt one of the model curricula for use in the state schools. Cities and towns shall act through  
16 their school committees, state schools shall act through the department of education, and charter  
17 schools shall act through their board of directors.

18 **16-110-3. One statewide district.**

19 (a) All school districts shall be subject to governance by the council on elementary and  
20 secondary education (the "council") as provided for herein. Provided, local school committees  
21 may still be maintained by municipalities and boards of trustees may be maintained for charter  
22 schools, for the administration of schools on all matters not covered by the council.

23 (b) The council shall negotiate a base teacher salary scale for all teachers and support  
24 staff. This scale may be a sliding or adjustable scale based upon the number of students located  
25 within a district and/or upon other particular factors unique to a district. The council shall  
26 articulate such factors in making its scale. Provided, it is the intent of this chapter to provide all  
27 students in this state with a base level of financial support from the state.

28 (c) The council shall negotiate a statewide teacher contract for health care.

29 (d) Municipalities may provide for additional salary, health care, and other benefits,  
30 provided that any such additional benefits shall be funded by the municipality or revenue streams  
31 other than state aid.

32 (e) The school funding formula shall remain in effect, except that the state shall pay for  
33 all funding for out-of-district placements of students with learning differences or disabilities.  
34 Local school districts may conduct evaluations and make recommendations to the council as to

1 [when an out-of-district placement needs to be made, and may suggest the particular placement.](#)

2 [The final decision on such placement shall be made by the council.](#)

3 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on August 1, 2023.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION

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1           This act would combine all public school districts, and charter schools into one of four  
2 (4) school districts, based on counties effective August 21, 2023. The act also provides that the  
3 council on elementary and secondary education would establish statewide curricula, and negotiate  
4 statewide teacher contracts as to salary and healthcare. The act would also provide that the school  
5 funding formula would remain in effect, except that the state would pay for all out-of-district  
6 placements for students with learning differences.

7           This act would take effect on August 1, 2023.

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