

2021 -- H 5702

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LC002059  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Representatives Caldwell, Baginski, and Donovan

Date Introduced: February 24, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-21 of the General Laws entitled "Health and Safety of Pupils" is  
2 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **16-21-37. Basic emergency and response skills for teachers.**

4 (a) At least eighty percent (80%) of Rhode Island teachers in each district shall have been  
5 trained in the basic emergency and response skills ("BEARS") curriculum, including, hands-only  
6 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Heimlich maneuver, and bleeding control, within the last three (3)  
7 years.

8 (b) In the school year 2021-2022, the BEARS curriculum will also include safety training  
9 related to SARS-COV-2.

10 (c) The BEARS training requirements shall phase into effect over a three (3) year  
11 timeframe. One third (1/3) of all Rhode Island teachers shall be required to complete "BEARS"  
12 teacher training every year, until at least eighty percent (80%) of teachers in each district have been  
13 trained once during the school years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024.

14 (d) Time spent by teachers receiving initial and refresher training in BEARS shall count  
15 towards professional development requirements.

16 (e) The Rhode Island department of education will verify that the required percentage of  
17 teachers in each school district have been trained in the BEARS curriculum; however, each  
18 individual school district shall have autonomy over how the curriculum is implemented within each  
19 district.

1           (f) A teacher or other school personnel, who has completed BEARS training, who renders  
2 emergency care on school grounds, school buildings, or in school functions, shall not be liable to  
3 the person assisted, for civil damages for any injuries which result from acts or omissions by the  
4 person rendering the emergency care of administration of subjects covered by the BEARS  
5 curriculum, which may constitute ordinary negligence. The immunity provided in this subsection  
6 does not apply to acts or omissions constituting gross, willful or wanton negligence.

7           (g) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to require any teacher or other  
8 school personnel to render emergency first aid.

9           (h) Each school district shall, from funds not otherwise allocated during the fiscal year,  
10 provide funding for each faculty member trained, at a rate determined in the state budget.

11           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 -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

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- 1           This act would require that one third (1/3) of all Rhode Island teachers, for the next three
- 2 (3) years trained in the basic emergency and response skills curriculum ("BEARS"), specifically in
- 3 hand-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Heimlich maneuver, and bleeding control.
- 4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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