

2023 -- H 6051

LC001900

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Representatives Morales, McNamara, Cruz, Sanchez, Giraldo, and Casimiro

Date Introduced: March 03, 2023

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:

3 **16-21-42. Standards for closure or phase-out of a public school building.**

4 (a) As used in this section:

5 (1) "Closure of a public school" means the temporary or permanent ending, concluding,  
6 and finishing of use of a building as a public school building within which education services are  
7 provided, and includes the cessation of all public school related activities therein;

8 (2) "Phase-out of a public school" means a gradual process designed to lead up to the  
9 closure of a public school. "Phase-out of a public school" includes provisions for continued  
10 education during the time of the process, as well as a transition plan for staff at the public school;

11 (3) "Staff" includes teachers, department heads, administrators, maintenance personnel,  
12 food and cafeteria personnel, athletic and team personnel, and any other individuals employed at  
13 the public school building subject to the provisions of this section.

14 (b) Within seven (7) calendar days after a determination by a public school district to  
15 initiate either a closure of a public school building or a phase-out of a public school building within  
16 the district, the following information shall be provided on the district website's homepage, and via  
17 an email and written notice sent to a responsible adult for each student attending school within the  
18 building being phased-out and closed:

19 (1) A public, detailed, quantitative and qualitative report regarding building facility

1 conditions, the cost to repair the building, identification of possible uses of space for the building  
2 once it has been closed, including, but not limited to, lease, sale, demolition, and other, student  
3 enrollment trends, existing classroom sizes, the proposed timeline of the proposed closure, and an  
4 explanation describing the reasons for the proposed closure of the public school;

5 (2) A contingency transition plan regarding enrollment and transportation options for  
6 families and household units and students who will be impacted by the closure of the school; and

7 (3) A contingency transition plan for staff who will be impacted by the closure of the  
8 school.

9 (c) Within fourteen (14) days following the release of the report and contingency plans  
10 required pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the district shall hold and host at least three (3)  
11 meetings as follows:

12 (1) A meeting with staff to share details of the proposed public school closure;

13 (2) A meeting with the school's parent-teacher association, special education local advisory  
14 group, and any other parent or responsible adult groups which are active within the school; and

15 (3) A public forum to share and discuss the closure proposal with students, families,  
16 community members, and staff.

17 (d) Following the hosting of the meetings required pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
18 section, the district's school board, committee, or other governing body shall make a  
19 recommendation to either move forward with the proposed school closure or phase-out.

20 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 establish certain actions a public school district must follow as part of the
- 2 phase-out or closure of a public school building.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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