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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Senator E Morgan

Date Introduced: February 13, 2025

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-22-30, 16-22-31, 16-22-32 and 16-22-33 of the General Laws in
2 Chapter 16-22 entitled "Curriculum [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the Rhode Island Board of
3 Education Act]" are hereby repealed.

4 ~~**16-22-30. Statewide academic standards.**~~

5 ~~(a) The council on elementary and secondary education (the "council") shall direct the~~
6 ~~commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the "commissioner") to institute a process~~
7 ~~to develop statewide academic standards for the core subjects of mathematics, English language~~
8 ~~arts, science and technology, history and social studies, world languages, and the arts. This process~~
9 ~~shall:~~

10 ~~(1) Be open and consultative;~~

11 ~~(2) Include, but need not be limited to, a culturally and racially diverse group of classroom~~
12 ~~teachers and students; and~~

13 ~~(3) Include, but need not be limited to, reviewing and revising current standards, as well as~~
14 ~~adopting new ones, if deemed appropriate.~~

15 ~~(b) The commissioner shall develop the statewide academic standards pursuant to this~~
16 ~~section by no later than December 31, 2019, and again as required by the council's procedures set~~
17 ~~forth in subsection (f) of this section. The standards shall:~~

18 ~~(1) Cover grades prekindergarten through grade twelve (PK-12);~~

19 ~~(2) Clearly set forth the skills, competencies, and knowledge expected to be demonstrated~~

1 ~~by all students at the conclusion of individual grades or grade spans;~~

2 ~~(3) Be formulated so as to set high expectations for student performance;~~

3 ~~(4) Provide clear and specific examples that embody and reflect these high expectations;~~

4 ~~(5) Be constructed with due regard to the established research and recommendations of~~

5 ~~national organizations, to the best of similar efforts in other states, and to the level of skills,~~

6 ~~competencies, and knowledge possessed by typical students in the most educationally advanced~~

7 ~~nations. The skills, competencies, and knowledge set forth in the standards shall define the~~

8 ~~performance outcomes expected of both students directly entering the workforce and of students~~

9 ~~pursuing higher education. In addition, the skills, competencies, and knowledge set forth in the~~

10 ~~standards shall inform the design and implementation of the Rhode Island comprehensive~~

11 ~~assessment system (“RICAS”) in mathematics, English language arts, and science and technology.~~

12 ~~The RICAS shall align with federal law, be in place for no fewer than ten (10) years, and facilitate~~

13 ~~comparisons of students of other states and nations;~~

14 ~~(6) Be designed to instill respect for the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of this state,~~

15 ~~and for the contributions made by diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial groups to the life of this state;~~

16 ~~(7) Be designed to avoid perpetuating gender, cultural, ethnic, or racial stereotypes;~~

17 ~~(8) Reflect sensitivity to different learning styles;~~

18 ~~(9) Reflect sensitivity to impediments to learning, which may include issues related to, but~~

19 ~~not limited to, cultural, financial, emotional, health, and social factors; and~~

20 ~~(10) Be in a form readily comprehensible by the general public.~~

21 ~~(e) This section shall not require the abandonment of any standards already in place, so~~

22 ~~long as the commissioner determines that these standards meet the statewide goals contained~~

23 ~~herein.~~

24 ~~(d) The commissioner shall submit a copy of the standards to the council for approval at~~

25 ~~least sixty (60) days prior to the standards taking effect.~~

26 ~~(e) Upon approval, the council shall make the standards available to the public.~~

27 ~~(f) The council shall develop procedures for updating, improving, or refining standards~~

28 ~~pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall include a~~

29 ~~requirement that the council review and evaluate the standards regularly to ensure that the high~~

30 ~~quality of the standards is maintained. The review cycle shall begin in 2025, with subsequent~~

31 ~~reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years thereafter.~~

32 ~~(g) On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the~~

33 ~~commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,~~

34 ~~regarding the standards developed and reviewed pursuant to this section.~~

1 16-22-31. Curriculum frameworks.

2 ~~(a)(1) The council on elementary and secondary education (the “council”) shall direct the~~
3 ~~commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the “commissioner”) to institute a process~~
4 ~~to develop curriculum frameworks for mathematics, English language arts, science and technology,~~
5 ~~history and social studies, world languages, and the arts. This process shall:~~

6 ~~(i) Be open and consultative;~~

7 ~~(ii) Include, but need not be limited to, a culturally and racially diverse group of classroom~~
8 ~~teachers and students; and~~

9 ~~(iii) Include, but need not be limited to, reviewing and revising current frameworks, as well~~
10 ~~as developing new ones, if deemed appropriate.~~

11 ~~(2) The process may include, but need not be limited to, community groups, cultural~~
12 ~~organizations, parents, teacher preparation programs, and leading college and university figures in~~
13 ~~both subject matter disciplines and pedagogy.~~

14 ~~(b) The commissioner shall develop the curriculum frameworks pursuant to this section by~~
15 ~~no later than September 1, 2021, and again as required by the council’s procedures set forth in~~
16 ~~subsection (c) of this section. The curriculum frameworks developed by the commissioner shall:~~

17 ~~(1) Present broad, research-based pedagogical approaches and strategies to assist students~~
18 ~~develop the skills, competencies, and knowledge called for by the statewide standards provided in~~
19 ~~§ 16-22-30;~~

20 ~~(2) Provide sufficient detail to guide and inform processes for the education, professional~~
21 ~~development, certification, and evaluation of both active and aspiring teachers and administrators;~~

22 ~~(3) Provide sufficient detail to guide the implementation of student assessment instruments;~~

23 ~~(4) Be constructed to guide and assist teachers, administrators, publishers, software~~
24 ~~developers, and other interested parties in the development and selection of curricula, textbooks,~~
25 ~~technology, and other instructional materials, and in the design of pedagogical approaches and~~
26 ~~strategies for use in elementary, secondary, and career and technical schools;~~

27 ~~(5) Be aligned with the state’s commitment to college and career readiness;~~

28 ~~(6) Encourage demanding real-world application, multidisciplinary problem-solving,~~
29 ~~integration of academic and career and technical education curriculum, project-based learning,~~
30 ~~performance assessment, team teaching, and alignment of classroom instruction with work-based~~
31 ~~learning opportunities;~~

32 ~~(7) Promote better alignment with postsecondary curriculum and instruction, including, but~~
33 ~~not limited to, the expansion and/or use of dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities for high~~
34 ~~school students that help them with the postsecondary transition, persistence, and attainment of a~~

1 credential;

2 ~~(8) Encourage capstone projects and associated performance assessments that provide~~
3 ~~students the opportunity to demonstrate holistic proficiency with respect to research, cross-~~
4 ~~disciplinary problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and oral defense;~~

5 ~~(9) Present specific, pedagogical approaches and strategies to meet the academic and~~
6 ~~nonacademic needs of English learner, economically disadvantaged, special education, and~~
7 ~~academically advanced students;~~

8 ~~(10) Be designed to avoid perpetuating gender, cultural, ethnic, or racial stereotypes;~~

9 ~~(11) Reflect sensitivity to different learning styles;~~

10 ~~(12) Reflect sensitivity to impediments to learning, which may include issues related to,~~
11 ~~but not limited to, cultural, financial, emotional, health, and social factors; and~~

12 ~~(13) Be in a form readily comprehensible by the general public.~~

13 ~~(c) The commissioner shall submit a copy of the frameworks to the council for approval at~~
14 ~~least sixty (60) days prior to the frameworks taking effect.~~

15 ~~(d) Upon approval, the council shall make the frameworks available to the public.~~

16 ~~(e) The council shall develop procedures for updating, improving, or refining curriculum~~
17 ~~frameworks pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall~~
18 ~~include a requirement that the council review and evaluate the frameworks regularly to ensure that~~
19 ~~the high quality of the frameworks is maintained. The review cycle shall begin in 2025, with~~
20 ~~subsequent reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years thereafter.~~

21 ~~(f) On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the~~
22 ~~commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,~~
23 ~~regarding the curriculum frameworks developed and reviewed pursuant to this section.~~

24 **16-22-32. High quality curriculum and materials.**

25 ~~(a)(1) The council on elementary and secondary education (the "council") shall direct the~~
26 ~~commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the "commissioner") to institute a process~~
27 ~~for reviewing and identifying curriculum and materials for mathematics, English language arts, and~~
28 ~~science and technology that meet the following requirements:~~

29 ~~(i) Is aligned with the academic standards provided in § 16-22-30;~~

30 ~~(ii) Is aligned with the curriculum frameworks provided in § 16-22-31;~~

31 ~~(iii) Is aligned with the RICAS, or any other test that is adopted as a statewide standardized~~
32 ~~test; and~~

33 ~~(iv) Is of high quality.~~

34 ~~(2) The commissioner shall identify at least five (5) examples each of curricula for~~

1 ~~mathematics and English language arts pursuant to this section by no later than January 1, 2021,~~
2 ~~for science and technology pursuant to this section by no later than January 1, 2024, and again as~~
3 ~~required by the council's procedures set forth in subsection (a)(8) of this section. Once identified,~~
4 ~~the curricula shall be made available to the public, subject to copyright considerations.~~

5 ~~(3) The commissioner shall direct all local education agencies ("LEAs") to select one of~~
6 ~~the identified high quality curricula and materials by the time of their next adoption cycle, but in~~
7 ~~any case, no later than June 30, 2023, for mathematics and English language arts, and no later than~~
8 ~~June 30, 2025, for science and technology. LEAs shall select curriculum and materials that are~~
9 ~~responsive to the LEA's cultural and linguistic needs, and support culturally responsive practices.~~
10 ~~LEAs shall implement the high quality curricula and materials at the start of the school year that~~
11 ~~immediately follows the selection. If an LEA is unable to implement the high quality curricula and~~
12 ~~materials fully due to financial hardship, the commissioner may grant the LEA an extension of~~
13 ~~time, provided that the LEA demonstrates continued efforts to complete the implementation.~~

14 ~~(4) The commissioner shall institute a waiver process for LEAs that would like to use a~~
15 ~~curriculum other than any identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section. Part of that~~
16 ~~process may include, but is not limited to, asking the LEA to:~~

17 ~~(i) Develop local curriculum goals;~~

18 ~~(ii) Communicate the rationale for selecting the proposed curriculum over any of the~~
19 ~~curricula identified by the commissioner; and~~

20 ~~(iii) Engage a third party reviewer that has a proven track record of curriculum audits to~~
21 ~~review the proposed curriculum to ensure it aligns with state standards, establishes the scope and~~
22 ~~sequence of instruction, is of high quality, is culturally relevant, and to discuss any other strengths~~
23 ~~and weaknesses.~~

24 ~~(5) Waiver determinations made pursuant to subsection (a)(4) of this section shall be~~
25 ~~appealable to the board of education.~~

26 ~~(6) Any LEA that has at least seventy five percent (75%) of its students meeting~~
27 ~~expectations on state assessments and also has no student subgroup identified for targeted~~
28 ~~assistance under Rhode Island's accountability process may select and use curricula and materials~~
29 ~~other than any identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section for that subject area, only;~~
30 ~~provided, however, that if the LEA no longer has at least seventy five percent (75%) of its students~~
31 ~~meeting expectations on state assessments, or if any student subgroup is identified for targeted~~
32 ~~assistance under Rhode Island's accountability process, the LEA must select and implement one of~~
33 ~~the curricula identified by the commissioner pursuant to this section.~~

34 ~~(7) LEAs shall develop and execute a curriculum implementation plan that includes~~

1 professional development to ensure that all teachers and administrators are prepared to implement
2 the new curriculum with the necessary skill and knowledge.

3 (8) ~~The council shall develop procedures for updating the identification of curricula and~~
4 ~~materials pursuant to this section by no later than September 1, 2021. The procedures shall include~~
5 ~~a requirement that the council review and evaluate the identified curricula and materials regularly~~
6 ~~to ensure that the high quality of the curricula and materials is maintained. The review cycle shall~~
7 ~~begin in 2025, with subsequent reviews taking place in 2029, 2033, and every four (4) years~~
8 ~~thereafter.~~

9 (b) ~~On or before December 1, 2020, and annually thereafter on or before December 1, the~~
10 ~~commissioner shall report to the governor, president of the senate, and the speaker of the house,~~
11 ~~regarding the progress toward fulfilling the requirements of this section, including, but not limited~~
12 ~~to, the high quality curricula and materials identified, selected, and implemented by LEAs pursuant~~
13 ~~to this section.~~

14 (c) ~~The state shall establish a professional development fund to provide professional~~
15 ~~learning to LEAs that elect to use prioritized curricula and materials in mathematics and English~~
16 ~~language arts as identified by the commissioner.~~

17 (d) ~~For the purposes of this section, “local education agencies” (“LEAs”) shall include all~~
18 ~~of the following within the state of Rhode Island:~~

- 19 (1) ~~Public school districts;~~
- 20 (2) ~~Regional school districts;~~
- 21 (3) ~~State operated schools;~~
- 22 (4) ~~Regional collaborative schools; and~~
- 23 (5) ~~Charter schools.~~

24 **16-22-33. Curriculum implementation accountability.**

25 (a) ~~Once local education agencies (“LEAs”) select high quality curriculum and materials~~
26 ~~pursuant to § 16-22-32, the department of elementary and secondary education (the “department”)~~
27 ~~shall identify an LEA assistance partner from within the department to provide any and all support~~
28 ~~requested by the LEA or individual schools within the LEA regarding access to, implementation~~
29 ~~of, and professional development for the curriculum and materials.~~

30 (b) ~~The LEA assistance partner shall meet with teachers, principals, administrators, or other~~
31 ~~school officials of the LEA to which they are assigned at a school within the LEA on a regular~~
32 ~~basis, which shall be no less frequently than every three (3) months, to discuss the progress toward~~
33 ~~implementing the curriculum and materials effectively. Areas of discussion may include, but are~~
34 ~~not limited to:~~

- 1 ~~(1) Barriers to learning and plans to eliminate said barriers;~~
- 2 ~~(2) Best practices regarding pedagogical techniques given the diversity of the student~~
- 3 ~~population being served;~~
- 4 ~~(3) Where to locate additional professional development resources; and~~
- 5 ~~(4) Implementation strategies that have been successful to share with other LEAs that are~~
- 6 ~~using the same curriculum and materials.~~
- 7 ~~(e) The LEA assistance partner shall tour all schools within its assigned LEA with at least~~
- 8 ~~one teacher and the principal or assistant principal:~~
- 9 ~~(1) To observe challenges teachers are facing while implementing the curriculum and~~
- 10 ~~materials;~~
- 11 ~~(2) To discuss with the teacher and principal or assistant principal ideas to help resolve~~
- 12 ~~those challenges; and~~
- 13 ~~(3) To answer any questions regarding the curriculum or implementation thereof.~~
- 14 ~~(d) The LEA assistance partner shall have follow up meetings at schools within their~~
- 15 ~~assigned LEA as often as requested by an individual school or the entire LEA to ensure all educators~~
- 16 ~~are comfortable implementing the curriculum effectively.~~
- 17 ~~(e) The LEA assistance partner shall report to the department no less frequently than every~~
- 18 ~~three (3) months regarding the status of curriculum implementation at the schools within their~~
- 19 ~~assigned LEA.~~
- 20 ~~(f) The commissioner is hereby authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary~~
- 21 ~~to implement the provisions of this section.~~
- 22 ~~(g) For the purposes of this section, "local education agencies" ("LEAs") shall include all~~
- 23 ~~of the following within the state of Rhode Island:~~
- 24 ~~(1) Public school districts;~~
- 25 ~~(2) Regional school districts;~~
- 26 ~~(3) State operated schools;~~
- 27 ~~(4) Regional collaborative schools; and~~
- 28 ~~(5) Charter schools.~~

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

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LC000380
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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

1 This act would repeal in their entirety sections 16-22-30, 16-22-31, 16-22-32 and 16-22-
2 33, all of which relate to the establishment of statewide academic standards in mathematics, English
3 language arts, science and technology, history, social studies, world languages and the arts and their
4 implementation into the curriculum of all public schools.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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