

2026 -- S 3137

LC006150

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- TEACHERS' TENURE

Introduced By: Senator Louis P. DiPalma

Date Introduced: March 20, 2026

Referred To: Senate Labor & Gaming

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-13-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-13 entitled "Teachers'  
2 Tenure" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **16-13-5. Suspension for cause — Payment for period suspended.**

4 (a) Section 16-13-4 shall not prevent the suspension of a teacher for good and just cause.  
5 Prior to the suspension of a teacher as provided in this section, the school committee shall hold a  
6 pre-suspension hearing to determine if a suspension is warranted, and at the pre-suspension hearing,  
7 shall consider any available evidence and afford the teacher or his or her counsel an opportunity to  
8 respond to that evidence. In the event a teacher is suspended or otherwise not permitted to perform  
9 his or her duties prior to the ~~presuspension~~ pre-suspension hearing, then the teacher shall be paid  
10 his or her regular salary during that period.

11 (b) Whenever a teacher is suspended by a school committee, the school committee shall  
12 furnish the teacher with a complete statement of the cause(s) of the suspension and, upon request,  
13 shall afford the teacher a hearing and appeal pursuant to the procedure set forth in § 16-13-4. If the  
14 teacher shall be vindicated as a result of the hearing or any appeal the teacher shall be paid in full  
15 for the period of suspension, and provided further, that during the period of suspension, all medical  
16 and insurance benefits shall remain in full force and effect. However, if the teacher is placed on  
17 suspension pending the outcome of a criminal investigation or prosecution, and convicted of a  
18 felony, as defined in § 11-1-2, the teacher shall repay to the school district the amount of the salary  
19 paid during the period of suspension, less any amounts paid to satisfy all taxes and any employee

1 [benefits.](#)

2 (c) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to prohibit or at any time to have  
3 prohibited a school committee in a municipality or regional school district with an elected school  
4 committee, or the chief executive officer in a municipality with an appointed school committee,  
5 from agreeing, in a collective bargaining agreement, to the arbitration of disputes arising out of the  
6 suspension of a teacher pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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1           This act would require any teacher under suspension for criminal conduct to repay the  
2 school district for any salary received if convicted of a felony, less any amounts paid to satisfy  
3 taxes and employee benefits. It also makes one typographical correction.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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