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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Introduced By: Senator Tiara T. Mack

Date Introduced: March 07, 2025

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-7.1 of the General Laws entitled "The Paul W. Crowley Rhode
2 Island Student Investment Initiative [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — The Rhode Island Board of
3 Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

4 **16-7.1-5.3. Establishment of school-based councils and a central advisory board.**

5 In order to promote stronger relationships and foster even further effective communication
6 between local schools, the communities they serve, and the Providence public school board, there
7 shall be established school-based councils at each public school in the city, and a central advisory
8 board consisting of a member from each school-based council, to work advise and promote better
9 communication with, the Providence public school board.

10 **16-7.1-5.4. Alternative local school control for school-based management in**
11 **Providence using school-based councils.**

12 Upon transfer of control of PPSD to the City of Providence, or at an earlier date as a part
13 of an agreed upon transition plan, PPSD shall form local elected school-based councils at each
14 PPSD school. These local school-based councils shall remain in place unless and until the city
15 charter commission recommends a change in governance structure for PPSD.

16 **16-7.1-5.5. Definitions for school-based councils in the city of Providence.**

17 As used in this section and in §§ 16-7.1-5.3, 16-7.1-5.4, 16-7.1-5.6, 16-7.1-5.7, 16-7.1-5.8,
18 16-7.1-5.9, and 16-57.1-5.10:

1 (1) “Building” means the physical locus of the school, sometimes colloquially referred to
2 as the “brick and mortar” building; provided, in a school that operates a remote, virtual or tele-
3 program, the term shall also include any students enrolled in and persons working within that
4 program.

5 (2) “Board” or “PPSB” means the Providence public school board.

6 (3) “Central advisory board” means the body established pursuant to § 16-7.1-5.10.

7 (4) “Commissioner” means the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

8 (5) “Department” means the department of elementary and secondary education.

9 (6) “District” or “PPSD” means the Providence public school district.

10 (7) “School-based council” means a school-based governance body, operated and located
11 at the local school level, within a single school building, as described in § 16-7.1-5.6.

12 **16-7.1-5.6. School-based council.**

13 (a) Except when otherwise authorized by the Providence public school board, the
14 composition of the school-based council, which shall be in every single school building, shall be
15 as follows:

16 (1) The building principal;

17 (2) Up to six (6) parents of students in the building; provided that, the term “parent”
18 includes any parent or legal guardian of children enrolled in the school;

19 (3) Two (2) teachers in the building;

20 (4) Two (2) residents of the community served by the school;

21 (5) In high schools, one full-time student in the building in good academic standing.

22 (b) The term of office for school-based council members shall be two (2) years, except:

23 (1) Building principals shall serve for so long as they are building principals; and

24 (2) Student members shall serve for one year.

25 **16-7.1-5.7. Selection of membership.**

26 (a) Members of the school-based council shall be selected as follows:

27 (1) The principal shall be an automatic appointment by virtue of the position.

28 (2) A parent member, which includes both a parent and a guardian, shall be selected from
29 among all parents and guardians of students enrolled in the building, provided, a parent or guardian
30 may nominate themselves or be nominated by another parent or guardian for membership, and shall
31 be elected by parents and guardians;

32 (3) Teacher members shall be selected from an election of all school staff members in the
33 building;

34 (4) Resident members from the community shall be nominated by the other members of

1 the school-based council provided that a resident member shall be a resident of Providence; and

2 (5) Student members shall be elected by the student body.

3 (b) In April of each school year, the schools shall develop a list of candidates for whom
4 elections are required for that year for membership on the school-based council. In the following
5 May, all elections required for membership on the school-based council shall be conducted.

6 (c) The school-based council shall convene an organizational meeting no later than June
7 15th following the election, and shall meet at least two (2) more times during the ensuing academic
8 year.

9 **16-7.1-5.8. General powers and duties of school-based councils.**

10 (a) School-based councils shall have the following general powers and duties:

11 (1) Approve a school improvement plan and submit the plan to the PPSB;

12 (2) At least twice a year, the principal shall publicly report to the entire school community
13 on the progress and problems of implementing the school improvement plan. The school
14 community shall be afforded the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the school
15 improvement plan;

16 (3) Approve an expenditure plan and submit the plan to the PPSB. The expenditure plan
17 shall be consistent with and subject to the terms of any contract for services with a third party
18 entered into by the PPSB. The expenditure plan shall also be consistent with applicable law,
19 collective bargaining agreements, PPSD policies and standards. The expenditure plan shall be
20 administered by the principal;

21 (4) Approve transfer allocations within funds via a super majority, which means fifty
22 percent (50%) of the council plus two (2) more; provided that, such transfer is approved by the
23 principal and is consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreements;

24 (5) Convene at least two (2) well-publicized meetings annually to present the proposed
25 expenditure plan and the school improvement plan to the school community. At these meetings,
26 the school-based council shall provide an opportunity for public comment;

27 (6) Hold an organizational meeting to elect a chairperson, who shall be a parent, and elect
28 a secretary and establish the regular meeting schedule for the year. The organizational meeting is
29 to be held no later than June 15 of each year and at least two (2) times thereafter as provided in
30 §16-7.1-5.7;

31 (7) Approve fundraising proposals by external organizations using school facilities;

32 (8) Approve purchases to be made with any internal school accounts funds consistent with
33 the requirements of the PPSB rules or policies. Additional approval by the PPSB or chief
34 purchasing officer may also be necessary;

- 1 (9) Make recommendations to the principal or academy superintendent for appointments
2 to fill vacant, additional, or newly created teacher positions at the school;
- 3 (10) Make recommendations to the principal or academy superintendent concerning
4 textbook selection and curriculum development consistent with the system-wide curriculum
5 objectives contained in the school improvement plan;
- 6 (11) Evaluate the allocation of teaching resources and the assignment/deployment of
7 certified and uncertified staff that is consistent with the instructional objectives listed in the school
8 improvement plan;
- 9 (12) Make recommendations to the principal or superintendent for reallocation of teaching
10 and non-teaching staff resources based on this evaluation;
- 11 (13) Advise the principal or superintendent regarding attendance and disciplinary policies
12 for the school, consistent with the board's student code of conduct/discipline policy;
- 13 (14) Comply with chapter 46 of title 42 ("open meetings"), and chapter 2 of title 38 ("access
14 to public records") and other applicable state and federal laws, as well as all applicable collective
15 bargaining agreements, court orders, and board rules and policies;
- 16 (15) Make public the names and contact information of its members;
- 17 (16) Advise the principal or academy superintendent regarding granting the use of school
18 facilities such as assembly halls and classrooms for social and educational activities;
- 19 (17) Encourage participation of parents and community members in school events and
20 school volunteer activities;
- 21 (18) Provide parents and community members with a forum to discuss important school
22 and community-related issues and to address school leaders;
- 23 (19) Assist school leaders in the identification and development of community resources
24 for the school and students by reaching out to government agencies, local businesses and
25 community organizations to obtain information and resources; and
- 26 (20) Assist school leaders in the promotion of the school, its staff and students.
- 27 (b) A school-based council shall not have the authority:
- 28 (1) To reject or alter any collective bargaining agreement or any obligations thereunder
29 including, but not limited to, payment of wages and benefits;
- 30 (2) To eliminate or alter any rights or obligations, as provided in chapter 9.3 of title 28
31 ("certified school teachers' arbitration") or 9.4 of title 28 ("municipal employees' arbitration")
32 including, but not limited to, the duty to bargain; and
- 33 (3) To hire or terminate school department personnel.
- 34 **16-7.1-5.9. Manner of operation.**

1 (a) No action by a school-based council shall be valid unless approved by a vote of a
2 majority of those present at a meeting with a quorum. A quorum of the full membership of a
3 school-based council is fifty percent (50%) plus one.

4 (b) School-based councils may adopt rules, bylaws and policies necessary to conduct their
5 business in an efficient manner that are not inconsistent with PPSB rules or policies or applicable
6 state or federal laws.

7 (c) School-based councils shall annually:

8 (1) Elect a chairperson who shall be the parent or legal guardian of a child attending the
9 school, and may elect a vice-chairperson;

10 (2) Elect a secretary; and

11 (3) Adopt and publish a calendar of regular meetings.

12 (d) The provisions of §§ 16-7.1-5.3 through 16-7.1-5.10 shall be deemed specific
13 provisions applicable to the city of Providence only, and as such shall supersede any provisions to
14 the contrary which are general provisions including, but not limited to, provisions contained in
15 chapters 2 and 97 of title 16.

16 **16-7.1-5.10. Central advisory board.**

17 (a) The purpose of the central advisory board shall be to promote and enhance strong
18 communication, interaction, and relationships between the individual schools in the PPSD and the
19 Providence school board.

20 (b) Each school-based board shall elect from among their members a member to serve as a
21 member of a central advisory board. Every school in the Providence public school district shall
22 have a separate member on the central advisory board. The central advisory board shall elect eleven
23 (11) persons from among its membership to serve as an executive board. The executive board shall
24 select from among its membership a chair, a vice-chair, and a secretary. The remaining members
25 of the executive board shall be deemed “delegates.” The executive board shall act as leadership for
26 the central advisory board. The central advisory board shall act as both a conduit to and in an
27 advisory capacity to the Providence school board.

28 (c) Members of the central advisory board shall serve a term of one year. Any member
29 shall be eligible for reappointment to the central advisory board.

30 (d) The central advisory board shall meet at least two (2) times during the academic school
31 year.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT
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- 1 This act would enable local school-based councils to be organized so as to enhance and
2 promote more school-based management and control, and to enhance communication between the
3 Providence school board and the individual schools.
4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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