

2016 -- S 2867

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LC005197
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- PUBLIC PREPARATORY ACADEMIES

Introduced By: Senators Pichardo, Crowley, Metts, Gallo, and Goodwin

Date Introduced: March 31, 2016

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-3.1 of the General Laws entitled "Cooperative Service Among
2 School Districts [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
3 amended by adding thereto the following section:

4 **16-3.1-21. Public preparatory academies.** -- (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any
5 general or special law to the contrary, the school committees of the cities of Providence and
6 Central Falls are authorized and empowered to initiate cooperative efforts to provide alternative,
7 diploma-granting secondary education programs for students ages fourteen (14) to twenty-one
8 (21) achieving limited success in traditional settings and to take steps necessary to facilitate these
9 cooperative efforts including, but not limited to, the utilization of technology on a collaborative
10 basis.

11 (b) The purpose of this section is to further enable the school committees of the cities of
12 Providence and Central Falls to:

13 (1) Support students at risk of school failure, with a special focus on the diverse needs of
14 urban students, to create an environment for individual growth, and to cultivate social and
15 emotional development;

16 (2) Offer a rigorous and relevant standards-driven experiential learning community, and
17 provide college and career preparatory education based on guided, project-based core curriculum
18 with an emphasis on education, human services, and community development; and

19 (3) Provide an alternative learning environment for disconnected and at-risk students

1 desiring to complete their academic careers in a setting that offers comprehensive support
2 services, accelerated academic curriculum, leadership development, and life skills that will enable
3 them to become resilient, self-sufficient adults.

4 (c) Students attending these academies will do so on a full-time basis with the costs for
5 their education at the academies being shared by the state and the district of residence as
6 described in §16-7.2-5.

7 (d) These academies shall be operated as local education agencies and each shall be
8 governed by a board of trustees. With the exception of those powers and duties reserved by the
9 commissioner of elementary and secondary education and the board of education, the board of
10 trustees shall have the powers and duties of school committees. The YouthBuild Preparatory
11 Academy shall be operated under the provisions of this chapter.

12 (e) Composition of the board of trustees – The board of trustees of the YouthBuild
13 Preparatory Academy shall consist of:

14 (1) One appointee of the board of trustees of the Central Falls school district; and

15 (2) One appointee of the school board of the city of Providence. The board of education
16 shall appoint the remaining members of the board of trustees of the YouthBuild Preparatory
17 Academy with input from the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. Prior to
18 enrolling students, the board of trustees shall present a plan for the governance, administration,
19 and operation of the YouthBuild Preparatory Academy, including the nature and extent of
20 parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of
21 the YouthBuild Preparatory Academy, and the means of ensuring accountability to the
22 commissioner, the sending school districts, and the board of education.

23 (f) The preparatory academies shall be eligible to receive other aids, grants, Medicaid
24 revenue, and any other revenue according to Rhode Island law, as though it were a school district.
25 Federal aid received by the state shall be used to benefit students in the preparatory academies, if
26 the school qualifies for the aid, as though it were a school district.

27 (g) Preparatory academies authorized under this section shall be subject to educational
28 and financial standards and reporting as deemed appropriate by the department of elementary and
29 secondary education.

30 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 -- PUBLIC PREPARATORY ACADEMIES

1 This act would authorize the Providence and Central Falls school committees to initiate
2 corporate efforts to provide alternative diploma-granting secondary education programs for
3 students between the ages of fourteen (14) and twenty-one (21), through utilization of technology,
4 on a collaborative basis.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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