

2014 -- S 3138

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION TO CREATE AND ADOPT A MODEL COMPETENCY-
BASED LEARNING POLICY

Introduced By: Senators Picard, DiPalma, and Pearson

Date Introduced: June 20, 2014

Referred To: Placed on Senate Calendar

1 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education defines competency-based
2 learning as a model of student learning that focuses on student mastery or understanding of
3 academic content in place of seat time; and

4 WHEREAS, Competency-based strategies provide flexibility in the way that credit can
5 be earned and provides students with personalized learning opportunities, according to the United
6 States Department of Education; and

7 WHEREAS, Competency-based learning can benefit elementary and secondary students,
8 adult learners and post-secondary students, according to the National Conference of State
9 Legislatures and the CompetencyWorks Collaborative; and

10 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Education, strategies for
11 competency-based learning include online and blended learning, dual enrollment, early college
12 high schools, project-based and community-based learning, and credit recovery; and

13 WHEREAS, Many states have implemented competency-based or proficiency-based
14 options for student learning to decrease high school dropouts, to improve student achievement, to
15 provide alternative pathways to graduation and to better prepare students for college and careers,
16 according to the National Conference of State Legislatures; and

17 WHEREAS, According to the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, low-performing
18 schools, state and district budget deficits, multiple pathways to graduation and the availability of
19 online learning are some reasons to implement a competency-based model in our schools; and

1 WHEREAS, Implementing competency-based pathways and models require effective
2 frameworks for school districts, along with appropriate mechanisms to assess competencies; and

3 WHEREAS, The Senate "Rhode to Work" legislative action plan recognized the
4 importance of the implementation of competency-based learning in our entire public school
5 system; now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
7 hereby respectfully requests that the Board of Education, the Department of Elementary and
8 Secondary Education and the Office of Postsecondary Education adopt a competency-
9 based/proficiency-based learning policy and a model district policy designed to increase
10 programmatic opportunities for students in both secondary and post-secondary education to earn
11 credits through the demonstration of competency; and be it further,

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the Department of
13 Elementary and Secondary Education issue guidance on the application of the policy in areas
14 including, but not limited to, virtual learning, career and technical education, and foreign
15 languages; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the policy shall indicate
17 that any seat time freed up by the demonstration of competency must be used to advance the
18 academic and/or technical training of students, including, but not limited to, tutoring or other
19 supports for areas a student may require, AP courses, dual enrollment, and internships and
20 apprenticeships. No student shall be allowed to use the available seat time as free time unless
21 otherwise approved by the school district and the Department of Elementary and Secondary
22 Education; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That this Senate respectfully requests that the Department of Elementary
24 and Secondary Education and the Office of the Post-Secondary Commissioner shall make
25 available the aforementioned model district policy to public higher education institutions, school
26 districts and school committees upon approval; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
28 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the chairperson of the Board of Education,
29 Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Commissioner of Post-Secondary
30 Education.

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