

2014 -- H 7755

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, O'Brien, Walsh, Ferri, and Amore

Date Introduced: February 27, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-77-2.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-77 entitled
2 "Establishment of Charter Public Schools [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of
3 Education Act]" is hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-77-2.1. Definitions.** -- As used in this chapter, the following words shall have the
5 following meanings:

6 (1) "District charter schools" means schools created by existing public schools, groups of
7 public school personnel, public school districts, or a group of school districts.

8 (2) "Independent charter schools" means schools created by: (I) Rhode Island nonprofit
9 organizations provided that these nonprofit organizations shall have existed for at least two (2)
10 years and must exist for a substantial reason other than to operate a school; or (ii) Colleges or
11 universities within the State of Rhode Island.

12 (3) "Mayoral academies" means schools created by a mayor of any city or town within
13 the State of Rhode Island, acting by or through a nonprofit organization (regardless of the time
14 said nonprofit organization is in existence) to establish a mayoral academy as hereinafter
15 described in chapter 16-77.4 ("Mayoral Academies"). For purposes of this chapter the term
16 "mayor" shall include any elected town administrator.

17 (4) "Charter public schools" means district charter schools, independent charter schools,
18 or mayoral academies.

19 (5) "Board of regents" means the Rhode Island board of regents for elementary and

1 secondary education.

2 (6) "Commissioner" means the Rhode Island commissioner of elementary and secondary
3 education.

4 (7) "Sending school district" means the district where the student attending or planning
5 to attend a charter public school resides.

6 (8) "Virtual schooling" means the teaching of courses through online methods with online
7 instructors, rather than with the instructor and student being physically present at the same
8 physical location at the same time. "Virtual schooling" includes, without limitation, instruction
9 provided by full-time, online virtual schools or virtual-blended schools.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 16-77 of the General Laws entitled "Establishment of Charter
11 Public Schools [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
12 amended by adding thereto the following section:

13 **16-77-13. Moratorium on virtual schooling.** – From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017,
14 there is a moratorium on the establishment of charter public schools with virtual schooling
15 components. This moratorium shall not apply to a charter public school with virtual schooling
16 components existing or approved prior to July 1, 2014, or to the renewal of the charter of a
17 charter public school with virtual schooling components already approved prior to July 1, 2014.

18 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO EDUCATION - ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1 This act would define virtual schooling, and impose a three (3) year moratorium on the
2 establishment of charter public schools with virtual schooling components, commencing on July
3 1, 2014. This moratorium would not apply to charter public schools with virtual schooling
4 components that exist or are approved prior to July 1, 2014.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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