

2020 -- S 2174

LC003922

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- MAYORAL ACADEMIES

Introduced By: Senators Pearson, Seveney, Satchell, Sheehan, and Gallo

Date Introduced: February 04, 2020

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-77.4-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-77.4 entitled
2 "Mayoral Academies [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is
3 hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-77.4-2. Procedure for creation and expansion of a mayoral academy.**

5 (a) Any persons or entities eligible to establish a mayoral academy may submit a
6 proposed charter, or an amendment to a charter for an expansion, to the commissioner. For
7 purposes of this chapter, "expansion" shall be an increase in total enrollment; an increase in the
8 grade levels previously authorized in the charter; or the addition of a school district to the
9 catchment area. The proposed charter shall:

10 (1) Be submitted to the commissioner no later than December 1st of the school year
11 before the school year in which the mayoral academy is to be established;

12 (2) Describe a plan for education, including the mission, objective, method of providing a
13 basic education, measurable student academic goals that the mayoral academy will meet, and
14 process for improving student learning and fulfilling the charter and fulfilling state and national
15 educational goals and standards;

16 (3) Provide a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction to students per
17 year;

18 (4) Indicate performance criteria that will be used to measure student learning and to
19 comply with the charter, state, and national educational goals and standards;

1 (5) Include an agreement to provide a yearly report to parents, the community, the school
2 committee of the sending districts, and the commissioner, that indicates the progress made by the
3 mayoral academy during the previous year in meeting the charter objectives;

4 (6) Present a plan for the governance, administration, and operation of the mayoral
5 academy, including the manner in which the governing board of the school will be chosen, the
6 nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the
7 governance and operation of the mayoral academy, and the means of ensuring accountability to
8 the commissioner, the sending school district(s), and the council on elementary and secondary
9 education;

10 (7) Identify the building that will house the mayoral academy and from whom and under
11 what terms and conditions it is to be provided;

12 (8) Describe what support services will be provided by the sending school district(s) and
13 under what terms and conditions those services are to be provided, and describe what support
14 services the mayoral academy will obtain directly from third parties and, to the extent known,
15 under what terms and conditions those services are to be provided;

16 (9) Explain the procedures that will be followed to ensure the health and safety of pupils
17 and staff;

18 (10) Describe enrollment procedures, including the permissible criteria for admission in
19 accordance with applicable state and federal law, along with a policy, or policies, that outline
20 outreach and recruitment programs to encourage the enrollment of a diverse student population;

21 In addition, mayoral academies must reflect the demographics of the sending district(s) in
22 terms of special education, English language learners, and students who qualify for free and
23 reduced price school meals. No new students shall be enrolled in a mayoral academy or taken
24 from waiting lists until equalized demographic numbers are met. Each mayoral academy shall:

25 (i) Continuously readjust their pupil admissions to reflect this requirement;

26 (ii) Not admit a pupil or pupils not in conformance with the demographic requirements
27 set out in this section;

28 (iii) Certify to the department of elementary and secondary education and the general
29 assembly, on a quarterly basis, that its admissions policy and pupil demographics are in
30 conformance with the demographic requirements of this section; and

31 (iv) Submit an annual report to the department of elementary and secondary education
32 and the general assembly detailing the demographic breakdown of all pupils and the length of
33 time such pupils attended the mayoral academy during said school year;

34 (11) Explain the student discipline procedures;

1 (12) Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed mayoral academy and
2 its employees, including the terms and conditions of employment and the qualifications that the
3 employees must meet. Teachers and administrators in mayoral academies must be certified
4 pursuant to state law and regulation.

5 (13) Each mayoral academy established pursuant to this chapter may, by written notice to
6 the commissioner of elementary and secondary education, elect to have this subsection apply (or
7 not apply) to its teachers, administrators, and employees:

8 (i) Teachers and administrators in a mayoral academy shall be entitled to prevailing
9 wages and benefits as enjoyed by other public school teachers and administrators;

10 (ii) Teachers and administrators in a mayoral academy shall ~~be entitled to~~ participate in
11 the state teachers' retirement system ~~under chapter 8 of title 36;~~

12 (iii) Employment in a mayoral academy shall be considered "service" as that term is
13 defined in chapter 16 of this title.

14 (14) Identify, with particularity, the state laws, state regulations, and school district rules
15 from which variances are sought in order to facilitate operation of the mayoral academy. Explain
16 the reasons for each variance and the alternative method by which the concern that gave rise to
17 the regulation or provision will be addressed;

18 (15) Provide a financial plan, including a proposed budget for the term of the charter, and
19 an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the mayoral academy, and the
20 manner in which the funds allocated to the mayoral academy will be managed and disbursed;

21 (16) Provide procedures by which teaching personnel and parents can legally challenge
22 decisions of the governing board of the mayoral academy that do not conform to the mayoral
23 academy's charter;

24 (17) Provide a copy of the proposed bylaws of the mayoral academy; and

25 (18) Provide written support from the town or city council(s) in the proposed catchment
26 area if required pursuant to § 16-77-5.1.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- MAYORAL ACADEMIES

1 This act would require the student populations of mayoral academies to reflect the
2 combined demographics of the sending district(s) in terms of the number of students in special
3 education, who are English language learners, and who qualify for free and reduced price school
4 meals.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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