

2013 -- H 5536

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives McNamara, Ferri, Diaz, Azzinaro, and Abney

Date Introduced: February 14, 2013

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Legislative findings and direction. The general assembly hereby finds and  
2 declares as follows:

3           (1) The Rhode Island general assembly recognizes that progress has been made in  
4 helping students transfer credits between and across the three (3) state public post-secondary  
5 institutions of higher education, including the community college of Rhode Island, Rhode Island  
6 college, and the University of Rhode Island; and

7           (2) The general assembly also recognizes that the new website [www.ritransfers.org](http://www.ritransfers.org)  
8 further illustrates that many programs and course transfer and articulation agreements are already  
9 in place; and

10           (3) Directs the office of higher education to develop and implement a promotional  
11 campaign designed to make the information and tools available at Rhode Island transfers known  
12 to high school students, guidance counselors, college students, college personnel, families and  
13 interested citizens and continue to develop Rhode Island transfers with additional tools that will  
14 enable students to have the information needed for planning to meet their educational goals  
15 through transfer.

16           ~~(3)~~(4) The board of education and/or the board of governors for higher education,  
17 whichever is in existence or if both are inexistence, then working jointly, shall identify existing  
18 barriers to transferring courses between and amongst the three (3) public post-secondary  
19 institutions of higher education in the state and remove such barriers when and where possible so

1 as to increase the number of transferrable courses and credits and to facilitate greater ease for  
2 students in transferring credits between and across the said state public post-secondary  
3 institutions of higher education. The board of education and/or the board of governors for higher  
4 education, shall first report the progress of this initiative to the speaker of the house and the  
5 president of the senate on or before March 1, 2014, and continuing annually thereafter on or  
6 before March 1.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 16-97 of the General Laws entitled "The Rhode Island Board of  
8 Education Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

9 **16-97-7. Best practice replication.** -- The board shall require all two (2) and four (4)  
10 year public higher education institutions to replicate best practices in remediation and to identify  
11 and reduce the use of methods which have been found to be ineffective in preparing or retaining  
12 students or which have been found to delay students from enrollment in college-level courses.

13 In identifying and establishing the best practices in remediation to ensure that all students  
14 complete post-secondary higher education level work that will lead to a post-secondary credential  
15 of value, the board shall consider and be guided by the following principles:

16 (1) Completion of a set of gateway courses for a program of study is a critical measure of  
17 success toward post-secondary higher education completion;

18 (2) The content in required gateway courses should align with a student's academic  
19 program of study, particularly, but not limited, in the area of mathematics;

20 (3) Enrollment in a gateway college-level course should be the default placement for  
21 many more students than is current practice;

22 (4) Additional academic support should be integrated with a gateway college-level course  
23 content as a co-requisite, and not as a prerequisite;

24 (5) Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work require  
25 accelerated routes into programs of study;

26 (6) Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in  
27 gateway courses and programs of study; and

28 (7) Students should enter a meta-major when they enroll in a public post-secondary  
29 institution of higher education and start a program of study in their first year, in order to  
30 maximize their prospects of earning a degree from a public post-secondary institution of higher  
31 education.

32 (8) Provided, that the general assembly recognizes the value of academic freedom,  
33 classroom creativity, and the need for flexibility in working with students. Nothing herein shall  
34 be construed to prevent or impair teachers from exercising such academic freedom, classroom

1 creativity, or flexibility in their work with students.

2 **16-97-8. Reverse transfer policy.** -- (a) The board of education in consultation with the  
3 department of higher education shall develop a common core of general education courses which  
4 shall be accepted at the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College and the  
5 University of Rhode Island so as to prohibit institutions from requiring students to complete the  
6 same courses or their equivalent twice.

7 (b) The board is empowered and directed to develop a statewide policy to foster reverse  
8 transfers which would enable a student who has accumulated sufficient hours in combination  
9 from multiple public institutions authorized to grant an associate degree to be awarded an  
10 associate degree based on the completion of said hours without any adverse impact on the  
11 transferring student.

12 **16-97-9. Progress reporting.** -- The board shall include in its annual report to the  
13 governor and general assembly all campus-level data on student persistence and progress toward  
14 implementing revised remediation, transfer, and retention practices, and the feasibility of  
15 establishing a transferable general education program or a common educational program for all  
16 public post-secondary institutions of higher education.

17 **16-97-10 Joint admissions agreement.** -- The general assembly directs the office of  
18 higher education in conjunction with the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island  
19 College, and the University of Rhode Island to provide a joint admissions agreement designed to  
20 provide more education options for students. Further, the office of higher education is required to  
21 develop and implement a plan to promote the joint admissions agreement to current students of  
22 the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island high school students, guidance  
23 counselors and families.

24 SECTION 3. 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 -- THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT

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1           This act would require the Rhode Island board of education to implement practices  
2   designed to improve coordination between the state's institutions of higher learning. The act  
3   would set forth principles for best practices to be followed, as well as rules with regard to the  
4   transfer of students.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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