AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- PAUL W. CROWLEY STUDENT INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Introduced By: Representatives Serpa, Fellela, Lyle, Solomon, and Caldwell

Date Introduced: January 22, 2020

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 16-7.1-10 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-7.1 entitled "The Paul W. Crowley Rhode Island Student Investment Initiative [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read as follows:


(a) In order to continue developing the skills of Rhode Island's teachers, administrators and staff, to facilitate the dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with curriculum frameworks and state assessments, and to implement district professional development plans required by certification regulations, the general assembly establishes a Professional Development Investment Fund. The general assembly shall annually appropriate some sum and distribute it based on a pupil-teacher ratio per pupil basis that shall be adjusted annually by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. School districts, including collaboratives established pursuant to chapter 3.1 of this title, may use funds received under this category of education aid to replace up to, but no more than, fifty percent (50%) of the amount the school district spent for professional development programs in the previous fiscal year. The expenditure of these funds shall be determined by a committee at each school consisting of the school principal, two (2) teachers selected by the teaching staff of the school, and two (2) parents of students attending the school. Schools that enroll students in the early grades (Kindergarten through grade three (3)) must expend these funds on the development of scientific research based,

Schools that have met their performance targets in reading for the current academic year and are not designated as a school in need of improvement, may expend their Professional Development Investment Funds on professional development in the core academic subjects of mathematics, writing, or reading to improve student performance.

Collaborative programs between schools are encouraged. These resources shall be used to close student performance gaps in accordance with the school's and district's strategic plan pursuant to § 16-7.1-2. Additional funds shall be allocated to the department of elementary and secondary education to support teacher and administrator professional development in all districts, including, but not limited to:

(1) Supporting mentoring systems;
(2) Providing school districts with program support to assist teachers in local school districts to improve reading instruction and enhance the integration of reading throughout the curriculum with the goal of improving student performance to high standards;
(3) Support for the design and implementation of leadership development for the teacher to assume leadership roles or ultimately prepare for administrator;
(4) Development of a plan for formal training of school leaders in standards-based instruction, school improvement planning, effective use of data in the decision-making process, community involvement and creation of governance structures;
(5) Support for national board certification of teachers, application fees for a certificate of clinical competence issued by the American speech language hearing association, and grants for coordination and support of school based teacher professional development; and
(6) The practice of scientific research based reading instruction to improve reading performance.

(b) In FY 2003, the additional funds allocated to the department of elementary and secondary education pursuant to this section shall be used only to support the activities described in subdivisions (a)(2) and (a)(5) of this section.

(c) Out of the funds appropriated by the general assembly for professional development in subsection (a) of this section, twenty-five percent (25%) shall be set aside for district-wide professional development activities. The expenditure of this district-wide professional development set-aside the professional development investment funds in each school district shall be determined by a committee in each district consisting of the superintendent or his or her designee, three (3) teachers appointed by the collective bargaining agent, and one member of the
Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary education field service team servicing that school district designated by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education appointed by the superintendent. The expenditure must be aligned with the district strategic plan as well as ongoing professional development programs approved by the department of elementary and secondary education the LEA professional learning plan required by the department of education certification regulations. Collaborative programs between school districts are permissible.

(d) Beginning in FY 2006, professional development funds shall only be spent with the prior approval of the commissioner of elementary and secondary education upon submission of a district level plan which incorporates the school level plans and which details the use of the funds. These plans shall to the extent possible call for professional development activities that are embedded or do not otherwise encroach upon student instruction time. The requirements of this paragraph shall apply to both district wide professional development activities and professional development activities determined by the school level committees.

(e) In FY 2009, payments from the professional development investment fund are hereby suspended through June 30, 2009. Notwithstanding, school districts may continue to maintain professional development programs and may reduce other education programs to achieve savings.

(f) In FY 2010, payments from the professional development investment fund are hereby suspended through June 30, 2010. Notwithstanding, school districts may continue to maintain professional development programs and may reduce other education programs to achieve savings.

(g) Commencing in FY 2021, the sum of two hundred dollars ($200) per student shall be allocated to each school district to the professional development investment fund.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.
This act would restructure the professional development investment fund to assume duties of dissemination of curriculum materials aligned with curriculum frameworks, state assessments, and implement district professional development plans with an allocation of two hundred dollars ($200) per student.

This act would take effect upon passage.