It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Indicate performance criteria that will be used to measure student learning and to comply with the charter, state, and national educational goals and standards;
(5) Include an agreement to provide a yearly report to parents, the community, the school committee of the sending districts, and the commissioner, that indicates the progress made by the mayoral academy during the previous year in meeting the charter objectives;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This act would take effect upon passage.

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