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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- PURPLE-STAR RHODE ISLAND
DEPENDENT EDUCATION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Noret, Solomon, Azzinaro, Kennedy,
and Filippi

Date Introduced: February 24, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 30 of the General Laws entitled "MILITARY AFFAIRS AND
2 DEFENSE" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 30.4

4 PURPLE-STAR RHODE ISLAND DEPENDENT EDUCATION ACT

5 **30-30.4-1. Short title.**

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the military child "Purple-Star Rhode Island
7 Dependent Education Act", or "PRIDE" act.

8 **30-30.4-2. Definitions.**

9 As used in this chapter, the following words and phrases are construed as follows:

10 (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

11 (2) "Military-connected student" means a student who is the dependent of either a person

12 in the active military service of the United States or in a full-time status during active service with

13 a force of the Rhode Island National Guard.

14 **30-30.4-3. Purple - Star Schools.**

15 (a) The commissioner shall designate a school as a purple star school if the school applies
16 and qualifies for the designation pursuant to the provisions of this section.

17 (b) To qualify as a purple star school, at a minimum a school shall:

18 (1) Designate a staff member as a military liaison, whose duties include:

- 1 (i) Identifying military-connected students enrolled at the school;
2 (ii) Serving as the point of contact between the school and military connected students and
3 their families;
4 (iii) Determining appropriate campus services available to military-connected students;
5 and
6 (iv) Assisting in coordinating campus programs relevant to military-connected students;
7 (2) Maintain on the school Internet website an easily accessible webpage that includes
8 resources for military-connected students and their families, including information regarding:
9 (i) Relocation to, enrollment at, registration at, and transferring records to the school;
10 (ii) Academic planning, course sequences, and advanced classes available at the school;
11 and
12 (iii) Counseling and other support services available for military-connected students
13 enrolled at the school;
14 (3) Maintain a transition program led by students, where appropriate, that assists military-
15 connected students in transitioning into the school;
16 (4) Offer professional development for staff members on issues related to military-
17 connected students; and
18 (5) Offer at least one of the following initiatives:
19 (i) A resolution showing support for military-connected students and their families;
20 (ii) Recognition of the month of the military child or military family month with relevant
21 events hosted by the school; or
22 (iii) A partnership with a local military installation that provides opportunities for active
23 duty military members to volunteer at the campus, speak at an assembly, or host a field trip.
24 (c) The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations as necessary to implement
25 the provisions of this section.

26 **30-30.4-4. Advance enrollment.**

27 A military-connected student whose parent or guardian is being relocated to the state under
28 military orders and is transferred to or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state,
29 shall be deemed to be a resident pupil of a city or town for the purposes of enrollment. A school
30 and/or school district shall permit military-connected students to enroll preliminary by remote
31 registration without charge and shall not require the parents or guardians of the military-connected
32 student or the student himself or herself to physically appear at a location within the district to
33 register the student, if the parent or guardian presents evidence of military orders that a parent or
34 guardian will be stationed in this state during the current or following school year. The parent or

1 guardian may use an address within the school district where the military-connected student is to
2 be enrolled of a temporary on-base billeting facility, a purchased or leased home or apartment, or
3 federal government or public-private venture off-base military housing. Proof of required residency
4 shall not be required at the time of the remote registration but shall be required within ten (10) days
5 of the student's attendance in the school of the city or town where he or she resides.

6 **30-30.4-5. Virtual schools.**

7 When making determinations regarding eligibility for virtual learning education pursuant
8 to the provisions of § 16-22.1-5, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall
9 deem a military-connected student, whose parent or guardian is being relocated to the state under
10 military orders and is transferred to or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state,
11 a resident of this state and the applicable local school system, for the entirety of the school year and
12 promulgate regulations to effectuate the purposes of this section.

13 **30-30.4-6. Tuition continuity.**

14 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a spouse or child of a member
15 of the active military service of the United States who has been assigned to duty elsewhere
16 immediately following assignment to duty in Rhode Island shall be deemed to be an in-state
17 resident for the purposes of determining tuition and fees at Rhode Island public universities,
18 colleges or community colleges, and is entitled to pay the tuition and other fees or charges provided
19 for Rhode Island residents as long as the spouse or child resides continuously in Rhode Island and
20 remains enrolled at the public university, college or community college.

21 **30-30.4-7. Liberal construction.**

22 The provisions of this chapter shall be given full effect notwithstanding any other
23 provisions of law to the contrary. This chapter shall be construed liberally so as to enable spouses
24 and military-connected students of eligible service members to minimize disruptions in education
25 and school transition.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- PURPLE-STAR RHODE ISLAND
DEPENDENT EDUCATION ACT

1 This act would establish the "Purple-star Rhode Island Dependent Education Act". The act
2 would provide that the commissioner of elementary and secondary education designate schools as
3 "purple-star" schools if the schools establish a program to assist children of military service
4 members.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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