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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION – REGIONAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS [SEE TITLE 16
CHAPTER 97 – THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT]

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, and Pearson

Date Introduced: February 10, 2021

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-45-6.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-45 entitled "Regional
2 Vocational Schools [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby
3 amended to read as follows:

4 **16-45-6.1. Career and technical education.**

5 (a) The general assembly finds that career and technical education [\(CTE\)](#) programs that
6 meet ~~rigorous~~ [the CTE board of trustees'](#) industry [developed](#) standards ~~and~~ prepare Rhode Island's
7 students to succeed in a wide variety of employment settings are a critical component of the state's
8 public education system and a necessary element of the state's economic development. [CTE](#)
9 [programs that meet the CTE board of trustees' standards are located in the regional career and](#)
10 [technical education centers and comprehensive high schools and are helping students graduate high](#)
11 [school with the skills to secure a job with a family sustaining wage.](#)

12 (b) The general assembly further finds that the proportion of students now enrolled in such
13 programs is inadequate. ~~Therefore, all Rhode Island school districts shall file a plan with the~~
14 ~~Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education no later than January 1, 2006 setting forth~~
15 ~~the means through which no fewer than forty (40) percent of their students enrolled in grades nine~~
16 ~~(9) through twelve (12) shall be provided the opportunity to enroll in career and technical~~
17 ~~programming that is certified by the Rhode Island Department of Education as meeting industry~~
18 ~~standards by September 2007~~ [to meet the needs of Rhode Island's growing economy. Rhode](#)

1 Island's employers are best positioned to assist in establishing a high quality system of secondary
2 and postsecondary career and technical education. To assist in the development of a high-quality
3 system of CTE, the CTE board of trustees shall review and annually provide recommendations to
4 the board of education regarding issues impacting secondary and postsecondary career and
5 technical education, including, but not limited to, program quality, industry alignment, the effective
6 use of state and federal CTE funding, the allocation of CTE funding, and expenditures of CTE
7 funding, program outcomes, work-based learning, transportation and graduation requirements. The
8 report and recommendations shall be provided to the board of education no later than October 15
9 of each year.

10 ~~(c) To facilitate the development of additional career and technical program offerings for~~
11 ~~Rhode Island students that meet industry standards the department of elementary and secondary~~
12 ~~education shall, in furtherance of the reports and studies that have been developed since 2000~~
13 ~~setting forth recommendations for an updated system of career and technical education for the State~~
14 ~~of Rhode Island, develop a system design that includes site assessments of all current career and~~
15 ~~technical programs and sets forth standards and procedures for the department of elementary and~~
16 ~~secondary education to approve programs that are developed in cooperation with business, industry~~
17 ~~and postsecondary institutions. The department shall also develop a system design for three~~
18 ~~additional state-operated career and technical schools, in addition to the William H. Davies School~~
19 ~~and the Metropolitan Career and Technical Center, including recommendations for a model for the~~
20 ~~siting, building costs, operational costs and program design for each such school. The general~~
21 ~~assembly shall appropriate funds to the department for purposes of their completion of the system~~
22 ~~design for the statewide program approval process to industry standards and the development of~~
23 ~~the models, siting and program design of the three additional state-operated career and technical~~
24 ~~schools.~~

25 (d) To sustain and advance the economic development of our communities, all students
26 retain the right to enroll in a state approved career and technical education program approved by
27 the CTE board of trustees in communities outside their community of residence. This right does
28 not apply to locally developed CTE programs, locally approved CTE programs, pathway programs,
29 or other programs that are not approved by the CTE board of trustees.

30 (1) Students shall have a right to request enrollment and to enroll in a CTE board of trustees
31 approved program outside of their community of residence when a duplicate CTE board of trustees
32 approved program is not offered within their community of residence. The CTE board of trustees
33 shall develop a definition of a duplicate program no later than October 15, 2021. The definition of
34 duplicate will include program type, information on the occupation that the student will be prepared

1 for, the credentials the student will earn, the type of work-based learning that the student will be
2 provided access to, the ability to access advanced course experiences, and include additional factors
3 such as postsecondary attainment, industry partnerships and advisory boards, and program quality.

4 (2) Effective January 15, 2022, and every year thereafter, the CTE board of trustees and
5 RIDE shall publish a detailed list of duplicate CTE programs for the upcoming school year. The
6 list will be used to support students and their families in accessing CTE board of trustees approved
7 career and technical education programs. There will be a thirty (30) day period for schools and
8 districts to appeal the duplicate designation to the CTE board.

9 (3) Students enrolled in a CTE program that is considered to be duplicative, prior to January
10 1, 2022, shall be exempt from the duplicate provision.

11 (e) Students enrolled in a CTE board of trustees approved CTE program outside their
12 district of residence that are not located within their transportation region may enroll in such
13 programs and their district of residence shall not be responsible for costs of transportation. The
14 receiving district enrolling the student in the CTE program may provide for the cost of
15 transportation if it so chooses.

16 (f) All eligible CTE programs shall align to CTE board of trustees' program standards.
17 Programs that do not meet this standard will not be eligible to enroll out-of-district students, and
18 receive state or federal CTE funding.

19 (g) The guiding principles for the CTE board of trustees shall be to increase the economic
20 vibrancy of Rhode Island.

21 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 EDUCATION – REGIONAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS [SEE TITLE 16
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1 This act would seek to advance economic development by guaranteeing students the right
2 to enroll in approved career technical educational programs and would allow them to enroll outside
3 the district of residence if their district does not offer a duplicate program.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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