

2022 -- H 8094 SUBSTITUTE A

LC005684/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE PAUL W. CROWLEY RHODE ISLAND STUDENT  
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Introduced By: Representatives Kislak, Ajello, Amore, Williams, Morales, Hull,  
Ranglin-Vassell, Caldwell, Alzate, and Batista

Date Introduced: April 06, 2022

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-7.1 of the General Laws entitled "The Paul W. Crowley Rhode  
2 Island Student Investment Initiative [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of  
3 Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

4 **16-7.1-5.1. Intervention and support for the Providence public school district.**

5 (a) No later than September 1, 2022, and in order to assess the Providence school district  
6 across multiple measures of district performance and student success, the commissioner shall  
7 update the turnaround action plan released June 23, 2020 (the "turnaround plan"), to include  
8 measurable annual goals including, but not limited to, the following:

9 (1) Student attendance and suspension rates;

10 (2) Student safety and discipline;

11 (3) Student promotion, graduation and dropout rates;

12 (4) Student achievement on the Rhode Island comprehensive assessment system;

13 (5) Progress in areas of academic underperformance;

14 (6) Progress among subgroups of students, including low-income students, English learners  
15 and students receiving special education;

16 (7) Reduction of achievement gaps among different groups of students;

17 (8) Student acquisition and mastery of twenty-first century skills;

18 (9) Development of college readiness, including at the elementary and middle school

1 levels;

2 (10) Parent and family engagement;

3 (11) Building a culture of academic success among students;

4 (12) Building a culture of student support and success among faculty and staff;

5 (13) Recruitment and retention of a qualified, diverse workforce;

6 (14) Staffing ratios and teacher vacancies;

7 (15) Health and safety of facilities; and

8 (16) Developmentally appropriate child assessments, if applicable.

9 (b) Effective March 1, 2023, and for the duration of the turnaround, the Providence school  
10 board shall meet at least monthly, and more frequently if necessary, to provide public input of  
11 district performance and implementation of turnaround strategies. The Providence school board  
12 shall have, at a minimum, the following powers and duties:

13 (1) To review and advise the commissioner on the appointment of senior school district  
14 administrators, provided that the Providence school board shall not have the authority to appoint  
15 senior school district administrators so long as the turnaround plan is in effect;

16 (2) To advise the commissioner on district-wide policy, provided that the Providence  
17 school board shall not have the authority to establish district-wide policy so long as the turnaround  
18 plan is in effect;

19 (3) To review progress toward annual performance measures;

20 (4) To receive feedback from stakeholders on the implementation of the turnaround plan;

21 (5) To establish appropriate advisory committees as needed to provide guidance on the  
22 implementation of the turnaround plan; and

23 (6) Any other duties delegated to the Providence school board by the commissioner or the  
24 council on elementary and secondary education (the "council").

25 (c)(1) The order of reconstitution and control, issued October 15, 2019, shall be authorized  
26 for a period of not more than five (5) years from issuance. The commissioner and turnaround  
27 superintendent may jointly develop additional components of the turnaround plan and shall jointly  
28 develop annual goals for each component of the plan in a manner consistent with this section. The  
29 superintendent shall be responsible for meeting the goals of the turnaround plan.

30 (2) The commissioner and superintendent shall provide a written report to the Providence  
31 school board at a minimum, on a biannual basis to provide specific information about the progress  
32 being made on the implementation of the district's turnaround plan. One of the quarterly reports  
33 shall include progress toward annual measures, pursuant to this section.

34 (3) The commissioner shall evaluate the performance of the superintendent on not less than

1 an annual basis. The purpose of such evaluation shall be to assess the implementation of the  
2 turnaround plan and determine whether the district has met the annual goals contained in the  
3 turnaround plan. The evaluation shall be in writing and submitted to the council and the Providence  
4 school board no later than July 1 for the preceding school year.

5 (4) If the commissioner determines that the district has met the annual performance goals  
6 stated in the turnaround plan, the evaluation shall be considered sufficient and the implementation  
7 of the turnaround plan shall continue.

8 (5) If the commissioner determines that the superintendent has not met one or more goals  
9 in the plan and the failure to meet the goals may be corrected through reasonable modification of  
10 the plan, the commissioner, after consultation with the Providence School board and with the  
11 approval of the council, may amend the turnaround plan.

12 (6) If the commissioner determines that the superintendent has substantially failed to meet  
13 multiple goals in the turnaround plan, the commissioner may terminate such superintendent.

14 (d)(1) The council shall adopt regulations providing for:

15 (i) The end of turnaround status; and

16 (ii) The transfer of the operation of a school district from the Rhode Island department of  
17 elementary and secondary education to the school committee and municipal control.

18 (2) The regulations shall include provisions to allow a district to retain measures adopted  
19 in a turnaround plan for a transitional period if, in the judgment of the commissioner, the measures  
20 would contribute to the continued improvement of the district. Such regulations shall also include  
21 provisions that clearly identify the conditions under which such a transitional period shall end and  
22 the powers granted to the commissioner and council under this section shall cease to apply to the  
23 district.

24 (e) If, on the basis of the regulations adopted by the council pursuant to subsection (d) of  
25 this section, the Providence school district has not improved sufficiently to remove the district from  
26 turnaround status, the commissioner may, after consultation with the Providence school board and  
27 with the approval of the council:

28 (1) Determine subsequent annual goals for each component of the turnaround plan with the  
29 turnaround superintendent, and renew the turnaround plan for an additional period of not more than  
30 three (3) years; and

31 (2) Create a new turnaround plan, consistent with the requirements of this section.

1           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage and shall sunset and expire on July 1,  
2   2024.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would require the commissioner to update the status of Providence school district,  
2 taking various factors into consideration, including, student attendance, student safety, student  
3 promotion and shall otherwise require the commissioner to update the turnaround plan released  
4 June 23, 2020.

5           This act would take effect upon passage and would sunset and expire on July 1, 2024.

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