

2014 -- H 7572

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LC004619  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - ADULT EDUCATION

Introduced By: Representatives Ferri, Diaz, Hull, Costantino, and Finn

Date Introduced: February 26, 2014

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Sections 16-63-2 and 16-63-13 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-63  
2 entitled "Adult Education" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **16-63-2. Legislative findings and policy.** -- (a) The general assembly, in accordance  
4 with the constitution of the state, R.I. Const., Art. XII, section 1, which obligates the state "to  
5 secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education," and also pursuant to R.I.  
6 Const., Art. XII, section 4, which requires it to "make all necessary provisions by law for carrying  
7 this article into effect," finds:

8           (1) That all citizens, regardless of age, have the right to education;

9           (2) That education is a lifelong pursuit;

10           (3) That basic education and general personal development are necessary to enjoy a  
11 wholesome life; ~~and~~

12           (4) That vocational training is useful in acquiring a marketable skill and achieving  
13 economic self-sufficiency;

14           (5) That a skilled workforce is critical to Rhode Island businesses and to the state's  
15 economic growth;

16           (6) That acquiring and strengthening foundational workforce skills, including, but not  
17 limited to, literacy, numeracy, high school equivalency, and English language skills, are vital for  
18 workers' upward mobility;

19           (7) That statewide, as of January 1, 2014, there are at least one thousand three hundred

1 [\(1,300\) adults waiting to enter adult education programs regulated and funded by the Rhode](#)  
2 [Island department of education; and](#)

3 [\(8\) That there is an urgent need to address this waiting list because such delays in](#)  
4 [education result in lost opportunities both for the individuals waiting and the state as a whole.](#)

5 (b) The general assembly declares:

6 (1) That the public laws shall address the education needs of adults and young people;

7 (2) That an integrated and coordinated adult education delivery system shall be provided  
8 and maintained on a statewide basis; and

9 (3) That public funds shall be appropriated to support that delivery system and fulfill the  
10 constitutional mandate.

11 (c) All adult education programs and services provided by any department or agency of  
12 the state of Rhode Island or local government, or funded in whole or in part by state funds, shall  
13 be offered in the least restrictive environment, be designed to enhance the quality of life for adult  
14 learners, and be consistent with and inclusive of the following values that reflect the preferences  
15 and needs of adult learners;

16 (1) Adult learners shall be treated with dignity and respect;

17 (2) Adult learners shall be included in policy development affecting adult education;

18 (3) Adult learners shall be offered services that are cost-effective and meet the learners'  
19 needs;

20 (4) Adult learners shall have access to testing, evaluation and requisite accommodation  
21 for learning and/or other disabilities;

22 (5) Adult learners shall be fully informed about the educational choices available to  
23 them;

24 (6) Adult learners shall participate in decisions about their educational process, including  
25 information exchange and goal setting;

26 (7) Adult learners shall be provided with educational programming commensurate with  
27 their abilities, including but not limited to basic skills, vocational education, and/or secondary  
28 education or its recognized equivalent;

29 (8) Adult learners shall receive consistent, sustained quality in their education.

30 **16-63-13. Adult education financing.** – (a) The cost of providing adult education  
31 programs and services shall be met by federal, state, and local government resources, and by  
32 tuition and fees to be paid by participants according to the categories of programs and services, as  
33 further set forth in this chapter.

34 [\(b\) Recognizing that as of January 1, 2014, there are approximately one thousand three](#)

1 hundred (1,300) adults waiting to enter adult education programs regulated and funded by the  
2 Rhode Island department of education, the general assembly hereby appropriates the sum of two  
3 million dollars (\$2,000,000) to the department of education for use in fiscal year 2015 to expand  
4 the capacity of current adult education programs in Rhode Island and to reduce and eliminate the  
5 number of adult learners waiting to enter such programs.

6 (c) On or before January 15, 2015, and approximately every three (3) months thereafter,  
7 the Rhode Island department of education shall provide a written report to the speaker of the  
8 house, the president of the senate, the chairs of the house and senate finance committees, and to  
9 the governor, which shall document how the funds appropriated in subsection (b) were expended.

10 Such report shall include:

11 (1) The adult education programs to which the funds were appropriated and the amounts  
12 of the appropriation;

13 (2) The action taken by said program to reduce the waiting list for adult education  
14 services;

15 (3) The status of the waiting list at each adult education program that received funds; and

16 (4) The status of those adult education programs with a waiting list that did not receive  
17 funds.

18 The department shall continue to provide reports to the general assembly on the progress  
19 made to reduce the number of adult learners waiting to participate in adult education programs,  
20 until further action of the general assembly.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION - ADULT EDUCATION

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1           This act would directly appropriate the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) to the  
2 Rhode Island department of education for the purpose of reducing and eliminating the number of  
3 adults waiting to receive adult education services. This act would also direct the Rhode Island  
4 department of education to provide regular written reports on the progress of reducing the number  
5 of adults waiting to participate in adult education programs.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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