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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE CIVIC LITERACY ACT

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Cano, Lawson, Euer, Pearson, Miller, McCaffrey,
Sosnowski, Ruggerio, and Seveney

Date Introduced: January 26, 2021

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-22-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-22 entitled "Curriculum
2 [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read
3 as follows:

4 **16-22-2. Civics education.**

5 (a) The general assembly recognizes the importance of a citizenry well educated in the
6 principles of democracy as enunciated in the constitutions of the state of Rhode Island and the
7 United States. The general assembly directs the board of regents for elementary and secondary
8 education to develop and adopt a set of grade level standards K-12 in civics education no later than
9 August 31, 2007. These standards shall include, but not be limited to, the history of the state of
10 Rhode Island, representative government, the rights and duties of actively engaged citizenship, and
11 the principals of democracy. These civic education standards shall be used in the public schools of
12 this state beginning in kindergarten and continuing through to and including grade 12. No private
13 school or private instruction shall be approved for the purposes of chapter 19 of this title unless the
14 course of study shall make provision for instruction substantially equivalent to that required by this
15 chapter for public schools.

16 (b) All middle and high school students attending public schools, or any other schools
17 managed and controlled by the state, shall demonstrate proficiency, as defined by the local school
18 district, in civics education that shall also satisfy at least half credit or course requirement in history
19 and social studies.

1 (c) Each public school district shall provide not less than one student-led civics project for
2 students during either middle or high school; provided, however, that each such project shall be
3 consistent with the history and social studies standards and frameworks promulgated by the Rhode
4 Island board of education. Civics projects may be individual, small group or class wide, and
5 designed to promote a student's ability to:

6 (1) Reason, make logical arguments and support claims using valid evidence; and

7 (2) Demonstrate an understanding of the connections between federal, state and local
8 policies, including issues that may impact the student's community.

9 (d) The department of education shall begin implementing subsections (b) and (c) of this
10 section for the 2022-2023 academic year.

11 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 -- THE CIVIC LITERACY ACT

1 This act would require that middle and high school students that attend public schools
2 demonstrate proficiency in civics education and would require public schools to provide not less
3 than one student-led civics project in either middle or high school consistent with history and social
4 studies frameworks promulgated by the Rhode Island board of education.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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