

2021 -- S 0209

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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 EDUCATION -- ACCESS TO ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES FOR  
ALL STUDENTS ACT

Introduced By: Senators Lawson, Gallo, Euer, Cano, Pearson, Picard, Sosnowski,  
DiPalma, Goldin, and Quezada

Date Introduced: February 10, 2021

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-98-2, 16-98-4 and 16-98-6 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-  
2 98 entitled "Access to Advanced Placement Courses for All Students Act [See Title 16 Chapter 97  
3 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" are hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-98-2. Definitions.**

5 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall have the following  
6 meanings given to them unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

7 (1) "Advanced placement" means a college-level class taught at the high school level  
8 ~~preparatory course for a college advanced placement that provides students the opportunity to earn~~  
9 college credit upon passage of an exam that:

10 (i) Incorporates all topics specified by the ~~college board~~ College Board on its standards  
11 syllabus for a given subject area; and

12 (ii) Is authorized by the ~~college board~~ College Board.

13 (2) ~~"Board of regents" means the board of regents for elementary and secondary education.~~

14 (3) "College ~~board~~ Board " means ~~the non-profit examination board in the United States~~  
15 ~~comprised of over four thousand five hundred (4,500) institutions of higher learning and known for~~  
16 ~~managing standardized tests such as the advanced placement or "AP" tests~~ and refers to the  
17 nonprofit organization that develops and administers standardized tests and curricula used by  
18 kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) and post-secondary education institutions to promote

1 [college readiness](#).

2 (4) "Department" means the Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary  
3 education.

4 (5) "Eligible teacher" means a professional employee that is certified in the subject area of  
5 the advanced placement course that he or she will be teaching.

6 [\(6\) "Examination" or "exam" means the test provided by the College Board to measure a  
7 student's mastery of the advanced placement subject matter.](#)

8 ~~(6)~~[\(7\)](#) "Four core academic areas" means advanced placement courses in English,  
9 mathematics, science and social science.

10 ~~(7)~~[\(8\)](#) "Poverty level" means the percentage of students in a school district eligible for free  
11 and reduced lunch.

12 ~~(8)~~[\(9\)](#) "Program" means [furtherance of](#) the advanced placement [classes in the public  
13 schools and includes](#) teacher training ~~program~~ [and increased student participation](#).

14 ~~(9)~~[\(10\)](#) "School district" means any public school district, school unit, area-vocational-  
15 technical school, ~~or~~ charter school [or mayoral academy](#) that composes a school district; the term  
16 also encompasses a single high school or multiple high schools within a school district where  
17 applicable.

18 ~~(10)~~[\(11\)](#) "Teacher training entities" means institutions of higher education, intermediate  
19 units or organizations approved/certified by the ~~college board~~ [College Board](#) to train teachers to  
20 teach advanced placement courses.

21 ~~(11)~~[\(12\)](#) "Virtual learning instruction" means providing academic courses to students via  
22 the Internet and/or the use of technology in providing instruction to students.

23 **16-98-4. Powers and duties of department.**

24 (a) Guidelines. The department shall promulgate rules, regulations and procedures  
25 necessary for the implementation of this chapter including, but not limited to, the following:

26 (1) In consultation with the ~~college board~~ [College Board](#), certify those teacher-training  
27 entities that are qualified to provide training of teachers to teach advanced placement courses in the  
28 four (4) core academic areas;

29 (2) In certifying teacher-training entities for this program, the department shall ensure that  
30 the training times and locations will be geographically accessible for teachers from eligible school  
31 entities to attend;

32 (3) The department, in consultation with the ~~college board~~ [College Board](#), shall ensure that  
33 training provided by those teacher-training entities must provide teachers of advanced placement  
34 courses with the necessary content knowledge and instructional skills to prepare students for

1 success in advanced placement courses and examinations; ~~and~~

2 (4) Starting at the end of the first year of the program, and every year thereafter, the  
3 department shall issue a report to the general assembly on the advanced placement teacher-training  
4 program that shall include, but not be limited to:

5 (i) The number of teachers receiving training in advanced placement instructions in school  
6 entities, school districts and high schools in each of the four (4) core academic areas.

7 (ii) The number of students taking advanced placement courses at school entities in each  
8 of the four (4) core academic areas.

9 (iii) The number of students scoring a three (3) or more on an advanced placement  
10 examination at school entities in each of the four (4) core academic areas.

11 (iv) The remaining unmet need for trained teachers in school entities that do not offer  
12 advanced placement courses.

13 (v) The number of students taking advanced placement courses who do not take the  
14 advanced placement examination.

15 (vi) The number of students below the poverty level who take advanced placement courses.

16 (vii) The number of students below the poverty level who take advanced placement courses  
17 and do not take the advanced placement examination; and.

18 (5) In consultation with local education authorities, ensure that the opportunity to  
19 participate in the advanced placement program and gain college credit is available to the greatest  
20 amount of students as practicable.

21 (b) Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit the board of education, through the department,  
22 from expanding the program to include other nationally accepted courses of study that provide  
23 students an opportunity to gain college credits from classes taken in high school.

24 **16-98-6. Program funding.**

25 (a) Funding for this program is subject to appropriation by the general assembly to the  
26 department for that purpose.

27 (b) In the event that insufficient moneys are appropriated in any fiscal year to provide  
28 funding for all eligible school entities applying to the program, the department shall prioritize  
29 funding of eligible school entities based on the poverty level of the school districts that high school  
30 students who will be taking the advanced placement courses reside in.

31 (c) Notwithstanding any general law, rule or regulation to the contrary, the department shall  
32 include as part of its annual budget the amount necessary to pay the exam costs for all students  
33 below the poverty level who take advanced courses.

34 (1) In support of the Rhode Island promise scholarship act (the “scholarship”), chapter 107

1 of title 16, the board of education shall remit to each school district, from the funds allocated for  
2 the scholarship or other similar program, the amounts necessary to pay for the exam costs for all  
3 students below the poverty level who take advanced placement courses.

4 (2) Funds allocated for the purpose of paying the cost of the examinations may be used  
5 only to pay those costs and may be carried over into the next fiscal year for the same purpose.

6 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 -- ACCESS TO ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES FOR  
ALL STUDENTS ACT

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1           This act would change the definition of advance placement to mean a college level class  
2 taught at the high school level that provides students the opportunity to earn college credit upon  
3 passage of an exam. This act also expands the reach of access to advanced placement courses to  
4 ensure that the opportunity to participate in the advanced placement program and gain college credit  
5 is available to the greatest amount of students as practicable.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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