

2022 -- H 7284

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LC004036
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION – THE EDUCATION EQUITY AND PROPERTY TAX
RELIEF ACT

Introduced By: Representative P Morgan

Date Introduced: February 02, 2022

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-7.2 of the General Laws entitled "The Education Equity and
2 Property Tax Relief Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **16-7.2-11. Securing our children's futures.**

4 (a) For fiscal year 2022-2023, the state shall appropriate a total of two hundred fifty million
5 dollars (\$250,000,000) in federal funds received from the Elementary and Secondary Emergency
6 Relief Fund, commonly referred to as the "ESSER Fund," or from the supplemental ESSER
7 funding, commonly referred to as "ESSER II" or "ESSER III" funding, which are part of the
8 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2 (hereinafter the "appropriation"), to help students
9 address and mend the deficiencies in their education, learning skills and knowledge caused by
10 disruptions in their schooling during the corona virus COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, the
11 funds from this appropriation shall be used to create an online education system (hereinafter the
12 "system") accessible electronically to students from kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12). The
13 system shall allow students to access professionally produced content that can be individualized to
14 the deficits the students have developed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

15 (b) The funds from this appropriation shall be distributed to local school districts based
16 upon the number of eligible students, including private and home school students, of the district.
17 All children shall be eligible for inclusion in the virtual learning programs (hereinafter "programs")
18 authorized by subsection (c) of this section.

1 (c) Funds from the appropriation shall be used to purchase virtual learning programs from
2 a nationally recognized company or companies that specialize in online learning programs that
3 incorporate high quality curricula. These virtual learning programs shall be made available to every
4 child in Rhode Island who requests individualized help and access to these programs.

5 (d) Funds from the appropriation shall also be used to offer testing, assessment, and other
6 diagnostic tools to assist a student and the student’s parent/guardian/responsible adult to identify
7 and determine areas of need for remediation. The department of elementary and secondary
8 education shall prepare trained educational guides to assist students and
9 parents/guardians/responsible adults in registering and accessing the online programs that focus on
10 those learning and other deficits.

11 (e) The system shall include:

12 (1) At-home access and which may be mentored by a parent/guardian/responsible adult;

13 (2) School and public library access which may be student-mentored (self-paced);

14 (3) After-school and weekend program access that shall be mentored by certified teachers;

15 and

16 (4) Summer learning programs that shall be mentored by certified teachers.

17 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 – THE EDUCATION EQUITY AND PROPERTY TAX
RELIEF ACT

1 This act would direct the state to appropriate the sum of \$250,000,000 from federal COVID
2 relief funds to establish virtual online learning programs to address learning deficiencies which
3 result from the COVID-19 pandemic.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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