

2024 -- H 8103

LC005760

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION-- SCHOOL COMMITTEES AND SUPERINTENDENTS

Introduced By: Representatives Cotter, Casimiro, Handy, and McNamara

Date Introduced: March 27, 2024

Referred To: House Education

(by request)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

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

4 **16-2-2. City and town schools required — School year — Location — Kindergartens.**

5 (a)(1) Except as specifically provided in this section, every city or town shall establish and
6 maintain for at least one hundred eighty (180) days annually or the equivalent thereof, exclusive of
7 holidays, a sufficient number of schools in convenient places under the control and management of
8 the school committee and under the supervision of the Rhode Island Board of Education. In lieu of
9 a convenient location, the school committee may provide transportation for pupils to and from
10 school in accordance with the provisions of chapter 21 of this title. Provided, that a school district
11 may establish a school year that is the equivalent of one hundred eighty (180) days through the use
12 of longer school days [or a combination of longer school days and shorter days in which school is](#)
13 [in session](#) in terms of hours or pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and that may total less than
14 one hundred eighty (180) separate days, so long as through the use of ~~the~~ longer school ~~day~~ [days](#)
15 [or through the use of a combination of longer school days and shorter days in which school is in](#)
16 [session](#), the school district annually provides a minimum of one thousand eighty (1,080) school
17 hours in a single school year. ~~This figure is based on a minimum of six (6) hours per school day.~~
18 For purposes of clarification, the intent herein is to permit school districts ~~to amend their school~~
19 ~~year to provide for longer school days while reducing the actual number of days in which the school~~

1 ~~facilities must be fully staffed and maintained~~ flexibility in the delivery of education services, but
2 to ~~insure~~ ensure that in doing so, school districts shall still provide ~~the minimum amount of~~
3 ~~instruction time contemplated by this section~~ one thousand eighty (1,080) school hours in a single
4 school year. Nothing herein shall be deemed to limit a school district from exceeding the minimum
5 amounts of days and hours set forth herein.

6 (2) School districts intending to make use of the option provided herein to use longer school
7 days or a combination of longer school days and shorter days in which school is in session to
8 lengthen school days and shorten the school year shall submit a detailed school day plan and a
9 proposed school calendar to the commissioner of elementary and secondary education for approval.
10 The commissioner shall review the submitted school day plan and the submitted calendar to
11 determine whether the plan and calendar are academically sound and fiscally efficient. The
12 commissioner may grant or deny approval of the plan and/or the calendar.

13 (b) School facilities shall include a sufficient number of kindergartens.

14 (c) On or before December 1, 2017, the department of elementary and secondary education
15 shall establish a policy that allows a school district to submit a detailed plan, at any time, to the
16 commissioner of elementary and secondary education that would allow the schools to conduct
17 instruction through virtual education when the schools have been closed due to inclement weather
18 or other emergency. The plan for virtual education would be subject to, and require approval by,
19 the council on elementary and secondary education in order to count as a school day.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

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1 This act would allow a school district to establish a school year that is the equivalent of
2 one hundred eighty (180) days through the use of longer school days or a combination of longer
3 school days and shorter days in which school is in session to provide a minimum of one thousand
4 eighty (1,080) school hours in a single school year.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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