

2014 -- S 2922

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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 THE CHARIHO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Introduced By: Senator Catherine Cool Rumsey

Date Introduced: April 30, 2014

Referred To: Senate Finance

(by request)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 10 of Chapter 286 of the 1986 Public Laws entitled "AN ACT IN
2 AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 286 OF THE PUBLIC LAWS, 1986, AND IN ADDITION TO
3 CHAPTER 419 OF THE PUBLIC LAWS, 2006, ENTITLED 'AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE
4 TOWNS OF CHARLESTOWN AND RICHMOND TOGETHER, OR TOGETHER WITH THE
5 TOWN OF HOPKINTON, TO JOIN A REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
6 INCORPORATING SAID REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND PROVIDING FOR
7 THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS, CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A REGIONAL
8 HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE JOINT USE OF THE PARTICIPATING TOWNS, WITHIN SAID
9 REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT ESTABLISHED BY THIS ACT,' AS AMENDED" is
10 hereby further amended to read as follows:

11 Sec. 10. (1)(a) There shall be a regional school committee for said district consisting of
12 ~~eleven (11)~~ nine (9) members. ~~-each~~ Each member town shall be represented on the committee in
13 direct proportion to its population as determined by the most recent population census figures.
14 The total population of the district shall then be divided by ~~eleven (11)~~ nine (9) and the resulting
15 quotients thus obtained shall be used as the basis for determining the proportionate representation
16 of each said member town on said committee, and realizing that the mathematical divisions of
17 said formula will not obtain absolute evenness, fractions of .5 or more shall be construed as 1
18 point and fractions less than .5 shall be construed as 0. Subject to limitations aforesaid, the
19 members of said committee from each of the member towns to be elected or appointed for terms

1 hereinafter set forth shall be determined as of the time of each bi-annual election and each of the
2 said member towns, based upon the census aforesaid. ~~The first such regional school committee~~
3 ~~shall be elected in the general election in November, 1988. In the general election 1988 each town~~
4 ~~electing three (3) members of the school committee shall elect two (2) members to serve a term of~~
5 ~~four (4) years and one (1) member to serve a term of two (2) years. A town electing more than~~
6 ~~three (3) representatives shall elect three (3) members for a term of two (2) years and additional~~
7 ~~members for a term of four (4) years. Thereafter members~~ Members shall be elected for a term of
8 four (4) years. ~~Until such time as those elected in that election shall be certified and qualified, the~~
9 ~~existing Chariho Regional High School District Committee shall serve as the Regional School~~
10 ~~Committee.~~ In the event of any vacancy by death, resignation or incapacity to serve of any term
11 of any member of said regional school district committee, the town council of the member town
12 in which such vacancy occurs shall fill such vacancy by election by a majority vote of the town
13 council of said town for the unexpired term of the member whose office is thus vacated.

14 (1)(b) ~~Since the United States Census bureau of the census conducts on a decennial basis~~
15 ~~and in view of the fact that any of the Chariho towns may incur rapid shifts in population which~~
16 ~~could effect the composition of the Chariho school committee, there may be an agreement among~~
17 ~~the town councils to provide for a census on a five (5) year basis beginning in 1995. A census of~~
18 ~~the towns taken in 1987 will be used as the basis for school committee composition until the 1990~~
19 ~~United States bureau of census data is provided. The cost of the 1987 census will be borne by~~
20 ~~each town in proportion to its population. Any town objecting to the use of the United States~~
21 ~~census material may require the making of an actual census in time for the first general election~~
22 ~~after 1995. The cost of such a census shall be borne equally by the three (3) towns and shall not~~
23 ~~constitute a reimbursable education expense; provided further that in the event that such an actual~~
24 ~~census does not result in a count materially different from the numbers contained in material~~
25 ~~compiled by the United States bureau of the census, then the cost of the actual census, shall be~~
26 ~~borne by the town or towns objecting to the use of such bureau of the census material.~~ Two (2)
27 seats currently held by committee members whose four (4) year terms expire in 2014 shall be
28 eliminated at the end of those terms, and no member shall be elected to those seats in the general
29 election of 2014 or thereafter.

30 (2) Within ten (10) days after the election and certification of the members of the regional
31 school district committee, said regional school district committee shall meet and organize by
32 selecting one (1) of their number to be chairperson of said committee. The chairperson chosen at
33 the first organized meeting shall serve in such office until the first meeting of said committee
34 following the qualification of new members elected to the regional school district committee at

1 the general election of 1988, At such first meeting of the said committee following the election
2 and qualification of new members, the committee shall elect a chairperson and elect such other
3 officers and are herein or hereafter authorized and each two (2) years thereafter at such first
4 meeting following a general election at which school committee members are elected, the
5 regional school district committee shall organize and elect or appoint such officers. A person may
6 not succeed himself/herself in the office of chairperson unless no other member of the committee
7 is willing to serve as chairperson and at such organizational meetings the chairmanship shall first
8 be offered to a committee member from a town other than the town one of the members of which
9 last served as chairperson in an order of rotation to be agreed upon at the first organization
10 meeting of the said committee which shall provide that each member town shall have the
11 opportunity of having one of its members serve as chairperson in a fixed order of selection. In the
12 event that no member from one of the member towns which is entitled to the chairmanship at an
13 organization meeting is willing to serve as chairperson, this election shall pass to the next such
14 member town so entitled under said agreement and so on until a chairperson is selected who is
15 going to serve. The said committee shall also appoint a clerk and a treasurer of said committee
16 who shall also be a clerk and treasurer of the said district and the district meetings and the said
17 clerk and treasurer may be the same individual and need not be a member of members of said
18 committee.

19 (3) Said regional school committee shall have all the powers and duties conferred by law
20 in this state upon school committees of towns, generally, including but not limited to the
21 following:

22 (a) To apply for and receive, accept and use any town, state or federal funds or assistance,
23 or both, as may be provided, whether in the form of a grant or a loan or both, including
24 specifically such funds or assistance from state or federal sources as the member towns would
25 otherwise be entitled to apply for and receive from such sources in the event that the said regional
26 school district did not exist but to the use of which such member towns might be individually
27 excluded by reason of the existence of said district.

28 (b) To publish an annual report thirty (30) days prior to the annual district meeting
29 containing a detailed financial statement showing the total receipts and expenditures of the period
30 covered by the report together with such additional material and information relating to the
31 maintenance and operating of the school or schools as may be deemed necessary by the regional
32 school committee.

33 (c) To receive and disburse funds for any regional school district purpose.

34 (d) To engage legal counsel.

1 (e) To engage and employ a superintendent of schools for the regional school district,
2 who may also be a principal or a regional school or schools, on a contractual basis for either a
3 definite or indefinite term as the regional high school committee shall determine. The person so
4 employed shall have all the powers and duties imposed upon a superintendent of schools by law.

5 (f) Said committee shall annually cause an audit to be made of the accounts of said
6 district, and on completion of each audit a report thereof shall be made to the members of said
7 committee and a copy thereof shall be submitted to the next regional school district meeting.

8 (g) Compensation for members of the said committee and/or clerk and treasurer thereof
9 shall be determined at and by the regional school district meeting as a part of the consideration
10 and action taken at said meeting in respect to operating costs and expenses of the said district.

11 (h) The regional school district treasurer shall furnish surety bond in an amount to be
12 determined annually by the said committee. The expense of said bond shall be chargeable to the
13 said district.

14 (i) Said regional school district committee may dispose of any item (or group of items) of
15 personal property with a fair market value (in the aggregate, if a group of items) of five thousand
16 dollars (\$5,000) or less, on such terms as the committee deems appropriate in its sole discretion.
17 Any item, or group of items, of personal property of the regional school district with a fair market
18 value of more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), but less than twenty thousand dollars
19 (\$20,000) (in the aggregate, if a group of items), may be disposed of by the said committee on
20 such terms as the committee deems appropriate in its sole discretion, by offering such property
21 for sale by competitive bidding. Any property of the regional school district with a fair market
22 value equal to or greater than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) may be disposed of only upon a
23 vote of a regional district meeting as set forth in Sec. 9(8).

24 SECTION 2. Section 13 of Chapter 286 of the 1986 Public Laws entitled "AN ACT IN
25 AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 286 OF THE PUBLIC LAWS, 1986, ENTITLED 'AN ACT
26 AUTHORIZING THE TOWNS OF CHARLESTOWN AND RICHMOND TOGETHER, OR
27 TOGETHER WITH THE TOWN OF HOPKINTON, TO JOIN A REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
28 DISTRICT INCORPORATING SAID REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND
29 PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS, CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A
30 REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE JOINT USE OF THE PARTICIPATING TOWNS,
31 WITHIN SAID REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT ESTABLISHED BY THIS ACT,' AS
32 AMENDED" is hereby further amended to read as follows:

33 Sec. 13(1) A student who enters an elementary school in kindergarten will be assured to
34 matriculation at the school through grade 4 unless the family relocates outside the elementary

1 school attendance district. Siblings, also will be assured of matriculation in the same elementary
2 school as long as another sibling is in attendance. [Effective September 1, 2015, elementary school
3 attendance districts shall be based on geographical proximity and may include more than one
4 town.](#)

5 (2) Transportation of pupils shall be considered an operational cost of the regional school
6 district and shall be governed by the regional school district committee, which shall also govern
7 and determine the curriculum of the school subject to the provisions of section 11 hereof.

8 SECTION 3. The question of the approval of this Act shall be submitted to the electors of
9 the towns of Charlestown, Richmond and Hopkinton qualified to vote on any proposition to
10 impose a tax or for the expenditure of money at the general election in 2014. The question shall
11 be submitted in substantially the following form:

12 "Shall the act passed by the general assembly at its January 2014 session entitled "AN
13 ACT IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO CHAPTER 286 OF THE PUBLIC
14 LAWS, 1986, ENTITLED 'AN ACT IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO
15 CHAPTER 419 OF THE PUBLIC LAWS, 2006, ENTITLED 'AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE
16 TOWNS OF CHARLESTOWN, RICHMOND AND HOPKINTON, TO JOIN A REGIONAL
17 SCHOOL DISTRICT INCORPORATING SAID REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND
18 PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS, CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A
19 REGIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM FOR THE JOINT USE OF THE PARTICIPATING TOWNS,
20 WITHIN SAID REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ESTABLISHED BY THIS ACT,' AS
21 AMENDED" be approved?

22 The warning for said election shall contain the question to be submitted. From the date
23 the election is warned until it is held, it shall be the duty of the town clerks of the respective
24 towns of Hopkinton, Charlestown and Richmond to keep a copy of the act available at their
25 offices for public inspection, but any failure of any clerk to perform this duty shall not affect the
26 validity of the election.

27 SECTION 4. This section and section 3 of this act shall take effect upon passage of this
28 act; and the remainder of this act shall take effect upon the approval of this act by a majority in
29 each town of those voting on the question at the election prescribed by section 3 hereof.

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