

Summary of S2838/H8094

In its current form, the section of the Crowley Act that regulates State takeovers of individual schools and schools districts (§16-7.1-5) is limited to a single paragraph that provides inadequate guidance or standards for an activity of this magnitude. These bills propose to amend the Crowley Act for future State takeovers by importing many of the extensive procedures and criteria contained within Massachusetts law. The bills also propose to increase accountability and engagement in the ongoing State takeover of the Providence Public Schools.

Proposed (amended) §16-7.1-5 would introduce new standards and procedures for the State takeover of individual schools, while proposed §16-7.1-5.1 would do the same for State takeovers of school districts. Both sections would codify components of the Massachusetts program, including the following:

- Define the substantive criteria that qualify a school or school district as “chronically underperforming” and the procedures designating a school or school district in this way.
- Prescribe the composition of a stakeholder group that will review and assist in the formation of a turnaround plan.
- Prescribe the necessary components of a turnaround plan, including annual measurable benchmarks.
- Prescribe the process for reviewing progress made under the turnaround plan, and the criteria to apply in a decision to renew the turnaround plan or revert the school or district to local control.

Proposed §16-7.1-5.2 would apply exclusively to the ongoing State takeover of the Providence Public Schools. It contains the following elements:

- A list of categories of annual measurable goals that will be incorporated in the Providence turnaround plan.
- The formation of a board of trustees. The board of trustees will have these responsibilities:
 - ▶ Review and approval of senior administrative appointments;
 - ▶ Set district-wide policy;
 - ▶ Review progress towards annual performance measures;
 - ▶ Receive feedback from stakeholders.
- The board of trustees will be composed of the following members:
 - ▶ An administrator designated by the superintendent;
 - ▶ A student designated by the Providence Student Union;
 - ▶ A teacher designated by the Providence Teachers Union;
 - ▶ A parent designated by the parent advisory council;
 - ▶ A School Board member;
 - ▶ Four members of the public appointed by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, of whom at least two (2) are parents.
- Standards and procedures to govern the extension or conclusion of the takeover.