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SECRETARY OF STATE

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

17-09

September 13, 2017

ESTABLISHING THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND'S K-12 SCHOOL FACILITIES

WHEREAS, since January 2015, Rhode Island has taken a number of steps to improve the conditions of our school facilities, including:

- (1) Lifted the moratorium on school construction projects instituted in FY11;
- (2) Increased funding to reimburse districts for past projects and to support new high priority, shovel-ready projects;
- (3) Created the School Building Capital Fund to provide upfront, pay-as-you-go funding to high need school districts for urgent repairs, and established the School Building Authority Advisory Board to advise the state on the use of the Capital Fund;
- (4) Streamlined the project approval process to allow decisions to be made based on priorities instead of a first-come, first-serve basis;
- (5) Required that school districts maintain a comprehensive asset maintenance plan; and
- (6) Launched the first of its kind, comprehensive statewide facility conditions assessment to establish a better, objective understandings of our schools' condition, capacity, educational program space, and future life cycle needs;

WHEREAS, the facility conditions assessment -- "State of Rhode Island Schoolhouses Report" -- released today, identified that:

- (1) Substantial needs exist within every school district in Rhode Island to ensure our students have 21st century learning environments;
- (2) \$627.5 million in high priority upgrades are needed in nearly every school district in the state to ensure our schools are warm, safe, and dry for students;
- (3) Significant additional investments are needed to bring our public school buildings to optimal conditions to maximize educational outcomes for students;
- (4) Only a small percentage of our schools are in good condition; and
- (5) More investment is needed to address our school construction needs, but that we must be smarter and more efficient in how we make those investments;

WHEREAS, our students and teachers deserve 21st century facilities designed to deliver a high-quality education;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GINA M. RAIMONDO, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby order as follows:

A. Rhode Island Schools Task Force

1. There is hereby established the Rhode Island Schools Task Force ("Task Force") that shall exist to advise the Governor and the General Assembly on how to best tackle the needs described in the 2017 "State of Rhode Island Schoolhouses Report" and to identify specific steps the state and local cities and towns can take to make significant and smarter investments in school construction.
2. The members and chairs of the Task Force shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
3. The Task Force shall be co-chaired by General Treasurer Seth Magaziner and Commissioner of Education Ken Wagner.
4. The membership of the Task Force shall include members of the General Assembly, the Chair of the School Building Authority Advisory Board, the Chair of the Board of the Rhode Island Health and Education Building Corporation, and a representative(s) of educators, children's health, the building trades, the business community, the League of Cities and Towns, the Rhode Island

Association of School Committees, and the Rhode Island School Superintendents Association.

5. The Task Force shall engage and solicit input from a broad and diverse range of groups, organizations, and individuals from around the state.

B. Cooperation with the Task Force

1. All departments, offices, boards, and agencies of the state shall provide assistance and cooperation to the Task Force, including use of state facilities, which may be necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Executive Order.
2. All departments, offices, boards, and agencies of the state shall provide staff support necessary for the Task Force.

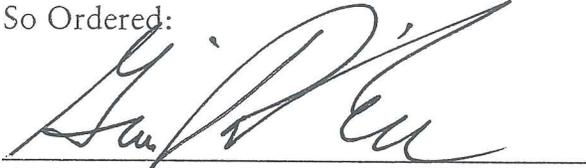
C. Duties and Purpose

1. The Task Force shall engage in a review of the "State of Rhode Island Schoolhouses Report" and of current practices related to the funding and approval of school construction projects.
2. The Task Force shall recommend specific strategies to address the immediate health and safety issues identified in the Report, develop a plan for a multi-year transformation of our school facilities, and make proposals for better utilization of current available resources and for potential new sources of funding.
3. The Task Force shall identify possible adjustments to the existing process for approving and funding school construction projects, including the identification of strategies that will ensure taxpayer investments in school construction are efficient and sustainable.
4. The Task Force's meetings shall be open public meetings held in various locations throughout Rhode Island to engage stakeholders and ensure transparency of process.
5. The Task Force shall establish parameters and mechanisms for the submission of proposals and recommendations by stakeholders and other interested parties. Such proposals shall be evaluated to determine if they can be feasibly implemented and, if so, the benefits to the state's public school facilities that may be realized from each proposal and recommendation.

6. The Task Force shall begin its work immediately. The Task Force shall submit a draft report to the Governor of its findings and recommendations on or before December 15, 2017.

This order shall take effect immediately.

So Ordered:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina M. Raimondo", written over a horizontal line.

Gina M. Raimondo

Governor

Dated:

9/13/17.