RHODE ISLAND'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION: 2015-2020

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Dear Fellow Rhode Islanders,

We are pleased to provide you with a copy of *Rhode Island's Strategic Plan for Public Education: 2015-2020*, which establishes a set of ambitious goals and bold initiatives that will enable our state's schools, colleges, and educational programs to be national leaders. It envisions an educational system that supports the development of a well-rounded and diverse citizenry who are active participants in and contributors to the success of their communities and the state.

The Rhode Island Board of Education, which includes both the Rhode Island Council on Elementary & Secondary Education and the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education, is responsible for prekindergarten through college and adult education. Through this strategic plan, we establish a foundation for an integrated public education system that is based on coordination, collaboration, and alignment.

There are three major sections of this plan: a five-year strategic plan for Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Education; a five-year plan for Postsecondary Education; and a five-year plan for significant work toward shared objectives. These plans and shared objectives seek to advance the lives of everyone in our state. We seek to serve everyone - from the youngest learner to a back-to-school adult, from Rhode Islanders in the smallest school to Rhode Islanders in the largest corporation - through a comprehensive set of measurable actions and milestones.

Many thousands of Rhode Islanders contributed to the development of this plan.
It is our hope that many more thousands of our fellow Rhode Islanders will support its implementation and its iterative, continuous improvement.

Join us as we step forward, together, to make our vision for Rhode Island's public education a reality.

Sincerely,

Barbara S. Cottam, Chair
Rhode Island Board of Education

Daniel P. McConaghy, Chair
Council on Elementary & Secondary Education

William G. Foulkes, Chair
Council on Postsecondary Education

Ken Wagner, Commissioner
Elementary and Secondary Education

James E. Purcell, Commissioner
Postsecondary Education

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2015-2020 GOALS: RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Rhode Island Board of Education has established a set of six overarching goals that formalize our commitment to educational excellence, expanded access, and seamless educational experiences for all Rhode Island learners. These goals support our efforts to make Rhode Island schools, colleges, and educational programs stand amongst the best in the world.

The Board of Education will:

- Strive toward academic excellence by setting standards that encourage all learners to achieve at the highest levels, with a focus on ensuring that all graduates are globally competent citizens;
- Integrate Rhode Island's PK-20 system so that it fully prepares students to reach their educational and career goals, to contribute to our state's workforce and communities, and to meet the needs of business and industry in our changing economy;
- Close the opportunity gaps facing traditionally underserved youth and adults by providing appropriate supports, incentives, and programs;
- Manage an overall funding strategy to keep costs low, promote access to free or affordable educational opportunities, and provide incentives for expanding educational programs that succeed;
- Lead an educational system that promotes and supports educator excellence at all levels; and
- Oversee an educational system that values a well-rounded and diverse citizenry and that encourages Rhode Islanders to participate in and contribute to civic and cultural life, democratic society, and global initiatives.

The Board of Education will monitor its progress toward achieving these goals through transparent and clear measures that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education will establish, manage, and report on to the public.

2020 VISION FOR EDUCATION:

RHODE ISLAND'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PK-12 & ADULT EDUCATION, 2015-2020

RHODE ISLAND COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

AUGUST 24, 2015

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RHODE ISLANDERS WROTE THIS PLAN

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

FAMILIES
STUDENTS
EDUCATORS

11,000+

STATEWIDE SURVEY RESPONSES

BUSINESSES
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

13 MEETINGS

1,000+ HOURS

6 MONTHS

4 PROTOTYPES

1,200+ FEEDBACK RESPONSES

1 FINAL DRAFT

19 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

300 PARTICIPANTS

THE AMBASSADOR DESIGN TEAM

WHO ARE THEY?

The 26-member Ambassador Design Team (ADT) was selected by the Council on Elementary & Secondary Education from a field of over 300 Rhode Island applicants with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives to write our state's next strategic plan for PK-12 public education.

15% CURRENT PK-12 STUDENT

46% FIRST GENERATION TO ATTEND COLLEGE

15% NOT BORN IN THE UNITED STATES

31% PEOPLE OF COLOR

35% CURRENT OR PAST TEACHER

50% PARENT OF CURRENT RI STUDENT

19% CURRENT ADMINISTRATOR

12% BUSINESS OWNERS

69% ATTEND(ED) RI SCHOOLS

19% HIGHER EDUCATION

42% MEN

58% WOMEN

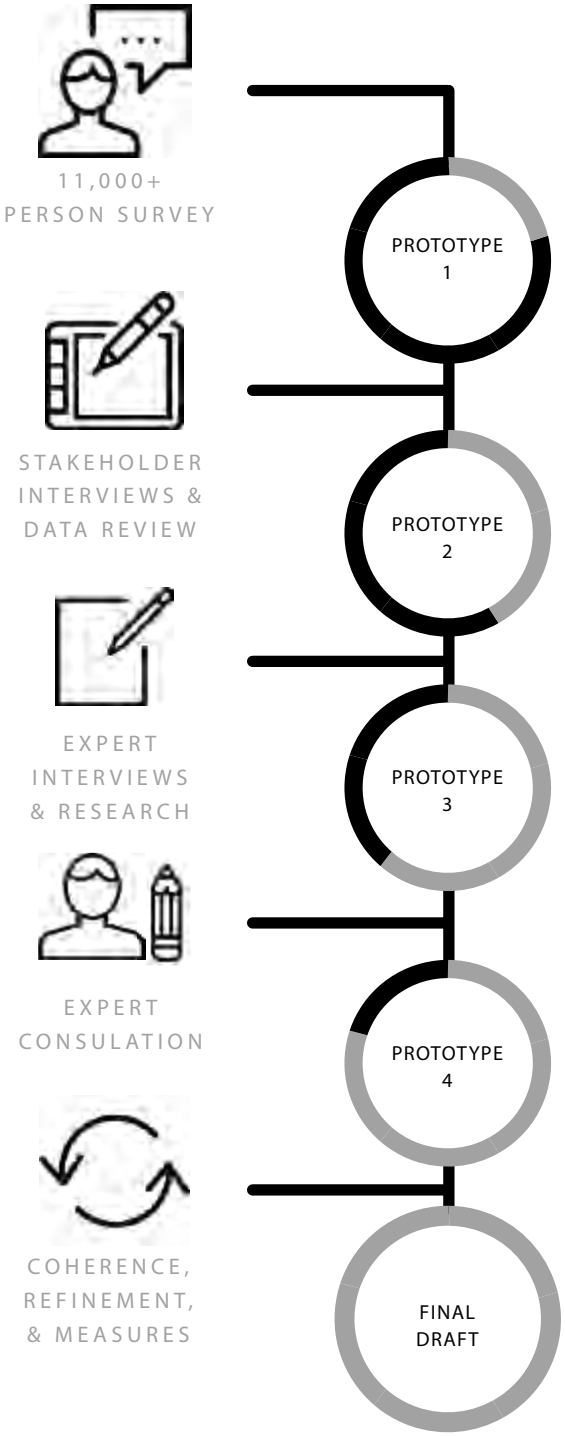
FIND US AT #EDVOICESRI

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CURIOSITY // EMPATHY // OPTIMISM // TRANSPARENCY
ENGAGEMENT // EMPOWERMENT // RESPECT

PLAN DEVELOPMENT: MANY DRAFTS, MANY VOICES

This planning process was grounded in the principles of transparency, engagement, empowerment, and respect. Every decision — from choosing the state's future educational priorities to writing the strategies — was made by a 26-member community team. This team treated Rhode Islanders as their most important stakeholders, publishing drafts (or prototypes) early, often, and long before they were complete. After each prototype was published, the team made immediate revisions. Using this rapid-prototyping process, the team was able to make many small adjustments over a six-month period and in so doing, develop a plan for by, of, and for Rhode Island.



PROTOTYPE 1

For the first prototype, the community team reviewed the data from an 11,000 person survey to write the core values intended to form the foundation for the plan. These values are a set of beliefs with profound and enduring meaning, are visible in every aspect of the plan, and should become visible in our education system itself.

PROTOTYPE 2

The second prototype included revisions to the values based upon hundreds of comments. In addition, the community team conducted over 100 stakeholder interviews and using the insights from those interviews, developed a first draft of the six priority areas that bring focus and organization to the plan.

PROTOTYPE 3

The third prototype included revisions to prototype three based upon hundreds of additional comments. In addition, the staff and community team completed over 50 hours of interviews with local, state, and national experts based upon these interviews, developed the first draft of implementation strategies for each of the six priority areas.

PROTOTYPE 4 AND THE FINAL DRAFT

The fourth prototype and the final draft included revisions based another two final rounds of prototype publication and feedback. In addition, over a dozen state, local, and national experts came to Rhode Island and joined the community team for a full day of plan revision and development. The combination of these many experts and over 1,000 Rhode Islander citizen participants resulted in the plan you are reading today.

RHODE ISLANDERS' VISION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

WHAT RHODE ISLANDERS WANT FOR STUDENTS

A Rhode Island graduate is one who is well prepared for postsecondary education, work, and life. He or she can think critically and collaboratively and can act as a creative, self-motivated, culturally competent learner and citizen.

HOW RHODE ISLANDERS WILL BUILD UPON OUR PREVIOUS WORK

Rhode Island students must continue to have access to rigorous world-class standards that set forth high expectations for all students. The combination of our educators' preparedness to teach to those standards, the quality of the instructional materials in our schools, and our students' experience in the classroom stands at the center of our vision. This plan describes six educational priority areas that will build upon our shared focus on educator quality and world-class standards in the core content areas, further unlocking the potential within our students, classrooms, and schools.

HOW RHODE ISLANDERS WILL ACHIEVE THIS VISION

All students will have the access and support needed to attain the academic, social, emotional, career readiness and citizenship knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to be successful in the 21st century. Students will develop these skills and competencies through individualized teaching and learning that emphasizes the use of innovative technology and hands-on instruction, while building meaningful real-world application. Our schools and learning environments will support an engaging and collaborative culture that is student-centered, safe, mutually respectful, and inclusive of many cultures and diverse perspectives.

Rhode Islanders together demand an educational system that holds high expectations for all students, regardless of income or background; is responsive to students' individual needs; and pushes the boundaries of imagination and innovation to create better learning conditions for students and educators.

VALUES

The "why" of Rhode Island's strategic plan, values set the foundation for the work that will take place. These values are intended to be visible in every plan priority and throughout our education system.

EQUITY

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value equitable distribution of resources and opportunities based on the individual needs of every student so as to support a positive learning experience for all.

SUPPORT

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value a culture of shared responsibility of educators, families, businesses, postsecondary education and the community partnering together to support all students.

DIVERSITY

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value the role of culture and embrace the use of multiple knowledge bases as we prepare students, staff, and educators to become culturally competent and aware on a local, national, and global scale.

AUTONOMY

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value earned autonomy, empowering educators to make timely decisions in response to developing student needs so that those who work most closely with students have greater influence on the decisions that support students' achievement.

PREPAREDNESS

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value a system that prepares every student for the cognitive, interpersonal, and personal demands of postsecondary education, career, and citizenship.

PERSONALIZATION

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value individualized approaches to learning that provide every student with the opportunities for success.

SAFETY

In our education system, Rhode Islanders value safe, healthy, and nurturing learning environments.

PRIORITIES

The six priority areas focus and organize Rhode Island's strategic plan for public education over the next five years.

1. Teacher and Leader Support
2. Early Childhood Education
3. Personalized Learning Statewide
4. Globally Competent Graduates
5. Informed Instructional Decision Making
6. Student-Centered Resource Investment

HOW TO READ THE PRIORITIES

Each priority area includes the following components:

OUR VISION OF SUCCESS IN 2020

outlines the scope of the priority, and describes success in 2020.

COMPONENTS OF OUR VISION

lists the major areas of work within each priority.

KEY OUTCOMES

describes what the desired impact looks like when this plan has met its stated goals, including aspirational descriptions and measurable outcomes.

THE STRATEGIES

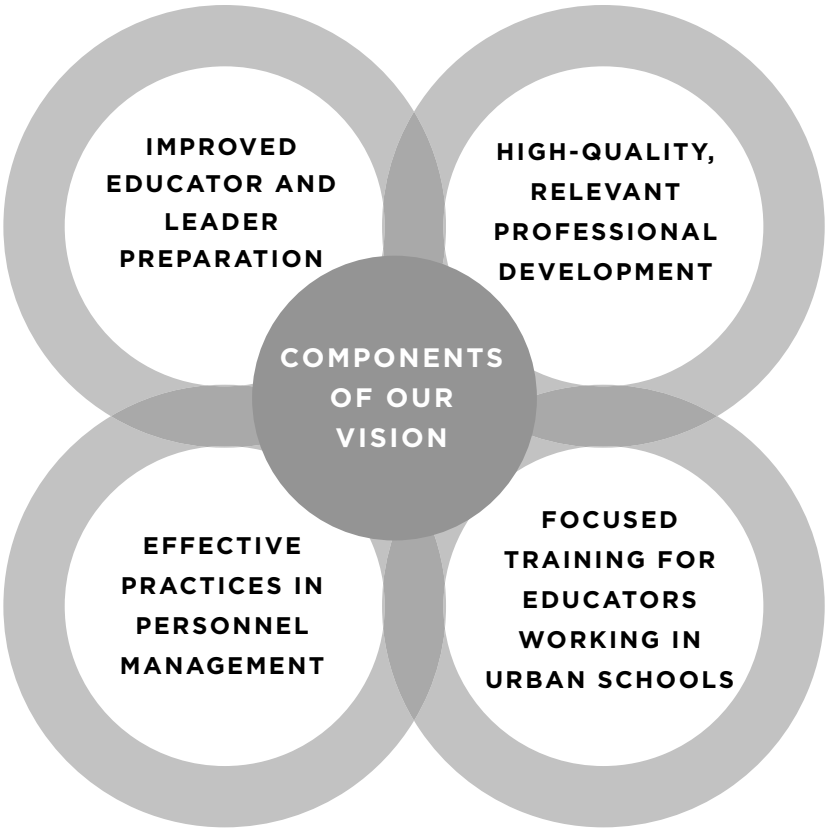
are the "how" describing what specific high-level actions the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) along with its key stakeholders will take to make this plan happen and to achieve the vision of success.

TEACHER AND LEADER SUPPORT

GROWING OUR GREAT EDUCATORS AND LEADERS

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to support and grow our current educators and leaders through relevant, personalized, and job-embedded professional learning that is focused on students in classrooms and in ways that build collegiality and collaborative decision-making. We will support great teaching by strengthening the recruitment and retention of high quality educators and leaders. To encourage the most talented people to enter the teaching profession, we will focus on recruiting educators who are culturally diverse, educators in hard-to-staff subject areas, and educators who are eager and prepared to work in our most challenging schools.



IMPROVED EDUCATOR AND LEADER PREPARATION

KEY OUTCOMES

- All new educators and building administrators are guaranteed supports in their first year of teaching or leading to help them master their practice
- Aspiring educators in preparation programs engage in field experiences that have improved quality and extended duration
- Educator-preparation programs meet rigorous standards of quality and prepare candidates for classroom and school success
- Students have equitable access to excellent educators and leaders, as evidenced by a reduction in equity gaps

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RIDE WILL

Advocate for resources and support for induction coaching of new educators and school leaders

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing rigorous criteria and incentives for the induction or mentorship of educators and school leaders

RIDE WILL

Work in partnership with postsecondary-education institutions, school districts, and schools to strengthen the preparation of aspiring educators, particularly by increasing the focus on high-quality, practice-based preparation grounded in student learning

EDUCATOR-PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Strengthening the preparation of aspiring educators by increasing the focus on high-quality, practice-based preparation grounded in student learning
- Increasing the quality and duration of pre-service field-experience
- Providing targeted and improved pre-service training in urban school environments

HIGH-QUALITY, RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

KEY OUTCOMES

- Professional development for educators and leaders is aligned with the most important needs of students, educators, and leaders as identified through data
- Educators provide feedback and support for one another in professional learning communities

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RIDE WILL

Support professional learning in data-informed, high-priority areas that is research-based, extended in duration, and deeply connected to the day-to-day work of teaching and learning

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing relevant, job-embedded, personalized professional development opportunities for educators that promote continuous growth, use peer observation, and promote reflection on practice

RIDE WILL

Develop guidelines for relevant and engaging professional learning for teachers and administrators

RIDE WILL

Provide models and tools for using educator and classroom data to inform decisions about professional learning and development

FOCUSED TRAINING FOR EDUCATORS WORKING IN URBAN SCHOOLS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increased recruitment and retention of educators in underrepresented and hard-to-staff fields
- Increased diversity of the educator workforce
- Improve mutually beneficial, collaborative partnerships between educator-preparation programs and local education agencies

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RIDE WILL

Partner with postsecondary education to develop specific training programs for teaching and leading in urban schools

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Offering professional development and training programs relevant to service in urban schools

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP BY…

- Working in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education, school districts, and schools to develop high-quality preparation programs for those aspiring to teach and lead in urban schools

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR EDUCATORS CAN HELP BY…

- Working in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education, school districts, and schools to develop high-quality training programs for teaching and leading in urban schools

RIDE WILL

Partner with postsecondary education to increase the recruitment and retention of educators who are culturally diverse and of educators working in hard-to-staff fields

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increased percentage of high quality educators retained in their first three years of practice in urban schools
- Creation of a tiered educator-career pathway that fosters growth and leadership within and beyond the classroom
- Local education agencies implement a coherent and comprehensive approach to managing educator talent

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RIDE WILL

Develop a framework and guidance for best practices for school districts and schools in managing personnel, especially relating to decisions about recruitment, hiring, placement, support, and retention

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Implementing effective practices in the areas of recruitment, hiring, placement, coaching, support, evaluation, and retention

RIDE WILL

Develop models for an educator career continuum that incorporate a tiered certification system and that provide multiple pathways through which educators with recognized expertise can take on a variety of meaningful leadership roles

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

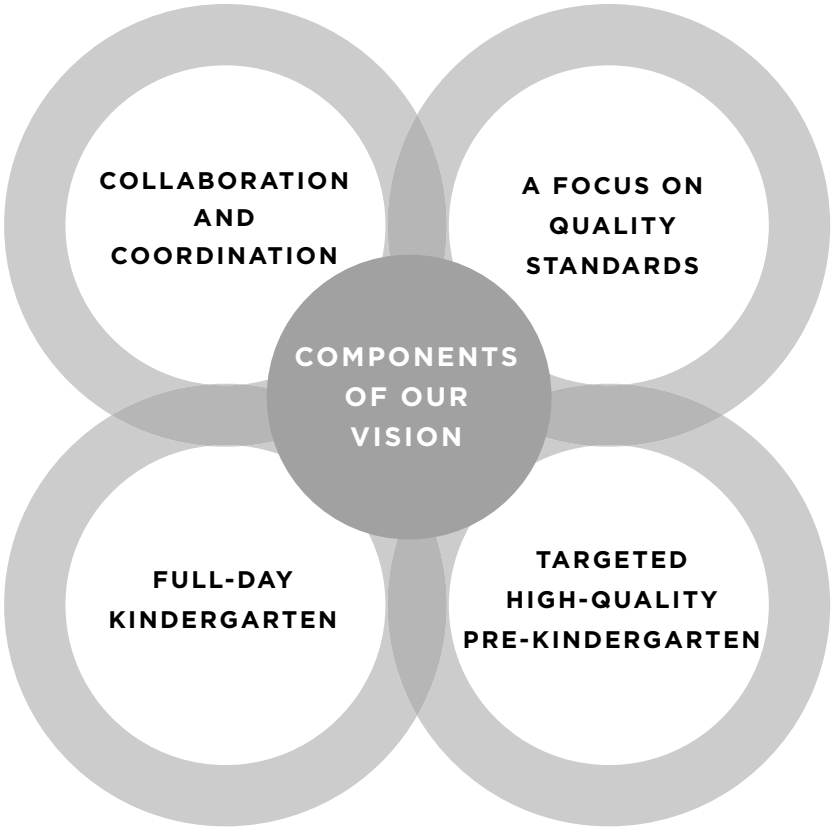
- Providing a career continuum that includes leadership roles for educators and school leaders, with their progress based on their demonstrated expertise

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

GIVING EVERY CHILD A GREAT START

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to expand opportunities for meaningful and nurturing early childhood learning to get children off to a great start in school. All educational partners will work together to greatly increase access to high-quality early learning opportunities for children from age 3 through age 8. Our state agencies will work together to provide supports for children from birth to age 3, expand pre-kindergarten programming that is accessible to families and youth with the greatest need, ensure that there is full-day kindergarten in every community, provide the supports necessary to ensure that all children meet their developmental milestones from age 3 through age 8, and expand and improve preparation and professional development for early-childhood educators.



COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increase early childhood developmental screening rates for children ages 3-5 by 15 percentage points
- A cohesive statewide system of early childhood education in which all state and local education agency programs/initiatives related to children birth through grade 3 use aligned language, standards, and expectations for early learning programs, educators, and children

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RIDE WILL

Promote the use of high-quality health and educational screening of young children and the distribution of family-friendly information about early childhood development

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Supporting the distribution of high quality, family-friendly information about early childhood development screenings, and the important role of early education screening
- Partnering with health care providers and early childhood programs to promote high-quality early childhood screening
- Expand screening services for children ages 3-5

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY-BASED PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Partnering with health-care providers and school districts to promote high-quality early childhood screening

HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONALS CAN HELP BY…

- Sharing developmental benchmarks and screening information with the families of toddlers and youth and communicating the importance of education

RIDE WILL

Participate in the coordination and streamlining of multi-agency oversight of early learning programs across Rhode Island

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Improving cooperation with family- and community-based early childhood education providers to improve and promote seamless transition into kindergarten

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY-BASED PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Improving communications and cooperative planning with school districts to prepare children academically, socially and emotionally for kindergarten and elementary school
- Coordinating with schools and districts to ensure that children make seamless transitions from their early learning environment to kindergarten

A FOCUS ON QUALITY STANDARDS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Develop and implement a tool to evaluate students at school entry using the kindergarten readiness profile
- Increase number of students in grade 3 performing at grade level in mathematics and reading by 10 percentage points
- Increase early learning programs reaching the highest state benchmarks for program quality by 28 percentage points

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RIDE WILL

Expand the adoption and use of the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards, including providing the necessary support and professional development for educators

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Fully implementing the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards, including providing the necessary support and professional development for educators and support staff in pre-kindergarten to grade 3

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY-BASED PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Fully implementing all aspects of the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards, including offering research-based professional development and learning opportunities for early childhood educators and support staff

RIDE WILL

Support and promote the use of standards-based expectations for early childhood educators, providers, and programs in order to develop a comprehensive, high-quality system of early learning programs

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Delivering early childhood programming that meets or exceeds established statewide standards-based expectations

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY-BASED PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Delivering early childhood programming that meets or exceeds the established statewide standards-based expectations

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing rigorous professional development on the early childhood standards for educators and practicum experiences that help aspiring educators and leaders recognize those quality standards in action

TARGETED HIGH QUALITY PRE-KINDERGARTEN

KEY OUTCOME

- Increase the number of four-year-olds enrolled in state-funded high quality pre-kindergarten programs in Rhode Island's highest-need communities by 16 percentage points

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RIDE WILL

Advocate for and allocate resources in order to expand access to high-quality pre-kindergarten to families and youth with the greatest need

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing or expanding high-quality, nurturing pre-kindergarten programs
- Widely publicizing the availability and importance of high quality pre-kindergarten programs, especially for families and youth with the greatest need
- School committees promoting and investing in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs within their district and in partnership with their community

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY-BASED PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing high-quality, nurturing pre-kindergarten programs
- Accessing state and local support and technical assistance to support program improvement

OTHER STATE AGENCIES CAN HELP BY…

- Investing state funds to increase the number of seats in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs that are available to families and youth with the greatest need

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increase the percentage of Rhode Island school districts providing high-quality universal full-day kindergarten to 100%

RIDE WILL

Advocate for state education aid to support implementation of full-day kindergarten

RIDE WILL

Enforce the requirement for high-quality full-day kindergarten statewide

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Implementing high-quality full-day kindergarten

PERSONALIZED LEARNING STATEWIDE

CREATING EXPERIENCES AND PATHWAYS THAT MEET STUDENTS' INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to provide an educational system in which every student is enrolled in rigorous learning environments that meet their individual needs and through which students progress based upon their demonstrated mastery of essential, aligned, and agreed-upon rigorous academic and 21st century skills. Starting in early childhood, students have access to personalized learning experiences that are experiential, blended, flexible, and differentiated; as a result of these experiences, students will be able to control the pace, place, and content of their learning experience while meeting state and local requirements. Rhode Island middle and high school students will have access to a wide range of high quality early college and early career training programs that enable them to earn high-value, portable credit and credentials. Rhode Island schools and districts will have systems and opportunities that expand students' access to personalized learning, and teachers will have the skills needed to enhance personalization in and outside the classroom.

BUILDING STATEWIDE CAPACITY TO PERSONALIZE

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increased number of schools implementing a school-wide proficiency-based model for instruction and advancement
- Students attend schools that are personalized to meet their individual needs
- Increased number of students meeting course requirements in learning experiences outside of the school day

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RIDE WILL

Partner with school districts and teacher-preparation programs to prepare current and pre-service educators in the skills to personalize student learning

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding and improving professional development in the areas of personalized instruction

EDUCATOR-PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding and improving the training of aspiring educators in personalized instruction through blended and proficiency-based learning

RIDE WILL

Pursue funding to create an innovation fund to support personalized learning at elementary, secondary, and adult learning levels

RIDE WILL

Advocate for funding to increase one-student-to-one-computer technology needs across the state

RIDE WILL

Establish a policy and a fiscal framework that enables student control over the pace, space, and content of their learning while meeting state and local requirements

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Revising school and district policy, practice, and procedures to promote greater levels of student control over their learning while meeting state and local requirements
- Utilizing individualized learning plans (ILPs) to best support every learner in meeting their personalized learning needs and goals

RIDE WILL

Collaborate with districts to create approaches to funding and partnerships among postsecondary education, and business/community organizations that result in credit-bearing learning opportunities outside the school day, year, and building

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Collaborating with community partners to expand student access to learning opportunities outside the school day and year

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, BUSINESS, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing students with meaningful learning experiences outside of school, including expanded learning opportunities, internships, work-related experiences, and apprenticeships

BLENDED AND DIGITAL LEARNING

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increase percentage of schools that offer full-time access to high-quality technology to support personalized learning
- Increased number of students in kindergarten through grade 12 who are learning in environments that are using blended learning models

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RIDE WILL

Support personalization by promoting and supporting school adoption of best and emerging practices in K-12 blended and digital learning

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding K-12 access to high-quality digital and blended learning opportunities that provide students the ability to control the pace, space, and content of their learning
- Adopting an online platform to manage student work and promote efficient personalization and proficiency-based advancement

RIDE WILL

Develop a state technology plan that supports one-student-to-one-computer ratios, improvement to statewide technology infrastructure, and district technology planning to meet student and school needs

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing and maintaining a multi-year technology plan aligned with the district and school plan for blended and digital learning
- Creating strong implementation plans prior to major device investments to improve instruction in personalized learning for all students
- School committees understanding and supporting prudent technology planning and infrastructure and device investments designed to dramatically improve student access and outcomes

CAREER READINESS AND PATHWAYS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Students have the opportunity to enroll in flexible college and career pathways and programs that fit their needs
- Double the number of credits awarded to students participating in dual and concurrent enrollment courses of their choice
- Increase student participation in Advanced Placement courses by 11 percentage points
- Increase the number of juniors and seniors earning industry-recognized credentials by 5 percentage points

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RIDE WILL

Organize and approve opportunities for student and adult access to college and career ready education and training programs that yield portable credits and/or credentials

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding student access to early college and early career education and training programs that yield portable credits and credentials
- Expanding and deepening college and career counseling services, including the use of individualized learning plans (ILP) to inform youth and adult decision-making

OUR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PARTNERS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding early college access programs and supporting students' participation

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY CAN HELP BY…

- Partnering with schools in the development and management of career and technical education programs

RIDE WILL

Develop statewide articulation agreements with postsecondary education and industry partners that will streamline and simplify the process for districts and schools to offer post-secondary credit to school-age youth

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Utilizing articulation agreements with postsecondary and industry partners to offer personalized college and career-ready courses for students

OUR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PARTNERS CAN HELP BY…

- Collaborating with the Rhode Island Department of Education to develop statewide articulation agreements with the K-12 system that will streamline and simplify the process for districts and schools to offer postsecondary credit to school-age youth

RIDE WILL

Collaborate with school districts, adult education providers, and business partners to offer recognized career-ready credentials and skill transcripts

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing students with access to state-recognized career-ready credentials and skill transcripts

EMPLOYERS AND INTERNSHIP PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Partnering with school districts to complete employability skills assessments and transcripts

RIDE WILL

Fund, performance monitor, and set priorities for adult educational services in partnership with high-quality providers

ADULT EDUCATION PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Delivering responsive and relevant adult educational services

GLOBALLY COMPETENT GRADUATES

PREPARING OUR NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL CITIZENS

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to become a state in which all of our high-school graduates are globally competent and prepared for the global labor market. All of our graduates will be ready to investigate the world, recognize the perspectives of others, communicate their ideas to diverse audiences, and take actions to improve conditions in our world. Preparing our students to be global citizens requires investing in the social and emotional health of our students, building the cultural competence of students and educators, and expanding student access to dual-language and world language instruction. The diversity of Rhode Island is an asset that will help us prepare our graduates for success in local and global society.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND WELLNESS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Rhode Island graduates possess the social and emotional skills necessary to persevere through challenging circumstances, to work in partnership with others, and to develop a growth mindset
- Increase the percentage of students and families who describe their school and their educators as welcoming and culturally respectful

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RIDE WILL

Develop standards for social and emotional learning in kindergarten through grade 12 and recommend curriculum and best-practice approaches for meeting these standards

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing professional development for support professionals, educators and school leaders on social and emotional skills development
- Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate and practice skills related to social and emotional learning

RIDE WILL

Collaborate with school districts and key educational partners to measure and improve school climate

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Collecting and using data on school climate to improve the culture of schools

RIDE WILL

Collaborate with public and private mental- and behavioral-health providers to expand the quality and quantity of in-school mental- and behavioral-health services

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Partnering with mental-health providers to expand student access to high-quality mental- and behavioral-health services in schools

COMMUNITY AND MUNICIPAL PARTNERS CAN HELP BY…

- Committing public and private resources to assist schools in supporting the social and emotional needs of students
- Collaborating with schools to co-locate high quality mental and behavioral health services in schools

STATE AGENCIES AND HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS CAN HELP BY…

- Creatively partnering with schools to increase student access to low- or no-cost mental- and behavioral health services

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding the focus on social and emotional learning as part of the pre-service classroom and practicum experience

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

KEY OUTCOME

- Aspiring educators and leaders prepared through Rhode Island's educator preparation programs have increased instruction on cultural competency and its role in classrooms and schools

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RIDE WILL

Adopt cultural competency standards and promote a statewide understanding of those standards

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Implementing statewide cultural competency standards for educators and students

RIDE WILL

Work with school districts and educator preparation programs to prepare current and pre-service educators in cultural competency

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing professional development for educators and leaders on cultural competency

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Preparing aspiring educators in cultural competency standards and practice

RIDE WILL

Promote best practices that develop students' cultural competency

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing direct instruction in cultural competency
- Providing students with opportunities to demonstrate and practice cultural competency skills
- Providing or expanding students' access to activities that promote healthy cultural identity and rich peer-based experiences
- Welcoming and engaging with all families, especially those with diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds

DUAL-LANGUAGE AND WORLD LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increase students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 accessing high-quality, proficiency-based language programs by 10 percentage points
- Double the number of students participating in dual-language programs that focus jointly on English and world language literacy and fluency
- 14% of high-school graduates earn the Rhode Island seal of biliteracy

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RIDE WILL

Promote the expansion of dual-language and world language programming and promote biliteracy for all students

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Expanding student access in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 to dual-language and world language instruction and application
- School committees supporting the district and school-level expansion of dual-language and world language programs

RIDE WILL

Adopt a biliteracy seal that students can earn based on their level of proficiency

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

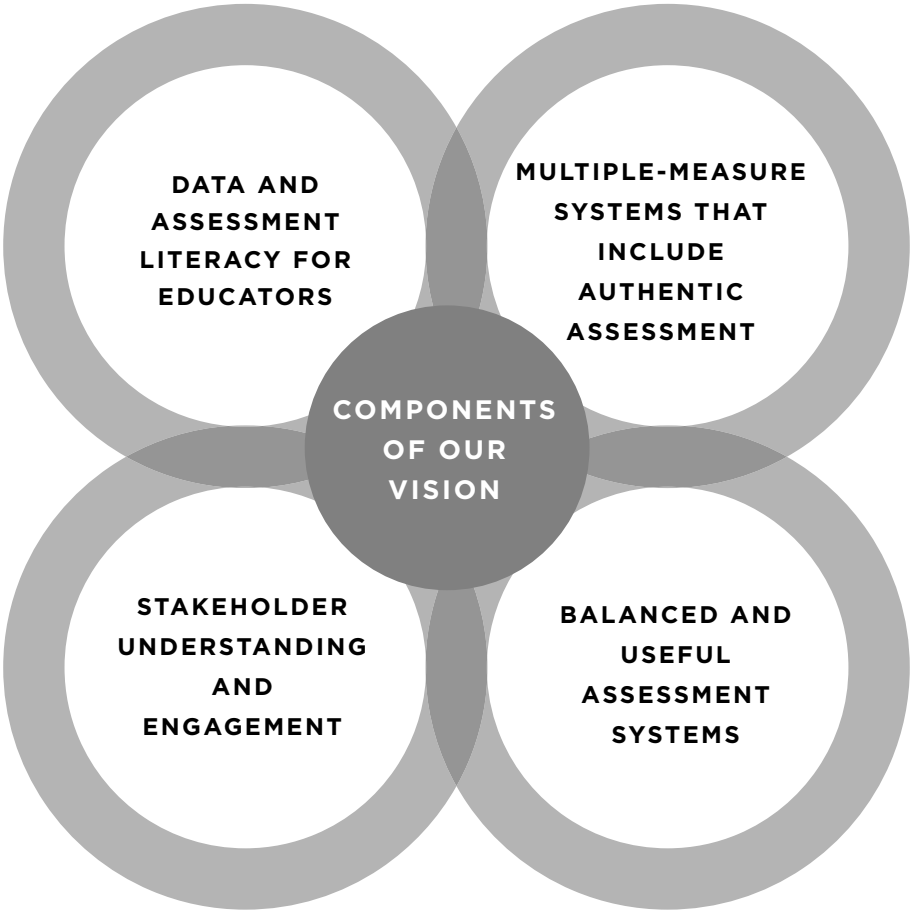
- Awarding the seal of biliteracy to eligible students

INFORMED INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION-MAKING

USING ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS THAT WORK FOR SCHOOLS, EDUCATORS, AND STUDENTS

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to link assessments to curriculum and to instructional practices in order to improve teaching and learning in every classroom. Our robust, manageable assessment systems will ensure that educators have the information they need to improve and adapt their classroom practices. Students, educators, and families will understand the purpose of assessments and how assessments align with the teaching and learning that takes place in school every day. There will be a balance between instruction and assessment so as to meet the needs of educators and of students.



DATA AND ASSESSMENT LITERACY FOR EDUCATORS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Educators are skilled users of data on student learning to make instructional decisions that support increased student achievement
- Rhode Island has published guidance and tools to build assessment literacy and the use of assessment data to support teaching and learning and inform curriculum development

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RIDE WILL

Create and implement a statewide vision for development and use of assessments that improve teaching and learning and are useful to educators at the state, district, and school levels

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Creating and implementing the statewide vision for assessment literacy in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education and other districts

RIDE WILL

Support a statewide focus on assessment literacy that includes the vetting of high-quality staff development focusing on assessment development and data use; the creation of best-practice assessment timelines, templates, and resources; and the establishment of cadres of highly trained educators who partner with schools and districts to improve assessment practices and assessment literacy statewide

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing rich professional development opportunities that focus on assessment literacy
- Utilizing best practice assessment timelines and templates to improve assessment practices and the use of data
- Using assessment and other educational data to inform teaching and learning
- Providing structured time for professional collaboration on assessment and its connection to classroom practice (e.g., examining student work, studying calibration practices, creating "broader" assessments)

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR EDUCATORS CAN HELP BY…

- Providing their membership with professional development opportunities that focus on the effective use of assessment systems, data, and assessment literacy

EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS CAN HELP BY…

- Enhancing instruction in assessment tools and types, assessment literacy, and the use of data to support instructional decision-making

MULTIPLE-MEASURE SYSTEMS THAT INCLUDE AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

KEY OUTCOMES

- An increased number of schools and districts use multiple and high-quality assessments as part of a comprehensive, instructionally supportive assessment system that informs student learning
- The Rhode Island state and federal accountability system includes multiple valid and reliable measures of school performance

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RIDE WILL

Support school and district teams to develop robust, valid, and manageable comprehensive assessment systems that use multiple, modern, and diverse types of assessments

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing comprehensive assessment systems that use multiple measures with a focus on meeting the needs of individual students

RIDE WILL

Investigate and pursue innovative forms of assessment and promising data platforms that support instructional decision-making

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Working in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education to pilot emerging, innovative assessment forms and promising platforms that support instructional decision-making

BALANCED AND USEFUL ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

KEY OUTCOMES

- Schools and districts achieve an appropriate balance between classroom instruction and the administration of high-quality assessments that support teaching and learning and inform curriculum development
- School and district assessment practices include formative, interim, and summative tools that are useful in the day-to-day practice of teaching and learning

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RIDE WILL

Examine state and local assessment practices in partnership with school districts to ensure that an appropriate amount of time and personnel are invested in the administration of state and local assessments

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Examining current district, school, and classroom assessment practices to ensure that there is an appropriate balance of time dedicated to instruction and to assessment

RIDE WILL

Support school districts in the development of a balanced set of assessments that include multiple measures and an appropriate blend of formative, interim, and summative assessments that provide valid, reliable, and useful data to inform instruction

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Examining current assessment practices to develop a balanced set of assessments that include multiple measures and an appropriate blend of formative, interim, and summative assessments that provide valid, reliable, and useful data to inform instruction

STAKEHOLDER UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGEMENT

KEY OUTCOMES

- Educators, students, families, and the community-at-large understand the purpose of assessments and how the process of documenting and communicating student learning is used to improve teaching and learning and ensure that all students are making progress
- Students are involved in their own assessment so that they understand and can talk about their level of knowledge and skills and set goals based on this information

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RIDE WILL

Develop useful communication strategies, tools, and reports that help families, students, and the community access and understand educational data

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing strategies to engage families in understanding the important role assessments play and how assessments benefit students and improve their academic achievement
- Engaging students in making meaningful decisions about their education by providing them with useful and relevant educational and assessment data
- Empowering students with opportunities to provide meaningful feedback on their educational experiences
- Developing and implementing strategies, tools, and systems at the local level to track, analyze, and report data on student performance

ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY, AND PARENT-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP BY…

- Actively engaging students, families, and the community in understanding the role and importance of assessments in improving students' academic achievement

PARENT-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP BY…

- Engaging and preparing families to access, understand, and use relevant educational data

STUDENT-CENTERED RESOURCE INVESTMENTS

INVESTING TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

OUR VISION FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

Rhode Island aspires to invest education dollars and to manage public-school assets with a focus on meeting the needs of students, teachers, and schools. The wise use of resources will require many of us to change our spending habits and to actively pursue new funding sources; increased state and local school funding cannot solve all of the problems Rhode Island faces. Recognizing the importance of our school facilities, Rhode Island aspires to meet high standards for school construction and renovation, while prioritizing school facilities with the greatest need.

INCREASED RESOURCE FLEXIBILITY

KEY OUTCOMES

- Increase competitive and philanthropic funding for the strategic priorities set forth in this strategic plan
- Increased flexibility in resource allocation that enables education leaders at the state and local levels to invest in the areas that have the greatest impact on student learning

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RIDE WILL

Vigorously pursue competitive and philanthropic funding to achieve the priorities set forth in this strategic plan

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Vigorously pursuing competitive and philanthropic funding to achieve the priorities set forth in this strategic plan

CORE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS CAN HELP BY…

- Vigorously pursuing competitive and philanthropic funding to achieve the priorities set forth in this strategic plan

RIDE WILL

Advocate for relief from prescriptive policies and regulations and promote and provide autonomy for school districts to invest resources to meet student needs

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Making maximum use of available state flexibility and advocating for local policy flexibility to make independent resource investment decisions

IMPROVED USE OF FISCAL DATA

KEY OUTCOMES

- School districts, school committees, and the community have access to and make good use of state and local financial reports and tools
- Increase in the number of those who access RIDE-published fiscal data

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RIDE WILL

Provide useful metrics, reports, and tools that blend fiscal and program data to support informed budget and program decisions

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Utilizing metrics, reports, and tools that blend fiscal and program data to support informed budget and program decisions
- Providing professional development for school leaders on the appropriate metrics, reports, and tools that blend personnel, assessment, and resource data to help school leaders make informed decisions
- Partnering with the Rhode Island Department of Education and other educational professionals to increase school committee members' understanding of fiscal data, educational budgets, and wise financial management practices

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR EDUCATORS CAN HELP BY…

- Working within their membership to increase understanding of fiscal data, educational budgets, and informed budget decisions

RIDE WILL

Collect and share best practices to support improved state and local budget creation, including multi-year budgeting that aligns with strategic priorities

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Using best practices in school budgeting that include fiscal data and expense and revenue projections on a multi-year horizon
- School committees advocating for the use of best practices in school budgeting that include expense and revenue projections on a multi-year horizon

IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE FUNDING FORMULA

KEY OUTCOME

- Rhode Island's funding formula for aid to education supports the ability of the state and local communities to provide equitable student access to high-quality educational programs, services, and facilities across Rhode Island

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RIDE WILL

In participation with core stakeholders, study the funding formula to review its success in delivering equitable access to high-quality programs, services, and facilities across Rhode Island

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Collaborating with the Rhode Island Department of Education to assess the state funding formula, focusing on the accurate identification of strengths, weaknesses, and proposed refinement

RIDE WILL

Develop a proposal for refinement of the funding formula that responds to the results of its study and improves its delivery of equitable access to high-quality programs, services, and facilities across Rhode Island

RESPONSIBLE STATE AND DISTRICT RESOURCE INVESTMENT

KEY OUTCOME

- Through increased state, regional, and local efficiencies, service sharing, best practices, and cost management, Rhode Island achieves savings at the state and local level and redirects funds towards educational priorities

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RIDE WILL

Support district and school leaders to develop budgets that systematically invest in the programs likely to yield the greatest benefits to students and incrementally adjust investments with limited benefits to student learning

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Using best-in-class budget processes and tools
- Routinely using state and local data to evaluate educational program success and using that information to inform investment decisions

RIDE WILL

Promote student-centered investment decisions by leading and promoting collaboration across agencies and school districts to eliminate duplication of services and expenses and to maximize savings

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Partnering with other school districts to achieve savings through the sharing of services and through other cost-containment programs and reinvesting savings in high-impact educational programs
- Optimizing economies of scale
- Fostering partnerships with postsecondary-education, business, and community partners and organizations for expanded learning opportunities

OTHER STATE AGENCIES CAN HELP BY…

- Working together to make the best use of funding opportunities, to eliminate duplication, and to focus on student success

POSTSECONDARY-EDUCATION, BUSINESS, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS, AND PRIVATE AND NONPROFIT AGENCIES CAN HELP BY…

- Working to increase and improve the fiscal, human, and operational resources in school districts and schools
- Providing in-kind and financial resources for meaningful learning experiences for students outside the school day, year, and building

IMPROVED SCHOOL FACILITIES

KEY OUTCOMES

- Statewide assessment of public school facilities is completed and results in a definable prioritization report based on Rhode Island adequacy standards for public school facilities
- Increase the number of schools below the minimum threshold of adequacy that receive state support through school housing
- A state and local school facilities program that focuses on ensuring our students learn in educationally appropriate facilities, maximizes available space and cost efficiency, and protects our investments in school facilities

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RIDE WILL

Develop facilities-adequacy standards to drive state and local facilities planning, promote investments in our highest-need school facilities, and equitably address statewide facilities' needs

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Conducting school facility analysis and participating in a statewide independent review of school facilities
- School committees supporting and advocating for prudent district pursuit of state and local funding for critical facilities improvements and projects
- Investing in improvements to maintain safe and healthy school facilities

RIDE WILL

Manage the school-construction program to promote cost efficiency, space utilization, and asset protection to maximize investments and minimize state and municipal indebtedness

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS CAN HELP BY…

- Developing and maintaining strong asset protection programs
- Conducting educational facility analysis to identify opportunities for optimizing utilization for all school facilities, including co-locating youth and community-serving programs
- Working with municipal partners to establish a local capital reserve fund to reduce an overreliance on borrowing

RHODE ISLAND CITIES AND TOWNS CAN HELP BY…

- Supporting reasonable asset-protection needs for school facilities
- Establishing a district capital reserve fund to support small school-facilities projects
- Limiting bonding and other financing to larger, long-term projects in order to reduce debt and interest costs

AREAS OF JOINT WORK

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

In order to ensure the success of students and educators across the PK-20 continuum, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) and the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) are committed to partnering together on the following three priority areas: workforce readiness, early college access and success, and teacher preparation. The success of this joint plan depends on the ability to collect, analyze, and report data across both systems. Comprehensive and coordinated data analysis will improve decision-making, support greater transparency and alignment, and promote student success.

PRIORITY AREA 1: WORKFORCE READINESS

PK-12 & ADULT EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK	SHARED OUTCOMES & AVAILABLE MEASURES	HIGHER EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK
Increase youth and adult access to and participation in credential-bearing education and training programs	Increase in access to and participation in career training opportunities in all areas, with an emphasis in state priority sectors • CTE concentrator participation rates: 2020 goal of a 15% increase* • Number of CTE programs in state priority sectors: 2020 goal a 25% increase • Number of higher education courses of study in state priority sectors: TBD	Align and expand academic and vocational offerings in areas of current and projected workforce needs
Partner with business and industry that support relevant skill development in youth and adults		Partner with business and industry to broaden relevant learning opportunities for students
Expand access hands-on learning opportunities for learners K-12		Expand the opportunities for experiential learning and soft-skills training
Develop career awareness and counseling programs that are connected to business and industry		Develop robust career advising programs that are connected to business and industry
Create coordinated college and career pathways that enable Rhode Island youth and adults to progress to and through postsecondary training and education programs	Increase in number of industry-recognized credentials earned by youth and adults • K-12 credential earning rates: 2020 goal of a 14% increase • Higher education credential earning rates: TBD	Create coordinated college and career pathways that enable Rhode Island youth and adults to progress to and through postsecondary training and education programs

* All change represented as a percentage point change

PRIORITY AREA 2: EARLY COLLEGE ACCESS AND COLLEGE SUCCESS

PK-12 & ADULT EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK

- Expand and improve college and career counseling services to youth and adults, including financial aid advising
- Establish statewide articulation agreements that expand student access to college-credit-bearing programs
- Expand course offerings in concurrent enrollment programs
- Increase student participation in and credit-earning rates in dual and concurrent enrollment and Advanced Placement courses
- Establish a statewide college-ready standard through the alignment of PK-12 and higher education standards and assessments
- Collect and analyze data on student performance and risk factors to promote postsecondary enrollment and success

SHARED OUTCOMES & AVAILABLE MEASURES

- Increase in postsecondary persistence and completion rates for Rhode Island high school graduates
  - Persistence measure for recent RI high school graduates: TBD
  - Completion measure for recent RI high school graduates: TBD
- Decrease in remediation rates
  - Remediation rate for recent RI high school graduates: TBD
- Increase in student participation in early college access programs
  - Student enrollment in dual and concurrent courses: TBD
  - Number of dual and concurrent enrollment courses offered: TBD
  - Number of college credits earned by high school students: 2020 goal of 10,000 credits earned
- Establishment of a statewide college-ready standard and an assessment tool or tools for its measurement
- Increase in FAFSA completion rates: TBD
- Increase in 529 plan utilization: TBD

HIGHER EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK

- Implement best practices for academic, career, and financial aid advising, with particular attention to addressing the needs of at-risk students
- Ensure that freshman placement are clearly articulated with performance in high school courses
- Establish statewide articulation agreements that expand student access to college-credit-bearing programs
- Expand dual enrollment offerings at public institutions
- Establish a statewide college-ready standard through the alignment of PK-12 and higher education standards and assessments
- Collect and analyze data on student performance and risk factors to promote postsecondary enrollment and success

PRIORITY AREA 3: TEACHER PREPARATION

PK-12 & ADULT EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK	SHARED OUTCOMES & AVAILABLE MEASURES	HIGHER EDUCATION: AREAS OF WORK
Collaborate with teacher preparation programs to expand candidate exposure to blended learning, personalization, cultural competency, social and emotional learning, assessment literacy, and early childhood development and education	Increase in partnerships between school districts and Rhode Island teacher preparation programs • Student teacher placements in urban schools: TBD • Innovative partnerships that enhance both K-12 schools and teacher prep program quality	Ensure that teacher preparation curricula at public institutions meet outcome certification requirements and address the needs of employers, specifically RI school districts
Collaborate with teacher preparation programs to enhance pre-service exposure to and training in urban schools	Increase in placement and retention of graduates of Rhode Island teacher preparation programs in Rhode Island public schools, with an emphasis on urban placements • 3-year retention rate for recent graduates of RI teacher prep programs: TBD • Placement and retention rates for RI teacher prep program graduates in urban RI public schools: TBD	Provide incentives to attract and retain excellent education graduates
Provide incentives to attract and retain excellent education graduates		Ensure that educator training programs recruit and retain students in shortage areas, including educators of color and those trained in STEM areas
Support recruitment efforts for shortage areas and educators of color	Increase statewide percentage of educators meeting needs in shortage areas by focusing on • Percentage of current Rhode Island educators meeting diversity indicators • Decrease in the number of emergency certifications in shortage areas • Number of graduates from educator preparation programs meeting diversity indicators • Number of graduates from educator preparation programs in STEM areas	

SAILING AHEAD

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION (2015-2020)

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INTRODUCTION

Hope is the Rhode Island state motto, and there are many reasons to be optimistic about public postsecondary education in Rhode Island.

Strong momentum exists at the state level from the legislature and the governor, at the campus level from our three institutions of higher learning, and at the community level from students, parents, and employers. Increased state funding for our colleges and university, establishing the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, and creating the Council on Postsecondary Education of the Board of Education demonstrate Rhode Island's commitment to better align public higher education with the educational and economic needs of the state.

As many other states have come to realize, transforming postsecondary education requires more than small improvements or pilot programs. This is a time for bold, strategic, and systemic change. This five-year plan charts a course toward a system of higher education where Rhode Islanders have access to high-quality public education that they can afford, where they have the supports they need to succeed, and where they graduate with the skills employers want in today's complex and changing economy.

WHERE WE ARE

Budget instability as a result of the recent recession and rising student debt has significantly impacted public higher education in states across the nation, including Rhode Island. Historical data on funding levels reveal that state support for higher education institutions has declined steadily and precipitously since 1980. Figures show that Rhode Island is funding the public colleges and university at levels below its support for them in 1963, ranking 42nd nationally in its support for higher education.[1] These figures are improving thanks to Governor Raimondo's and the General Assembly's support for higher education in the state budget.

At the same time, the costs of higher education have continued to rise, and students are expected to bear an ever greater share. Currently, Rhode Island students and families pay 70.1% of the costs of public higher education (much higher than the national average of 47.1% and 5th highest nationwide).[2] These increasing costs limit access to postsecondary training and education, especially for underserved and underrepresented populations. Flagship institutions like the University of Rhode Island have responded by increasing institutional resources dedicated to financial aid, but they have a limited ability to expand aid further to keep up with student needs.

Financial considerations are not the only challenge for students seeking a postsecondary credential. Many students lack the necessary social and institutional support structures to help them complete their programs of study. Other students struggle with competing priorities, such as having to work or care for loved ones, while others lack a clear vision of how their studies advance their goals. In Rhode Island, populations of color face particular challenges, with attainment rates 26% lower on average than whites.[3]

And yet, earning a postsecondary credential is more important than ever. Estimates suggest that by 2020, 71% of Rhode Island jobs will require an industry certificate or college degree.[4] Currently, only 60% of Rhode Islanders have the necessary qualifications. This difference points to a "skills gap" between the training employers require and the preparation of our workforce. Insufficient support for human capital development and university research has contributed to the current inability of our state to transform itself from a primarily low-skilled, industrial based economy to a more sustainable, diversified modern economy.

Other states are moving aggressively to address these challenges by expanding college access, raising completion rates, aligning degree and certificate programs with the needs of employers, and strengthening institutional capacity.

WHERE WE'RE HEADED

In order to become more competitive and build greater prosperity, the Ocean State needs a coordinated, comprehensive system of public higher education that is responsive to the state's economic and demographic changes. This strategic plan provides a framework for change and charts a clear course ahead. It includes values that will inform the next five years of work, as well as priorities for action. Implementing this plan will require input and effort from key stakeholders: the Council of Postsecondary Education, Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, the three public institutions of higher learning (University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island), and the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as well as students, families, faculty, business and political leaders, and community members.

VALUES

Our values inform both the overarching goals for our system of higher education and the processes for achieving those goals.

EXCELLENCE

Excellence is the cornerstone of higher education. Students must gain the knowledge and skills to excel in their lives and work, and faculty must continue to excel in pedagogy and research so that they can be the knowledge drivers of our state. Other goals should not compromise excellence in academic standards.

EQUITY

Equity focuses on eliminating disparities around higher education access, affordability, and attainment. This is especially important for underserved and underrepresented populations, whose opportunities have historically been limited by factors including race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, and family educational background.

INVESTMENT

Investment means committing financial, institutional, and community resources to transforming our public system of higher education so that it becomes a more accessible and affordable pathway for our citizens and greater economic driver for our state.

PARTNERSHIP

Partnership requires coordinated and collaborative efforts by all stakeholders to improve higher education in Rhode Island.

INNOVATION

Innovation drives creative new programs and products, fuels business and industry, and leads the way to new solutions for society's most pressing issues.

IMPACT

Impact describes the purpose behind the endeavors undertaken in higher education. Individual and collective contributions, such as teaching, learning, research, and service, promote the greater good at the local, national, and global levels.

PRIORITIES

The following four priorities offer a framework for setting goals, initiating policies and programs, and measuring success in public higher education in Rhode Island over the next five years (2015-2020).

Higher attainment
Opportunities to access and afford college
Prosperous economy
Effective institutions

HIGHER ATTAINMENT

Completing a postsecondary credential brings opportunities for improved quality of life, higher lifetime earnings, stronger community engagement, and greater personal growth and fulfillment. Rhode Island has committed to the goal of improving statewide attainment to 60% by 2025,[5] and it is important to meet this ambitious goal without compromising our commitment to excellence. According to data recently published by the Lumina Foundation, 44% of the state's working-age adults (25-64) have an associate degree or higher.[6] This figure is significantly lower for populations of color. Among the black population, attainment is just over 30%, while among the Latino population the rate is even lower at 18%. There is no time to lose in addressing these disparities and improving our overall attainment rate.

TARGETS BY 2020

- **51.9% statewide postsecondary attainment[7]**
- **45,125 more degree holders ages 25-64 = 1814 additional new grads per year**
- **50% increase in attainment among Latino and black populations**

STRATEGIES

1. Support institutions in developing measures to evaluate persistence and attainment as part of performance-funding formula.
2. Support institutions to improve rates of persistence and attainment, especially for traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations.
   a) Partner with institutions to expand college completion programs to re-engage Rhode Islanders with some college credits and help them progress to completion.
   b) Partner with institutions to improve curriculum alignment and develop a general education core.
   c) Identify and implement best practices for reducing excess credits.
   d) Identify and implement best practices for promoting student resilience and engagement.
3. Support institutions in implementing components of the Complete College Rhode Island plan.
   a) Support institutions in implementing interventions to accelerate time to degree.
   b) Support institutions in establishing or expanding guided pathways.
   c) Support institutions in implementing or expanding structured schedules and/or learning communities.

OPPORTUNITES TO ACCESS AND AFFORD COLLEGE

Historical data on funding levels highlight the critical need for calculated, deliberate investments in higher education that ensure a postsecondary credential is attainable and affordable for all Rhode Islanders. Research by Ruffalo Noel Levitz points to two affordability thresholds that make a difference for students' enrollment, persistence, and completion: (1) having tuition, fees, and books covered; and (2) having 70% of total cost of attendance met.[8] Getting as many students as possible to these thresholds will make a significant positive impact on attainment in Rhode Island.

TARGETS BY 2020

- **100% of low-income[9] in-state students covered for cost of tuition, fees, and books at RI public institutions through grants, scholarships, and federal need-based student loans**
- **33% of low-income in-state students covered for 70% of the total of cost attendance (tuition/books/fees/room/board) at RI public institutions through grants, scholarships, and federal need-based student loans**
- **33% reduction in average debt of graduates from public institutions**

STRATEGIES

1. Implement last-dollar scholarship program to get more students across affordability thresholds.
2. Identify and add alternative revenue streams for need-based and merit-based financial aid.
   a) Advocate for increase in state funding for need-based financial aid for resident students.
   b) Secure available private and federal funding that can support student financial aid.
   c) Develop community-based sponsorships of resident students.
3. Incentivize institutions to reduce dependency on in-state student tuition funds, as compared with other funding sources.
4. Encourage institutions to increase need-based and merit-based financial aid.
5. Advocate for expanding student loan forgiveness programs.
6. Coordinate with Treasurer's office to expand utilization of state 529 plan.
7. Coordinate with other state offices and agencies to expand utilization of higher education tax incentives.

PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

The national and Rhode Island economy has changed significantly over the last generation as a result of technological advances and the globalization of markets and the workforce. Research shows that certain factors promote prosperity within this new economic landscape: (1) density of skilled workers; (2) access to good schools, colleges, universities, and health care; and (3) community leadership. Research also suggests that local economies, rather than global, national, or even regional economies, will drive overall growth. To attract new business investment and build a thriving economy, Rhode Island must commit to retaining its graduates and building communities with a greater density of educated citizens.

TARGETS BY 2020

- **20% increase in total # new graduates from URI, RIC, and CCRI in high-demand, high-wage areas**
- **10% increase in # recent graduates from URI, RIC, and CCRI entering state and national workforce**
- **Increase in economic impact of postsecondary education for Rhode Island's businesses and communities**

STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate with the Department of Labor and Training and the Governor's Workforce Board to map the alignment of academic and vocational offerings with current and projected workforce needs for the state.

2. Increase number of graduates with skills necessary for high-demand, high-wage fields.
   a) Partner with institutions to expand capacity in current programs that prepare students for high-demand, high-wage fields.
   b) Partner with institutions to develop new programs of study that meet identified needs in high-demand, high-wage fields.
   c) Partner with institutions to develop stackable credentials in key fields to promote education and skills training at all levels of the workforce and encourage progress in moving up career ladders.

3. Ensure that all students are prepared to enter workforce immediately after graduation.
   a) Partner with institutions to conduct learning outcomes assessments that demonstrate how curriculum advances 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, analysis, application, and communication.
   b) Partner with institutions to expand experiential learning opportunities in coordination with businesses and communities, including project-based learning, internships, co-ops, and volunteer programs.
   c) Partner with institutions to incorporate soft-skills training into their curriculum and extracurricular activities.
   d) Partner with institutions to develop more robust career advising that engages the business community.

4. Partner with institutions to increase economic impact of business partnerships and research, especially at the local and state levels.

EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

In order to ensure a strong and equitable community, Rhode Island must invest in higher education as a top priority. Struggling against decades of budget cutbacks, our institutions lack the funding needed to fulfill their mission, support our students, and drive their research initiatives. Rhode Island must commit itself to increasing funding for public higher education. This will be especially important as the system of higher education must increase its capacity to meet the ambitious goal of 60% attainment by 2025. At the same time, our institutions of higher learning must maximize the resources available to them and attract new revenue from federal and private sources. Moreover, we must develop a greater capacity to collect, analyze, and report system-wide data to inform decision making, monitor institutional effectiveness, improve accountability and transparency, and promote student success. This necessitates investing in a system to maintain and analyze comprehensive data on our institutions, facilities, students, and graduates.

TARGETS BY 2020

- **Diversification of revenue streams for higher education**
- **Restoration of state support to pre-recession ratios**
- **Increase in operational efficiencies**
- **Comprehensive data management system implemented**

STRATEGIES

1. Identify and secure additional revenue streams for postsecondary education.
   a) Advocate for more state funding for postsecondary education.
   b) Apply for and secure federal and private grant monies to support institutional capacity and research.

2. Establish and monitor performance-funding measures for each institution.

3. Coordinate with institutions to ensure they have sufficient capacity to meet goals for student attainment.

4. Streamline operations to reduce costs throughout system.
   a) Absorb the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the RI Higher Education Assistance Authority (RIHEAA) within the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC).
   b) Review institutional operations to ensure efficient utilization and coordination of assets.
   c) Encourage institutions to maximize use of classroom space.
   d) Review capital improvement plans submitted by institutions to eliminate inefficiencies.
   e) Join NC-SARA consortium to streamline costs for engaging in distance learning initiatives.

5. Demonstrate progress toward achieving system-wide targets and objectives.
   a) Expand internal capacity to collect and analyze system-wide data.
   b) Develop processes for publishing system-wide data to improve accountability and transparency.
   c) Conduct studies comparing RI postsecondary data with peer systems to identify strengths and challenges of system.

SAILING AHEAD

At the end of WWII, the US made a bold decision to invest in the future of its economy by providing $1.9 billion annually to the education of veterans. This commitment to human capital gave people hope for personal and collective prosperity and enabled the WWII generation to become the "greatest generation."

It is possible that Rhode Island's next greatest generation is waiting for the opportunity to propel RI forward. Let us harness the winds of change and sail forth with the goal of greater prosperity for our students and communities.

ENDNOTES

1. See Postsecondary Education Opportunity, "State Investment and Disinvestment in Higher Education, FY 1961 to FY 2014" (Issue 260, February 2014).

2. See State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, "State Higher Education Finance (SHEF): FY 2014" (2015), Figure 9, p. 33: http://www.sheeo.org/sites/default/files/project-files/SHEF%20FY%202014-20150410.pdf.

3. Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner calculations based on US census figures and Rhode Island data in Lumina Foundation, "A Stronger Nation through Higher Education" (2015): http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/#rhode-island.

4. See Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce, "Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020" (2013), Figure 6, p. 8: https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/StateProjections_6.1.15_agc_v2.pdf.

5. Postsecondary attainment includes an associate degree or higher.

6. See Rhode Island data in the Lumina Foundation's "Stronger Nation" Report (2015) above at n. 3. The report includes state-by-state progress toward the goal of 60% attainment by 2025.

7. Following the Lumina "Stronger Nation" Report (2015), postsecondary attainment figures include adults of working-age (25-64) with a two-year or four-year college degree.

8. Measures adapted from Ruffalo Noel Levitz, "Access Alert: How the Neediest Students Can Gain Access and Succeed through Strategic Financial Aid Awarding" (2007): https://www.ruffalonl.com/documents/shared/Papers_and_Research/2007/ACCESSreport_1007.pdf.

9. "Low-income" is understood as any student who is eligible for a federal Pell grant.

GLOSSARY OF COMMON PK-12 EDUCATION TERMS

To support a common understanding of this plan, the team has developed this glossary of the terms found throughout the plan. The glossary provides us with the language to define and explore complex education issues facing the state, avoid misunderstandings in discussions and application, and promote mutual understanding as we all work together to support public education in Rhode Island.

Adult Education:
classes offered by school districts, community colleges, and other public and private organizations for residents 18 years or older who are not enrolled in a high school

Assessment Literacy:
knowledge about the development and use of assessments to improve teaching and learning

Assessment:
the wide variety of methods that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition of students from preschool through college and adulthood

Assessment, Forms of:

Formative:
assessments for student learning that take place in a variety of forms (such as quizzes, informal questioning, observations, discussions with students) during the instructional process to get real-time feedback about what students are learning so that instructional approaches, materials, and supports can be modified accordingly;

Interim:
assessments of and for student learning that take place periodically throughout a course or school year to determine if students are on track to performing well or meeting academic standards

Summative:
evaluations of student learning at the conclusion of a specific instructional period to determine if students have learned what was expected within a defined instructional period

Authentic Learning
a wide variety of educational and instructional techniques focused on what students are taught in school to real-world issues, problems, and applications so that what they are learning mirrors real-life contexts, equips them with practical and useful skills, and addresses topics that are relevant and applicable to their lives outside of school; also known as Experiential Learning

Benchmark:
a standard or point of reference against which things may be compared or assessed

Best Practice:
a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has been proven to reliably lead to a desired result

Blended Learning:
the practice of using both in-person and technology-based learning experiences when teaching students; for example, students using online tools with teacher support during class; another example, a mix of being taught by a teacher in the classroom and portions completed independently online outside the classroom

Calibration Practices:
multiple individuals work together to score a sample of submissions/work products before dividing and individually grading the remaining student work in order to minimize variation in interpretation of students' work

Career Continuum:
the stages through which a professional's career progresses; for educators: from preservice, to beginning, to career, to teacher leader, often to administrator

Career and Technical Education (CTE):
organized academic and work-related education that offers students opportunities for career awareness, career exploration and career preparation focused on providing them with the academic and technical knowledge and work-related skills necessary to be successful in postsecondary education, training activities, and employment

Career-Ready (Students):
a term generally applied to students who are considered to be equipped with the knowledge and skills deemed to be essential for success in the modern workforce; also related to 21st century skills

College-Ready (Students):
a term generally applied to students who are considered to be equipped with the knowledge and skills deemed to be essential for success in university, college, and community-college programs

Comprehensive Assessment System:
a coordinated plan for monitoring the academic achievement of students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 in order to increase student learning by producing actionable data, evaluating the effectiveness of programs, and ensuring that all students are making progress toward achieving learning goals

Credentialing Program:
a program in which students have the opportunity to earn credentials (educational certificate, degree, certification, or government-issued license) that verify skill mastery, educational attainment, and the authority to perform a task or operation

Credit Bearing Learning Opportunities:
courses, internships, and other learning opportunities that fulfill academic requirements for high school graduation or for postsecondary-level course credit

Cultural Competence:
having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn, build on, and respect the varying cultural and community norms of others; ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry

Curriculum:
the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program; in Rhode Island, curriculum is under local control – that is, developed and/or chosen by each local school district

Curriculum Framework:
an organized plan or set of standards or learning outcomes that defines the content to be learned in terms of clear, definable standards of what the student should know and be able to do.

Data Literacy:
the ability to read, create, and communicate data as usable information that supports student success

Developmental Milestones/Benchmarks:
a set of functional skills or age-specific tasks that most children can do at a certain age range; although each milestone has an age level, the actual age when a normally developing child reaches that milestone can vary quite a bit

Differentiated Learning/Instruction:
use by educators of a wide variety of teaching techniques and lesson adaptions to instruct a diverse group of students, with diverse learning needs, in the same course, classroom, or learning environment so that all students master the essential knowledge, concepts, and skills needed but through the use of different instructional methods that best fit the students' distinct learning needs; these different instructional methods are often based upon students' differing readiness levels, learning profiles, and interests

Diversity:
the quality or state of having many different forms, types, ideas or people who are different races or who have different cultures in a group or organization

Dual-Enrollment (Students, Program):
a student is enrolled in a secondary school while simultaneously enrolled part-time or full-time as a non-matriculating student at a postsecondary institution, such as a community college, college or university

Dual-Language (Education, Instruction, Programs):
academic programs that are taught in two languages to develop students' fluency in both languages and also their academic content knowledge, as well as the knowledge, skills, and cultural proficiencies needed to succeed in an academic program; curriculum, instructional methods, and structure vary from program to program

Early Childhood Education:
educational programs and strategies geared toward children from birth to the age of eight years

Early College Access Program:
a program where students are enrolled – concurrently/at the same time – in college or university courses and in a high school; also known as Dual Enrollment Programs

Educational Data:
Information from multiple sources that is used to support student learning and manage schools, including information about student/teacher attendance, services students receive, student academic development and growth, teacher preparation information, postsecondary success and remediation rates, etc.

Employability Skills Transcript:
an inventory documenting a student's acquisition of general skills in the categories of applied knowledge, effective relationships, and workplace skills that are necessary for success in the labor market leading to sustainable employment and career growth

English Language Learner:
students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes or backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their own academic courses

Equity:
in education, the term equity refers to the principle of fairness; while it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of equality, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not necessarily equal; it is has been said that "equity is the process; equality is the outcome," given that equity—what is fair and just—may not, in the process of educating students, reflect strict equality—what is applied, allocated, or distributed equally

Experiential Learning:
see **Authentic Learning**

Expanded Learning Opportunity:
educational experience that is beyond a typical course sequence offering and occurs outside of traditional classroom settings or school buildings, such as internships, apprenticeships, independent research projects, online classes, travel, community-service projects, or dual-enrollment experiences; also known as **Extended Learning Opportunity**

Funding Formula:
a formula for the direct distribution of state financial support to public school districts in Rhode Island

Global Competence:
the set of broad skills that ensure student preparedness in the areas of 21st century skills, language proficiency, cultural/global awareness, and social-emotional learning

Growth Mindset:
a belief that intelligence and other basic abilities can be developed, which results in a commitment to learning and a focus on improvement

High Expectations:
any effort to set the same high educational standards for all students in a class, school, or education system; the concept is based on a belief that a failure to hold all students to high expectations effectively denies them access to a high-quality education, since the educational achievement of students tends to rise or fall in direct relation to the expectations placed upon them

High Quality:
worthwhile, effective; meets a high standard of excellence, rigorous; targets or standards determined and agreed to collectively by stakeholders to exceed the ordinarily accepted standard

Individualized Learning Plan (ILP):
a plan developed by students (in collaboration with teachers, counselors, and parents) as a way to help them achieve short- and long-term learning goals while feeling a stronger sense of ownership over their education, most commonly at the middle school and high school levels (not to be confused with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is developed for students who are found eligible for special education services)

Induction (Coaching):
high-quality education-data-driven, instructionally focused support given to beginning teachers during their first year of teaching in a classroom

Innovation:
the act or process of introducing new ideas, devices, or methods

Innovation Fund:
public and/or private grant funding that supports the expansion of an effective program with strong results to other places where the program is needed

Internship:
any official or formal program to provide practical experience for beginners in an occupation or profession

Intervention:
the systematic process of assessment and planning employed to remediate or prevent a social, educational, or developmental problem

Job Embedded Professional Development:
a "learn-try-evaluate cycle" that repeats over time, includes active teacher involvement, has immediate implementation, and is more effective than traditional professional development because educators work on concepts or initiatives more than once; educators have a chance to learn, try it in their own classrooms, and then evaluate their performance

Kindergarten Readiness:
what students should know and be able to do upon entering kindergarten, as set forth in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards

Learning Environment:
refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn; since students may learn in a wide variety of settings, such as outside-of-school locations and outdoor environments, the term is often used as a more accurate or preferred alternative to classroom, which has more limited and traditional connotations—a room with rows of desks and a chalkboard, for example

Learning Pathway:
the specific courses, academic programs, and learning experiences that individual students complete as they progress in their education toward graduation

Local Efficiencies:
projects that will achieve savings and improve municipal efficiency through shared services, cooperative agreements, mergers, consolidations and dissolutions

Multiple Knowledge Bases:
a knowledge base in education means the knowledge someone has that is specific to a particular subject or content area, gained through education or experience; there are two basic types: academic knowledge (e.g., science knowledge base) that includes the content knowledge that a person needs to be deemed competent and knowledgeable in that content area, and professional knowledge, which in education means knowledge of teaching concepts and skills (e.g., pedagogy, instructional strategies, evaluating and meeting knowledge levels of learners); in the context of this plan, multiple knowledge bases means the presence of multiple diverse areas of knowledge (either within a person or within a group) that can be drawn from to support and enhance students' educational experiences, learning styles, and academic growth

Multiple Measures (Assessment) Systems:
a coordinated plan that uses multiple forms (e.g., formative, interim, summative) and types (e.g., test, quiz, exam, selected response, written response, performance or portfolio task) of valid and reliable assessments to monitoring the academic achievement of students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12

Multiple Pathways:
the implementation of the idea that learning can occur at different times and in different places, including the classroom, the community, a workplace, outdoors, online, etc. which results in schools creating alternative learning experiences that may be better suited to some students while expanding the number and type of learning options available to all students

One-to-One (1:1; one student to one computer):
programs that provide all students in a school, district, or state with their own laptop, netbook, tablet computer, or other mobile device; essentially, one device for every student

Peer Observation:
a formal or informal observation of teaching, while it is taking place in a classroom or other learning environment, that is typically conducted by fellow teachers

Personalized Learning:
a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students; its implementation may differ from district to district and school to school; also known as Student-Centered Learning

Pre-Kindergarten:
early childhood education programs enrolling children between the ages of 3 and 6 in order to ensure developmentally appropriate early development and learning experiences based on Rhode Island's Early Learning and Development Standards

Pre-Service Educators:
individuals who are enrolled in a Rhode Island Approved Program for educator preparation

Preparedness:
to be or have been made equipped with the knowledge and skills deemed essential for success in university, college, and community-college programs, or career pursuits

Professional Development (Professional Learning):
a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning in a variety of formats that is intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness

Professional Learning Community (PLC):
a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students

Proficiency:
a determination of the level of knowledge or skills a student has achieved that is based on academic standards or a standards-based measurement system (such as a summative assessment); this determination can also relate to the specific or set levels, scales, or cut-off scores on standardized tests and other forms of assessment

Proficiency-Based (Learning, Model):
systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education

Reflection on Practice (Reflective Practice):
an important strategy used by educators to inform and develop their teaching abilities and improve student learning; it is a cycle where educators think about or reflect on the decisions they made while teaching and what happened as a result, then consider the educational theory that applies, then decide what to do differently next time, and then put that decision into action

Retention (of educators and leaders):
keeping educators and leaders in the education profession

Rigor:
a term widely used by educators to describe instruction, schoolwork, learning experiences, and educational expectations that are academically, intellectually, and personally challenging; for example, rigorous learning experiences help students understand knowledge and concepts that are complex, ambiguous, or contentious, and help students acquire skills that can be applied in a variety of educational, career, and civic contexts throughout their lives

Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS):
The Standards represent expectations for young children's learning and continual growth in all areas: intellectual, physical, and emotional. Further, they provide a common language for measuring progress toward achieving specific learning goals.

Rubric:
an evaluation tool or set of guidelines used to promote the consistent application of learning expectations, learning objectives, or learning standards in the classroom, or to measure their attainment against a consistent set of criteria

Safety:
generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity

School Climate/Culture:
the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions; it also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity; also known as School Culture

Screening:
a wide variety of assessments that are used to determine whether students may need specialized assistance or services, or whether they are ready to begin a course, grade level, or academic program

Seal of Biliteracy:
an award given by a school or district in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation

Social Emotional Learning:
the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions

Standards:
concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education; they describe educational objectives, but they do not describe any particular teaching practice, curriculum, or assessment method

Standards-Based (Expectations):
systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating understanding or mastery of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education

Student Engagement:
the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress their education

Student-Centered Learning:
see **Personalized Learning**

Support:
tools and resources for students, parents, educators and community; each group needing assistance to achieve or support the achievements of students

Support System:
a wide variety of instructional methods, educational services, or school resources provided to students in the effort to help them accelerate their learning progress, catch up with their peers, meet academic standards, or generally succeed in school; may include tutoring sessions, supplemental courses, after-school programs, teacher advisors, volunteer mentors, alternative ways of grouping/counseling/instructing students, and may be provided to individual students, specific student populations, or all students in a school

Tiered Certification System:
a system for education certification where licensees demonstrate increased teaching efficacy and growth to advance to higher licensure levels

Twenty-First (21st) Century Skills:
a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces (e.g., critical thinking, innovation, collaboration)

World-Class Standards:
content standards that are equivalent in rigor, expectations, and scope to the content standards of the highest performing countries in the world

World Language:
a language known or spoken in many countries

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