OPC Role for RI Higher Education

RIOPC works to ensure, promote, and expand postsecondary attainment among all Rhode Islanders by providing an effective system of postsecondary education and workforce training that is high quality, equitable, accessible, affordable, and aligned to pre-kindergarten-12 education and the economy. RIOPC provides supports to students and partners through six methods:

01. Strategic Planning

02. Policy Development

03. Fiscal Management

04. Policy Recommendation and Program Implementation

05. Data Analysis, Reporting, and Transparency

06. Regulatory and Administration

Source: Rhode Island Strategic Plan for Postsecondary Education 2022-2027

Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner | February 7, 2024
RIOPC’s mission and strategic plan align with six metrics that evaluate the success of our programs and initiatives:

**Metrics**

1. Increase the statewide FAFSA completion rate.
2. Increase participation in early college opportunities with a focus on the Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) community.
3. Increase participation in workforce training programs through RIOPC's Education Centers (e.g., B2W/RJRI, HPEI, ECCE) and RI Reconnect.
4. Increase the persistence rate of RI Last Dollar Scholarship and Grant Program recipients from one academic year to the next.
5. Increase the statewide postsecondary attainment rate.
6. Increase the statewide postsecondary attainment rate for Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).

Source: Rhode Island Strategic Plan for Postsecondary Education 2022-2027
Employment of workers with more than a high school education increased by 11.5 million of the 11.6 million net new jobs added in the post 2008 recovery.

Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, America’s Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots, 2016
Measuring Postsecondary Attainment in Rhode Island: 70% by 2030

53% of Rhode Islanders possess a postsecondary degree or credential.

45% have attained postsecondary degrees.

6.9% possess a postsecondary credential.

RIOPC maintains postsecondary attainment data for each municipality in Rhode Island. The information is updated annually and available on RIOPC’s website.
RIOPC Supports Postsecondary Education

Emerging Opportunities & Challenges to Meet 70% by 2030 Goal

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<th>Challenges:</th>
<th>RIOPC Initiatives to Overcome Challenges:</th>
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<td>• Decreasing K12-postsecondary population</td>
<td>• Education Centers: Westerly, Woonsocket, Rhode Island Nursing Center</td>
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<td>• Aging Workforce</td>
<td>• Rhode Island Reconnect (statewide wrap-around)</td>
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<td>• Student Success &amp; Completion Rates</td>
<td>• Enhanced State Longitudinal Data System – Rhode Island Longitudinal Data System (RILDS)</td>
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<td>• Lack of Precision, Measuring Postsecondary outcomes</td>
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<td>• Expanding Scholarship/Affordability Mechanisms</td>
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RIOPC manages three education centers throughout the State. These centers provide prime-age adults with workforce development and training that aligns with employer needs.

01 Our education centers served 10,351 students in 2023. Since 2017, over 40,000 students have been served across our three education centers.

02 The Westerly Education Center is a national leader with strong public private partnerships, particularly with Electric Boat. This partnership has been a pipeline for hundreds of Rhode Islanders in securing good paying jobs at EB.

03 The Rhode Island Nursing Education Center is a state-of-the-art facility providing URI and RIC nursing students with 21st century technology while obtaining their degree.

04 The Woonsocket Education Center serves northern RI providing students with the opportunity to receive workforce development training or complete a CCRI course.
Rhode Island Reconnect

Helping Rhode Islanders change careers, learn a new trade, or get on the path to a degree or certificate.

RI Reconnect is a Success

- Since January 2020, RI Reconnect has helped 3,311 Rhode Islanders re-enroll in college, enroll for the first time, get job training, or secure jobs.
  - 63.2% identified as students of color
- Close to 87% of RI Reconnect participants have completed a workforce training or credential/degree conferring program.
- 70.5% of RI Reconnect participants are prime-age workers, 25 – 54 years old.
- 77.2% of RI Reconnect participants enrolled in courses at CCRI, RIC, or URI.
- Over 15,570 support services have been provided to RI Reconnect participants since January 2020.
Rhode Island Longitudinal Data System (RILDS)

Formerly known as RI DataHUB, RILDS is Rhode Island’s repository for linked, inter-agency, longitudinal data.

• RILDS moved to RIOPC on November 4, 2023, where it continues to form new data-sharing partnerships.

• RILDS integrates, links and centralizes data from over the past three-plus decades and across sectors, including education, employment & health to provide the most accurate information about our state.

• RIOPC now offers legislators & staff a policy, research & data service that relies upon RIOPC research and/or data & analysis from RILDS to assist with the preparation of legislation or other initiatives related to postsecondary education and workforce development.
Thank You!

Senate Committee on Education

February 7, 2024