Rhode Island’s holistic approach to supporting education to workforce pathways for all learners is driven by strong cross-sector collaboration. PrepareRI, a cross-agency initiative, has helped to strengthen programs across K-12, postsecondary, and the department of labor. As part of this work Rhode Island has defined priority sectors for high-skill, high-demand industries and is streamlining learner access, enrollment and attainment to the aligned programs of study, work-based learning, college acceleration and industry credentials. To continue this state-wide momentum and ensure all learners are supported, Rhode Island can consider codifying in legislation effective systems and structures to maintain the longevity of this work. Additionally, continued data collection and analysis is imperative to refining or developing new programs to ensure all learners have equitable access and attainment of high-quality pathways.

**STRENGTHS**

- Rhode Island’s high level of cross-agency collaboration in pathway development led by PrepareRI.
- Rhode Island’s statewide K-12 work-based learning program with partnership.
- Development grants and statewide summer internship opportunity.
- Rhode Island’s innovative approach to stackable credentials including a transfer minor program and the Computer Networking stackable credential program.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Conduct a full audit of K-12 and postsecondary CTE program offerings for alignment, quality and equitable access.
- Strengthen the longitudinal data system, including governance, to evaluate program quality and learner outcomes.
- Implement co-requisite remediation initiative for K-12 and postsecondary learners that allows for concurrent enrollment in a non-credit remedial course and a college credit-bearing course.
LEARNER PATHWAYS

Ensure vertical alignment to workforce needs, robust funding, collaboration across agencies and equitable access for all students.

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<td>STATE CROSS-AGENCY SHARED PRIORITIES</td>
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HIGH-QUALITY CTE PROGRAMS
Align all CTE programs with high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations that reflect the state’s economic and workforce priorities. Ensure that these programs feature the academic and technical skills and knowledge learners will need to be successful.

TARGETED CTE PROGRAM FUNDING
Dedicate state funding for CTE programs—but only if they are aligned to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations. Target specific funds for pathway completion and demonstrated learner outcomes.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS
Conduct a biennial return on investment (ROI) analysis of CTE programs to assess whether all learners have access to high-demand, high-skill and high-wage pathways. Collect school- and student-level data to evaluate outcomes of CTE programs against established shared metrics for quality and equity.

STATE CROSS-AGENCY SHARED PRIORITIES
Establish shared priorities and collective accountability across state agencies and education systems for learner pathway development, supports and success. Ensure that business and industry have a seat at the table and can lead discussions related to demand and training requirements.
Rhode Island’s CTE courses are governed by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and the CTE Board of Trustees. CTE programs are part of a statewide cross-sector and cross-agency initiative, PrepareRI. PrepareRI’s initiative focuses holistically on preparing Rhode Island Youth “with the skills they need for the jobs that pay.” Prepare RI includes career exploration, career education (CTE), college credit, and jobs and internships.

Rhode Island offers CTE courses across the 16 nationally recognized career clusters. CTE programs are located in nearly all districts, postsecondary institutions, adult skills training facilities, and CTE centers. In K-12, all CTE courses are required to align to a set of industry-specific program standards established by the CTE Board. (H7795/S2780 requires the CTE Board to be industry aligned and to focus on program quality and outcomes.) These standards include guidance on a series of at least three courses, a work-based learning experience, an industry credential or postsecondary credit, and employability skills. All CTE standards are annually reviewed every 4 years to alignment to the statewide priority sectors, (high-skill, high-demand industry sectors), identified in the Long-Term Economic Development Plan (LTEDP). The LTEDP, managed out of the department of Commerce, provides a detailed analysis of Rhode Island’s economy, based on labor market information, historical data, and likely future trends. Additionally, the CTE Board oversees statewide industry advisories which includes representation from K-12, postsecondary, and industry for the standards development and review process.

In terms of alignment with postsecondary, each of RIDE’s CTE programs is mapped to an aligned “Guided Pathway” at the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) and University of Rhode Island (URI). (Guided Pathways are groups of majors at URI and CCRI, similar to career clusters.)

As part of the “priority sector” alignment process, Rhode Island can consider conducting a thorough audit of its existing K-12 and postsecondary CTE programs to (a) ensure that all promoted programs align with state workforce and economic demands and projections in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations; (b) determine where there are program gap opportunities in both access and attainment for historically underserved learners; and (c) as certain program quality and rigor aligned to correct academic and technical knowledge and skills. A plan can be developed and implemented to phase out all misaligned or low-quality programs and phase in revised or new high-quality programs of study fully reflective of the state’s priorities.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**
- Delaware – Career and Technical Education Programs
- Tennessee – Career and Technical Education Programs
- Texas – Program of Study Initiative

**RESOURCES**
- PrepareRI
- RIDE - CTE
- Long-Term Economic Development Plan
- Perkins V Plan
- Industry Standards Summary Sheet
- PrepareRI Dashboard

**POLICIES**
- 2012 CTE Regulations
- RIGL §16-45.1 Career and Technical Education
- RIGL §16-45-6 Regional Vocational Schools
- RIGL §42-64.17-1 Long-Term Economic Development
- RIGL §16-53 Rhode Island Board of Trustees on Career and Technical Education
Targeted CTE Program Funding

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Rhode Island statute acknowledges that CTE programs and career pathways may have higher-than-average costs associated with “facilities, equipment maintenance and repair, and supplies” especially in “critical and emerging” industries. RIDE’s Categorial Funding policy outlines that the funds can be used to offset high cost of quality programs and expansion (program equipment fund). To be eligible for funding, CTE programs must be in a priority sector and meet the program standards adopted by the CTE board. For the program equipment fund RIDE dedicates an annual amount of no less than $1 million per year.

Rhode Island has recently implemented a series of one-time grants to support CTE. In 2018, PrepareRI and RIDE offered the $1.2 million CTE Innovation and Equity Grants which were designed to help schools increase access to historically underserved students. In 2019, PrepareRI offered two additional CTE grants. The career exploration grants offered schools the opportunity to integrate career exploration into school day coursework.PrepareRI leverages a portion of the $6 million Perkins V funding to sustain these grants.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
The priority sector requirement for state and Perkins CTE funding is a great first step. Rhode Island can consider sustained funding to support the startup and sustainment of high-quality, aligned programs for items such as equipment, incentives for hard-to-fill teacher positions, or teacher training to further incentivize districts and schools to strengthen alignment and build out high-quality work-based learning opportunities for students. Rhode Island can continue to collect data from recently deployed grants to study the impact and return on investment of the grants.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Indiana – Funding Methodology
- Ohio – Innovative Workforce Incentive Program
- Texas – House Bill 3

RESOURCES
- PrepareRI- Grants
- CTE Fund Working Group
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
- RIGL §16-7.2-6(b) The Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act
- Rhode Island CTE: Categorical Funding Policy
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

No formal legislation that governs an audit for quality and equity could be identified. Rhode Island’s CTE regulations, however, are aimed at increasing equity by allowing students to enroll in any CTE program in the state for free—even if a student’s desired program is in another school district. A list of current CTE programs can be found on the EnrollRI platform, with plans to allow students to use this platform to enroll in CTE programs in the near future.

Rhode Island’s CTE Perkins V plan outlines information on CTE Program Report cards which contain program completion rate, graduation rate, postsecondary outcome and equity data points – participation gap (difference in the percentage of students from each subgroup who are participants in the CTE program compared to their percentage among the entire school population) and completion gap (difference in the percentage of students from each subgroup who are completers in the CTE program compared to their percentage among the entire school population). RIDE is required by statute to provide an annual report to the General Assembly on the outcomes of our CTE programs. RIDE is currently exploring the use of post-program wage data for graduates. The CTE Report Card information is currently a part of Perkins V program accountability reporting and district-level report cards.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

As part of the “priority sector” alignment process, Rhode Island can conduct a thorough audit to (1) see where high-quality aligned programs are being offered and where access gaps exist and (2) understand student participation and completion data by student groups to determine potential inequities. ExcelinEd’s Auditing a State Career and Technical Education Program for Quality playbook provides a roadmap for developing and implementing an audit.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Colorado – Return on Investment Reports
- Florida – Executive Order 19-31 and House Bill 7071 (NOTE: While promising, both could be strengthened by more focused analyses on equity and quality of offerings.)

RESOURCES

- Perkins V Plan
- RI Talent Dashboard
- PrepareRI Dashboard
- EnrollRI

POLICIES

- 2012 CTE Regulations
Rhode Island has a robust history of leveraging state cross-agency shared priorities to support its education to workforce commitment. The central state cross-agency group is PrepareRI, an interagency group including the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Governor’s Workforce Board (GWB), Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) and Department of Labor and Transportation (DLT). This strategic cross-sector group is working to ensure that “all students have the advanced skills they need for today’s in-demand jobs.” PrepareRI’s four focus areas are: career exploration, career education, college credit and jobs and internships. In 2022 PrepareRI released an updated strategic plan which focuses the work on overlap across agencies and transition points for learners.

Supporting PrepareRI is CTEBOT, a cross-sector group with industry representation, legislatively charged with goal-setting, affirming CTE course standards and alignment to the workforce.

Rhode Island can continue leveraging Prepare RI’s convening power to promote greater collaboration and integration between the state’s secondary and postsecondary education to workforce pathways and programs. These efforts could include defining roles and responsibilities, broader data collection and data sharing across systems. Rhode Island can also consider codifying the effective systems and structures of cross-sector initiatives in statute.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Delaware – [Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education (DACCTE)]
- Indiana – [Governor’s Workforce Cabinet]
- Washington – [Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board]

**RESOURCES**

- [PrepareRI]
- [CTE Board of Trustees]
- [PrepareRI Action Plan]
- [PrepareRI Dashboard]
- [PrepareRI 2021 Annual Report]

**POLICIES**

- [RIGL 16-45.1 Career and Technical Education]
- [RIGL 16-53 Rhode Island Board of Trustees on Career and Technical Education]
- [RIGL 42-102 Governor’s Workforce Board]
- [RIGL 42-102 Career Pathways Advisory Committee]
POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

Streamline postsecondary learning and empower high school students to earn credit to reduce the time required to earn postsecondary degrees.

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COLLEGE ACCELERATION

Provide and incentivize a range of options for learners to earn college credit while in high school. Ensure that all learners have access and financial support to accelerate their journey to a postsecondary credential.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDENTIALS

Implement a consistent state policy for awarding postsecondary program or elective credit for prior learning, work experience and earned industry credentials.

COLLEGE ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

Establish statewide articulation agreements to ensure college credits earned in K–12 or at one institution transfer and count toward a degree at another. Minimize or eliminate credit loss and misalignment for transitioning learners.

REMEDIATION

Replace outdated developmental and remedial education with college credit bearing options paired with intensive supports. Adopt co-requisite remediation programs or offer remediation to learners before they graduate high school.
POSTSECONDARY ACCELERATION

STATE CASE STUDY

KEY POLICY

College Acceleration

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

In 2013, the General Assembly passed the Dual Enrollment Equal Opportunity Act, resulting in the adoption of a statewide policy for dual and concurrent enrollment, allowing students to take college courses while earning credit at both the secondary school and the higher education institution.

One core goal of PrepareRI is that every student will graduate high school with college credit or an industry credential. The PrepareRI Dual Enrollment Fund provides funding for tuition and fees at public postsecondary institutions. This funding has been braided with general revenue funds to be able to partner with private colleges in the state to offer dual course opportunities as well through the All Course Network (more information below). Rhode Island’s focus on college acceleration has seen sustained growth in terms of access and attainment, growing from a pass rate of 10.8% in 2010 to 25.2% in 2020. CS4RI (Computer science for Rhode Island) and Two Codes are two additional cross-sector initiatives to increase student access to computer science courses, including college acceleration options.

Prepare RI’s All Course Network (ACN) provides access to dual enrollment, advanced placement, work-based learning, career preparation, and enrichment supplemental course opportunities. Private colleges also participate through ACN for dual enrollment options. In January 2021, RIDE received a federal grant (RethinkRI) to expand seats available through the ACN. Additionally, Rhode Island College offers an Early Enrollment Program (EEP). EEP is a concurrent enrollment program that offers college credit from Rhode Island College to high school students. Interestingly, EEP courses are available to both high school students in Rhode Island (for free) and Massachusetts (at a reduced cost of $65 a credit). Rhode Island also has 5 P-Tech high schools/programs, which is managed by the RI Commerce Corporation in conjunction with CCRI.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Rhode Island can continue to strengthen its data collection and reporting of outcomes for all its college acceleration options disaggregated by demographics such as race, socioeconomic status, language, students with disabilities and region. This can help target any issues of student access and equity that may exist across the state.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

• Florida – High School Acceleration Programs and Statewide Agreements on Credit
• Idaho – Advanced Opportunities Funding
• Louisiana – TOPS-Tech Early Start Program
• North Carolina – Automatic Enrollment

RESOURCES

• PrepareRI Dashboard
• Prepare RI
• RIDE Advanced Coursework
• All Course Network – Enroll RI
• Early Enrollment Program
• CS4RI

POLICIES

• RIGL 16-100 Dual Enrollment Equal Opportunity Act
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Community College Rhode Island (CCRI), Rhode Island College (RIC) and the University of Rhode Island (URI) all have policies for credit for prior learning and credentials, but it does not appear that the policies are consistent across the three.

CCRI has the most robust system of offering credit for prior learning. They offer CLEP or departmental challenge exams, credit for corporate trainings that have been ACE evaluated, credit for military training and standardized credit for workplace training such as police academy, apprenticeships and real estate. Students also have the opportunity to demonstrate prior learning through the creation and submission of a portfolio assessment.

RIC and URI also both accept credit for CLEP and military service. A proficiency examination can be undertaken at URI for certain courses. At both institutions, a prior learning assessment portfolio can be submitted, but at URI, a portfolio development course must be taken first.

RIC and URI also recognize CCRI’s awarding of prior learning credit but have some stipulations on how these credits transfer.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island, through the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, can consider developing a statewide policy for prior learning assessments for public institutions and streamlining communications for learners to know their options.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Prior Learning Assessment Credit Policy
- Kentucky – Prior Learning Initiative
- Ohio – Military Strategic Implementation Team

RESOURCES
- CCRI- prior learning assessment FAQs
- RIC- Prior Learning
- URI- AP credit
- URI- prior learning (university manual)
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
- N/A
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education’s (RICPE) policy on articulation and transfer between public institutions of higher education in Rhode Island has been in place since 1979 and was updated in 2016 to be more inclusive. Students who start at CCRI are conditionally admitted to RIC or URI if they have a 2.4 GPA and 60 credits that will be applied to a bachelor’s degree. CCRI to both URI and RIC has a series of 2+2 program transfer plans that students can follow for seamless transferring between the two institutions.

Rhode Island does not have a transferable core of lower-division courses nor a statewide common course numbering system; however, it does have a course equivalency database. CCRI, URI, and RIC all accept AP, IB and dual enrollment for credit but slight variations may exist on the type/number of credit awarded.

RITransfers website, which highlights the policy of the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) for articulation/transfer and the agreements developed among the state’s three public institutions, contains information for students to determine if their courses will transfer for credit to other Rhode Island public institutions.

Rhode Island’s Perkins V plan states that they will utilize some of their Perkins reserve funds for postsecondary partnership grants. Eligible postsecondary institutions may apply for Postsecondary Partnership Grants to better support transcripted, program-aligned college credit earned while in high school CTE programs, and industry-specific teacher professional development.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Rhode Island can consider standardizing the type of credit awarded for AP, IB, and dual and concurrent enrollment across the state’s higher education institution and standardizing how credits are accepted at Rhode Island College and University of Rhode Island for students who transfer from Community College Rhode Island.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements
- Indiana – Core Transfer Library
- Kentucky – Transfer Articulation Agreements

RESOURCES

- RI Transfers
- Perkins V Summary
- CCRI to RIC: 2+2 Transfer Plans and Transfer Minors
- TES College Source
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES

- RIGL 16-100-4 Dual Enrollment Equal Opportunity Act
- Council on Postsecondary Education-Policy for Articulation and Transfer between Public Institutions of Higher Education
Rhode Island

KEY POLICY

Remediation

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
RIOPC led the statewide process to increase co-requisite remediation in Rhode Island, through convening the Co-Requisite at Scale Institute. CCRI uses multiple measures outside of SAT/ACT scores to determine if students require remedial support and co-requisite remediation. Qualified students are enrolled in a credit-bearing math or English course and a “just in time” support course.

RIC allows freshmen to earn six credits for enrolling in a writing class that includes a co-requisite remedial program, and the college offers a remedial math class for free during the summer. From online research it does not appear the University of Rhode Island does not offer remedial courses but it does offer a writing workshop in the summer.

As part of the PrepareRI initiative, RIDE’s Readiness Project facilitates collaboration between K-12 and postsecondary educational institutions in the state to increase Rhode Island students’ readiness for college. Specifically, the project aims to increase academic readiness for college, streamline matriculation, and improve communication to students and families about postsecondary options. Students can take the Readiness courses as an elective or outside of school time through the All Course Network and multiple LEAs are piloting the courses in school across the state. RIDE also has a Memorandum of Agreement with the three public colleges to honor high school readiness course results for postsecondary placement.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island can increase transparency and communication on remediation options on their higher education websites. Rhode Island can consider expanding co-requisite remediation across all public postsecondary institutions and to dual enrollment high school opportunities.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Georgia – Complete College Georgia
- North Carolina – Multiple Measures of Placement Policy
- Tennessee – Co-Requisite Remediation and Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS)

RESOURCES
- CCRI- Just in Time Math
- Co-Requisite at Scale Institute
- PrepareRI Dashboard
- PrepareRI Readiness Project

POLICIES
- N/A
POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Reduce barriers—such as funding, lack of alignment and missed opportunities—to help more students attain postsecondary credentials.

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**REVERSE TRANSFER CREDENTIALS**
Establish a statewide policy to allow students to earn an associate degree while continuing to work toward a bachelor’s degree. Ensure two-year and four-year college credits can be combined toward the credential.

**LAST DOLLAR/LAST MILE FINANCIAL AID**
Provide dedicated state financial aid to qualifying learners that fills in gaps in federal assistance (last dollar) and promotes attainment for learners just shy of completing a degree (last mile).

**OUTCOMES-BASED FUNDING**
Transition postsecondary funding models from those based on learner enrollment to ones based on learner outcomes. Dedicate more funding to programs and institutions that show demonstrated success in meeting success metrics such as job placement and long-term wage earnings.

**STACKABLE DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS**
Define and promote a combination of industry and academic credentials that reflect articulated pathways to advanced learning and employment. Ensure that postsecondary credential programs are widely accessible to all learners and reflect value in the labor market.
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
The Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education adopted a reverse transfer policy in 2016. The reverse transfer policy allows individuals to apply credits from URI and RIC toward a degree or certificate from the CCRI.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island can consider how to strengthen communications to notify eligible individuals of the reverse transfer process. Currently students have to complete a reverse transfer application to have their transcript reviewed. Rhode Island can study the data for student participation by factors such as race, disability and socioeconomic status to help ensure that there is equitable access to the process.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Reverse Transfer Process
- Florida – Reverse Transfer Statewide Articulation Agreements
- Texas – Reverse Transfer Process

RESOURCES
- RIOPC- Reverse Transfer
- CCRI Reverse Transfer
- Moving the Needle Report
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
- RIGL 16-59 Council on Postsecondary Education
- Council on Postsecondary Education- Reverse Transfer Policy
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Rhode Island Promise, a plan introduced by the state’s governor in 2017 and codified in state legislation, is a last-dollar scholarship that is distributed to CCRI and is applied to students’ bills for tuition and mandatory fees for two years. The original legislation was set to expire with the class entering CCRI in September 2020 but was extended through to students graduating in 2021 and in May 2021, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed legislation to permanently enact the Rhode Island Promise.

This program will not apply funds to certain additional costs including the cost for textbooks, late registration fees, and fees associated with particular academic programs and particular courses, as well as travel costs associated with attendance. Students must maintain a 2.5 grade point average, enroll full time and be recent high school graduates. A student may receive these funds up to age 21; however, the student must provide a documented reason for late graduation. This program has resulted in an increase in enrollment and graduation rates at Rhode Island community colleges.

Additionally, in response to the challenges related to the global COVID-19 pandemic, CCRI implemented three additional types of scholarships: (1) COVID Recovery Scholarship, which provides 2020 high school graduates or GED recipients who did not attend college within Fall 2020-Spring 2021 semesters with the opportunity to attend CCRI tuition free over 2 years; (2) COVID Recovery Scholarship, which provides students who have completed at least 50% of an undergraduate certificate or associate degree, but who did not enroll in college for 2020-21 school year to attend CCRI tuition-free over the next two years; And, (3) COVID Recovery Summer scholarship, which covers tuition for up to two courses in summer 2021 for current or newly enrolled students. The Rhode Island FAFSA initiative is a partnership in which PrepareRI, the College Planning Center and College Advising Corp support our high school seniors and families in completing the FAFSA.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Rhode Island can continue to collect data by student demographics on enrollment, persistence, and degree attainment to use in strengthening supports for the Rhode Island Promise. Rhode Island can consider additional grants for additional related expenses such as childcare or books/lab fees or a grant for emergency needs such as medical expenses or car breakdowns (a finish line grant).

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Florida – Last Mile College Completion Program
- Rhode Island – Rhode Island Promise
- Tennessee – Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect

RESOURCES

- Community College of Rhode Island
- Rhode Island Promise
- Council on Postsecondary Education
- Rhode Island Promise
- Rhode Island Promise Policy Manual
- COVID Recovery Scholarships
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES

- RIGL 16-107 Rhode Island Promise Scholarship
- 2021- Senate Bill No. 79
- RICOP Rhode Island Promise Scholarship Promise Policies and Procedures
KEY POLICY

Outcomes-Based Funding

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Performance Incentive Funding Act, which was designed to promote alignment of the state’s priorities for higher education and institutional policy and practice. In June 2018, the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education approved the Performance Funding Policies and Procedures establishing the processes for the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education to evaluate institutional performance in consultation with the institution’s President and the Council. This included approving performance funding metrics for each institution in the categories of graduation/completion, workforce development, and mission-specific initiatives, including those named in statute (CCRI, RIC and URI). On an annual basis, the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education conducts an evaluation of institutional performance funding reports and make a determination of whether performance has been achieved for each category and metric. As of 2020, performance funding evaluation for URI is the purview of the University’s Board of Trustees.

Workforce development is 20% of the performance funding, and for CCRI and RIC, it includes total certificates and degrees awarded, % high-demand, high-wage certificates and associate degrees awarded. For URI, it includes the number of awarded post bacc. certificates/degrees in high-demand, high-wage fields.

The performance funding is appropriated as additional incentive funding and not part of each postsecondary institutions annual budget.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Rhode Island can consider making the outcomes-based funding a part of the actual annual allotted budget. ExcelinEd’s Education Funding Reform Conceptual Framework for Performance Funding provides information on performance funding for states.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Missouri – Performance Funding
- Tennessee – Outcomes-Based Funding Formula
- Texas – State Technical College Funding Model

RESOURCES

- RIOPC- Performance Funding
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES

- RIGL §16-106 Performance Incentive Funding
- Performance Funding Policies and Procedures
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Through a grant, CCRI created a series of stackable credentials within its Computer and Networking Technology Associate in Science Degree Program. Students were able to complete Certificates in Computer Desktop Technology and/or Computer Networking Technology. All of the credits in these certificates are applicable to the degree program.

Rhode Island has a transfer minor program, an innovative first of its kind policy. Transfer minors are available for specialized areas that Rhode Island College currently does not offer a major or minor for. If a student completes an associate degree at CCRI in one of the 8 programs (such as accounting or law enforcement) they are eligible for a transfer minor on their RIC transcript.

University of Rhode Island has created stackable certificates in Graduate Healthcare Management which can lead to a Master of Science Healthcare Management.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island has some innovative approaches to stackable credentials. Rhode Island can consider how to continue to expand and communicate its stackable credentials across K-12 and postsecondary. Rhode Island can consider developing a process by which postsecondary institutions demonstrate that these credentials are actually “stacking” into credit bearing programs for learners. This could be a combination of both strong data collection/reporting and incentives for learner progression through stacked credentials.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Colorado – Stackable Credential Legislation
• Idaho – SkillStack
• Indiana – Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant

RESOURCES
• CCRI Stackable Credentials - Computer and Networking Technology Associate
• RIC Transfer Minor
• University of Rhode Island Graduate Council Proposal
• PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
• N/A
WORKFORCE READINESS

Ensure the skills, credentials and apprenticeships students pursue help to prepare a strong workforce within the state.

WORK-BASED LEARNING
Establish a statewide K–12 and postsecondary work-based learning program that promotes learning through a series of progressive learner experiences both in the classroom and in a work setting. Provide guidance and support for how education and business and industry collaborate to achieve mutual priorities.

APPRENTICESHIPS
Establish clearly defined program guidance for state-promoted apprenticeships outlining prerequisites, requirements, funding, stakeholder incentives and participant outcomes.

INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS
Ensure all industry credentials earned in K–12 or postsecondary are aligned with high-demand, high-skill, high-wage occupations and valued by state and regional employers.

SKILLS RETRAINING/CREDENTIALING
Identify and promote non-degree programs and credentials that support new, transitioning and displaced learners in career change and advancement. Ensure that supports include funding supports for learners and incentives for participating employers who train or retrain them.
Work-Based Learning

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Work-based learning (WBL) is one of the central focuses of the cross-sector collaboration PrepareRI. Work-based learning (WBL) includes, internships, apprenticeship, service learning, school-based enterprise, and industry projects. Under PrepareRI, the state established the PrepareRI Internship program, through which high school juniors are placed in paid summer internships with employers in a range of industries and can earn college credit. PrepareRI has developed the WBL navigator, an online tool that helps to connect learners and employers to WBL opportunities.

Rhode Island’s Governor’s Workforce Board (GWB) provides guidance, standards and recommendations on work-based learning. The GWB collects extensive data on WBL participation and outcomes through their Department-wide data management system and through a student/employer survey that measures skills growth and other outcomes. To support WBL there have been a series of grants. The Work-Based Learning and College and Career Readiness grants were for qualified organizations to form strategic partnerships to develop and implement high-quality, paid, work-based learning and college and career readiness programming. In 2020-21, Prepare RI offered the Real Skills for Youth Grant (an initiative from the GWB) to support 19 strategic partnerships between industry and education to develop and implement career readiness programming, including paid summer work-based learning experiences.

For postsecondary, WBL exists across all three public institutions. CCRI’s Division of Workforce Partnerships coordinates work-based opportunities for learners. Rhode Island College coordinates internships such as the Computer Science Internship. URI’s Center for Career and Experiential Education supports learners in career building including searching and networking strategies, resume building, and internships.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island can continue to collect data on the various types of work-based learning placements and experiences to gauge student access to consistent high-quality placements and to ensure that the state’s K–12 work-based learning graduation requirement is having its intended outcomes. Rhode Island’s Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner can establish WBL policies in alignment with the GWB to continue the momentum for WBL at the postsecondary level.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Delaware – Work-Based Learning Practicum
- Georgia – Work-Based Learning Framework
- Rhode Island – PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator

RESOURCES
- Prepare RI Work-Based Learning
- WBL Navigator
- Governor’s Workforce Board WBL Guidance
- CCRI Internships and Work-Based Learning
- RIC Computer Science Internship
- URI CCEE

POLICIES
- RI Education Code Chapter 16-80. Rhode Island School-to-Career Transition Act of 1996
- 200-RICR-20-10-3. Regulations Governing Career and Technical Education in Rhode Island
Rhode Island

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Apprenticeships in Rhode Island are coordinated through the Department of Labor and Training (DLT). The DLT apprenticeship office is responsible for registering and communicating apprenticeships that meet state and federal regulations. DLT apprenticeship, however, is partnering with Apprenticeship RI and Building Futures, to help employers build new apprenticeship programs in a variety of industries including healthcare, information technology, marine trades and manufacturing, with the goal of doubling the number of workers trained through apprenticeship within 5 years. In 2020 Apprenticeship RI offered a talent development grant to employers to business service occupations (e.g. information technology, finance/insurance, and professional services) to develop a registered apprenticeship. The Youth Apprenticeship Committee is a committee established under the Statewide Apprenticeship Council with the goal of growing youth apprenticeship as a pathway for young people in the state. Members of the committee include Apprenticeship RI, RIDE, GWB, and DLT.

Rhode Island has one comprehensive youth apprenticeship program, the PrepareRI Youth Apprenticeship program (PRIYA). PRIYA is an opportunity for high school students to earn while they learn as they embark on a specific career pathway while still in high school. PRIYA students work part-time, take classes that directly relate to their employment experience, and work closely with their employer and CCRI to coordinate the beginning of a career path while still in high school.

The GWB supports apprenticeships through its Real Jobs Rhode Island initiative and has employer incentives to participate in/develop trade and non-trade apprenticeship programs (additional information located in the industry engagement incentives policy section).

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
To build on its steady progress, Rhode Island can consider an incentive program for students who are in registered apprenticeship programs to be eligible for reimbursement of tuition, books, required tools and other approved expenses required for participation in the program.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Iowa – Earn and Learn
• Kentucky – Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky and Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship
• New Jersey – Apprenticeship Network
• South Carolina – Apprenticeship Carolina

RESOURCES
• DLT- Apprenticeships
• ApprenticeshipRI
• Building Futures
• PrepareRI Youth Apprenticeship program
• PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
• RIGL 28-45-13 Standards of Apprenticeship Agreements

KEY POLICY
Apprenticeships
**Industry-Valued Credentials**

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

In Rhode Island all CTE courses are required to align to a set of industry-specific program standards established by the CTE board, which include a series of at least three courses, a work-based learning experience aligned to the Governor’s Workforce Board guidance and additional requirements by the CTE Board of Trustees, allow students to earn “culminating credential” of an industry-recognized credential and/or postsecondary credit, and help students gain employability skills.

The RIDE CTE Program Industry standards list which industry credentials the programs of study can culminate in, where applicable. Students outside of CTE programs can receive an industry recognized credential through the All Course Network as well which offers credentials as a supplemental opportunity for students (these credentials are in alignment with the CTE Board recognized list).

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

According to ExcelinEd’s research with Burning Glass for CredentialsMatter.org, in 2017–18, 39 percent of industry credentials earned by Rhode Island K–12 students were asked for by employers and were associated with occupations that pay at least $15 per hour. Rhode Island can continue to strengthen its list of promoted K-12 credentials in collaboration with industry to ensure alignment to high-skill, high-wage, high-demand occupations. Postsecondary can participate in this vetting and alignment process. The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner can strengthen data collection and reporting of credentials earned in postsecondary and their quality/stackability to degrees or additional credentials.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Indiana – [Promoted Industry Certifications](#)
- Kentucky – [Valid Industry Certifications](#)
- Louisiana – [Industry-Based Certification State Focus List](#)

**RESOURCES**

- [RIDE CTE Program Industry Standards Summary Sheet](#)
- [PrepareRI Dashboard](#)

**POLICIES**

- N/A
Rhode Island

**KEY POLICY**

Skills Retraining/Credentialing

**STATE POLICY ANALYSIS**

Up-skilling current employees to advance skills and/or remain competitive is a component of Real Jobs RI (through the Department of Labor). Real Jobs RI is an initiative to increase communication feedback loops from employers to help accelerate supply of qualified individuals through items such as creating programs or removing barriers.

Rhode Island Reconnect (RIR) is designed to support adults in changing careers, learning a new trade or getting on a path to a degree or certificate. RIR provides educational navigators to support interested individuals in planning out their next steps.

The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner manages the Westerly Education Center (WEC), a public private partnership designed to provide high-quality educational programs to meet the projected workforce growth in the region. They also run the Rhode Island Nursing Center (RINEC) that supports workforces educational and training in the healthcare fields. In 2020, the legislature approved a new workforces center to be established in Norther Rhode Island which is expected to open its doors at the end of 2021. Additionally, CRI and RIC both offer skills retraining.

In 2020 Governor Gina M. Raimondo’s launched the “Back to Work RI” initiative to support unemployed individuals, with a specific focus on those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Local industry training providers conduct the trainings through Real Jobs Rhode Island partnerships, as well as schools such as New England Tech and the Community College of Rhode Island. The Department of Labor and Training also launched the Virtual Career Center to connect Rhode Islanders to career services; job seekers can browse job postings and training opportunities, and can even schedule a virtual meeting with a job coach. Additionally, the department of labor and training and the Governor’s workforce board have a job search website- EmployRI.

**OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN**

Rhode Island can continue to collect and analyze data to help get more underserved adults into job training programs and to align job training programs with credential attainment through postsecondary and adult education.

**PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES**

- Indiana – [Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant](#)
- Ohio – [TechCred](#)
- Washington – [Worker Retraining Program](#)

**RESOURCES**

- [Back to Work RI](#)
- [Real Jobs RI](#)
- [SkillsRI](#)
- [Rhode Island Reconnect](#)
- [EmployRI](#)
- [Westerly Education Center](#)

**POLICIES**

- N/A
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

*Incentivize workforce engagement in student pathways and reduce the barriers that keep employers from participating.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>K–12</th>
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<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>BACHELOR’S OR HIGHER</th>
<th>WORKFORCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>LEGAL BARRIERS</strong></td>
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**INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVES**
Establish, sustain and promote a comprehensive set of industry and employer engagement incentives for supporting education to workforce pathways. Incentives may include grant funds, tax credits, or local and regional support services.

**LEGAL BARRIERS**
Remove or lessen legal barriers such as liability insurance, workers’ compensation and worksite age restrictions to provide more learners with work-based learning opportunities.
Industry Engagement Incentives

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
The GWB offers a series of employer incentives through Real Jobs RI. Real Jobs RI grows business led partnerships that build workforce solutions to address their unique workforce challenges. Through Real Jobs RI, businesses can place new employees into immediate job openings, up-skill current employees to advance skills and/or remain competitive, create talent pipelines and assist businesses to advance their priorities.

The Work Immersion Training grants offer up to 50% wage reimbursements to any RI business that provides a temporary paid work experience to college students, CTE high school students and unemployed adults. The Incumbent Worker Training Grants provide grant funding for continuing education, training, and upskilling of incumbent employees at existing Rhode Island employers. The program provides matching reimbursement grants of up to 50% for preapproved training-related costs. The Work Opportunity Tax Credits are available to employers that hire individuals in target populations (such as those qualified for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), veterans, qualified ex-felons, food stamp recipients, and supplemental security income (SSI) recipients. Additional tax credits are available for some new hires and apprenticeship training in specific programs. The non-traditional incentive program provides an incentive of $1,000 per non-trade apprenticeship registered who has completed the probationary period.

The GWB Unified Workforce Development Expenditure and Program report analyzes the workforce programs and outcomes.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island can consider extending the Work Immersion Training Grants and Incumbent Worker Training Grants, currently the application closed in 2020. Rhode Island can also consider incorporating more small businesses into Real Jobs RI to provide holistic support to a wide variety of employers.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
• Georgia – Work-Based Learning Premium Credit
• Indiana – Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant
• Iowa – Tax Credit

RESOURCES
• Real Jobs RI
• Programs + Incentives – GWB (ri.gov)
• Real Skills, Pathways, Jobs Grantee Guide
• PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
• RIGL 42-102-13 Non-traditional Apprenticeship Incentive Program
• H8371 Governor’s Workforce Board
STATE POLICY ANALYSIS

The Governor’s Workforce Board has created a document outlining the legal requirements for employers to participate in internships. PrepareRI’s action plan states that “In consultation with employers and industry representatives, review and revise workplace regulations, including workers’ compensation liability regulations, age limitations and requirements, and other obstacles that currently present barriers to work-based learning opportunities for youth.” The outcomes of this work are located in the GWB Work-Based Learning Guidance document.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN

Rhode Island can consider implementing policies to reduce legal barriers for employers engaging in K–12 and postsecondary worksite-based learning. Rhode Island can consider a partnership with an external company to employ work-based learning students who are then placed at businesses. This helps to reduce many of the burdens such as workers’ compensation liability and other restrictions. Rhode Island could also consider allowing public schools to purchase certain insurance coverage for the benefit of businesses and students participating in CTE programs and provide for some immunity from liability of certain public school students participating in these programs.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

- Kentucky – Apprenticeship Programs & Partnerships
- Rhode Island – Work Immersion Training Grant
- Texas – Insurance Coverage

RESOURCES

- GWB- Legal Questions Around Student Internships
- Prepare RI’s Action Plan
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES

- N/A
To ensure the strength of all the other policies, there must be cross-sector agreement on outcomes, strategies to get there and data to track progress.

**PROGRAM QUALITY MEASURES**
Establish shared statewide definitions and indicators for quality of and success in education to workforce pathways. Ensure these shared priorities extend across agencies and systems and inform decisions about program offerings, funding and outcomes.

**STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM**
Ensure the state’s cross-agency data system collects and reports on data needed to evaluate education workforce programs against shared metrics for quality and success. Data should span agencies and education systems and into the workforce to inform decision-making and drive outcomes.
Rhode Island’s postsecondary attainment goal is that by 2025 70% of Rhode Islanders will have a postsecondary degree or credential.

Through the GWB’s Career Pathways Advisory Committee (CPAC) and PrepareRI, the state has focused on shared agency definitions for career pathway programs and high-demand career fields. All agencies also have a list of shared goals, which are currently being updated to extend to 2025. These shared goals include the following focus areas: employer engagement, industry credentials and college credit, work-based learning, CTE, counseling and career exploration, outcome-focused accountability, aligned funding, and outreach and professional learning. The PrepareRI action plan describes publishing an annual report detailing student performance in career focused indicators such as the number and percentage of students (a) with access to career pathways in high-skill, high-demand sectors or with access to work-based learning opportunities.

The GWB provides a unified workforce development expenditure and program report. The report analyzes participation in the GWB workforce initiatives and outcomes related to the programs such permanent job placements. The RI Talent Dashboard also provides updated education and workforce outcomes.

According to Rhode Island’s Perkins V plan, shared program indicators exist through the Long-Term Economic Development Plan, created every four years by Rhode Island Commerce. The Long-Term Economic Development Plan, provides a detailed analysis of Rhode Island’s economy, based on labor market information, historical data, and likely future trends. This report identifies the high-skill, high-demand industry sectors, known as “Priority Sectors” that are used for awarding Perkins funding.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island, through the GWB and Prepare RI, can continue to strengthen the shared program quality definitions and transparency in reporting progress towards the indicators.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
- Indiana – Governor’s Workforce Cabinet
- Rhode Island – PrepareRI

RESOURCES
- PrepareRI What We Do
- PrepareRI 2020 Annual Report
- PrepareRI Action Plans
- GWB Unified Workforce Development and Expenditure Report
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
- RIGL 42-64.17 Long-term Economic Development Plan
- H8371 Governor’s Workforce Board
State Longitudinal Data System

STATE POLICY ANALYSIS
Rhode Island’s longitudinal data system, Data Hub, is governed by the Rhode Island P20 council. The Data Hub receives data records from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and the public higher education institutions that participate on the Rhode Island P-20 Council.

Additionally, a statewide data analysis organization, DataSpark, housed at the University of Rhode Island, has developed a coordinated data platform, RI Talent Dashboard, that shares information about Rhode Island’s PK-20 outcomes, alongside labor market and other relevant information. This tool is intended to support policy-making at state and local levels.

OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN
Rhode Island can strengthen the RI Talent Dashboard by providing information on longer-term outcomes such as wage attainment.

PROMISING EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES
- Colorado – Talent Pipeline Report
- Florida – Talent Development Council
- Kentucky – KYStats

RESOURCES
- DatasparkRI
- RI Talent Dashboard
- RI Data Hub
- Prepare RI Outcome Indicators and Goals
- PrepareRI Dashboard

POLICIES
- 2014 H7668 Secretary of Education

Rhode Island