



Special Legislative Commission
to Conduct a Comprehensive Review
and Make Recommendations
Regarding the Appropriate State Agency
to House Adult Education

Final Report

Submitted to the
Rhode Island State Senate
April 5, 2019

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Additional Resources from Commission Meetings

Agendas for Commission Meetings:

December 18, 2018

January 14, 2019

January 28, 2019

February 11, 2019

April 1, 2019

Correspondence between Senate Policy Office and R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

2018 Senate Resolution No. 2960

*This Commission was created by Senate Resolution No. 2960,
in the 2018 Legislative Session*



The Honorable Dominick J. Ruggerio
President of the Rhode Island Senate
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear President Ruggerio,

We are pleased to submit the Final Report of the Special Legislative Commission to Conduct a Comprehensive Review and Make Recommendations Regarding the Appropriate State Agency to House Adult Education. This Commission believes Rhode Island must better address the needs of a variety of adult learners so they may contribute to a healthy economy and achieve economic self-sufficiency. This report is the culmination of the Commission's work. It represents collaborative input from members, Adult Education practitioners, and the public, all of whom shared their expertise and insight with the Commission.

The Commission hereby recommends moving Rhode Island's Adult Education programs from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education into the Governor's Workforce Board, within the Department of Labor and Training. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that adult learners gain the necessary education and additional skills they need to participate fully in the workforce and to continue their educational endeavors. The Commission recognizes that the Department of Labor and Training has built strong connections among employers, educators, trainees, and job seekers. Therefore, the Commission is hopeful that such partnerships will allow the Governor's Workforce Board to elevate the importance of Rhode Island's Adult Education programs.

I am especially grateful to all Commission members for their willingness to participate in these discussions, and I appreciate their investment of time and talent to this process.

I respectfully submit to you our Final Report.

Sincerely,

Senator Harold M. Metts
Adult Education Commission Chair

**SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW
AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS
REGARDING THE APPROPRIATE
STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

Commission Attendees

Senator Harold M. Metts
Chair
District 6

Senator James E. Seveney
District 11

Sabine Adrian
Director for Adult Education
Institute for Labor Studies & Research

Shannon Carroll
President and CEO
Genesis Center

Nora Crowley
Interim Executive Director
Governor's Workforce Board
Designee in her absence: Pauline Abetti

Brenda Dann-Messier, Ed.D.
Commissioner
Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
Designee in her absence: Sophie Tan

Meghan L. Hughes, Ph.D.
President
Community College of Rhode Island
Designee in her absence: Julian Alssid

Scott Jensen
Director
Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training
Designee in his absence: Matthew Weldon

Ken Wagner, Ph.D.
Commissioner
Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Designee in his absence: Stephen Osborn

Barry Weiner
Assistant Director for Rehabilitative Services
Official Designee for the
Rhode Island Department of Corrections

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 12, 2018, the Rhode Island Senate read and passed Senate Resolution No. 2960 to create a Special Legislative Commission to Conduct a Comprehensive Review and Make Recommendations Regarding the Appropriate State Agency to House Adult Education. Chaired by Senator Harold M. Metts, this Commission has worked to determine the best way to address the needs of Rhode Island's adult learners. Chairman Metts has emphasized the importance of ensuring that Rhode Island has an educated workforce – a point that economists have emphasized to the Rhode Island Senate during and after the Great Recession. In order to develop and maintain a healthy economy, it is vitally important that Rhode Island address the needs of a variety of adult learners. This Commission is committed to ensuring that Rhode Island's Adult Education services meet students' needs, including basic literacy, the lifelong pursuit of education, and career training that will be useful in acquiring marketable skills and achieving economic self-sufficiency.

The Senate Commission met five times over the course of four months and was charged with presenting its findings and recommendations to the Senate President. Members discussed Rhode Island's current Adult Education system, which is housed in the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and they examined options for relocating Adult Education programs into other state agencies. The Commission recognized that adult learners typically enter the system with a range of needs, including improving their educational skills, gaining the literacy skills necessary to function in today's society, completing secondary and post-secondary education, participating in job-training programs, and securing and retaining employment. The Commission further recognized that adult learners often have different needs and goals than traditional adolescents and post-secondary students, and the Commission understood it is essential that the state's Adult Education system accommodates these students' needs.

Rhode Island's Adult Education system must be collaborative, allowing for inter-agency cooperation and efficiency, and it must maximize limited funding, Commission members agreed. Commission members worked collaboratively, taking input from each other and from presenters. This document represents the final report of the Commission. In response to its analysis and discussions, the Commission recommends six top priorities for improving the state's Adult Education system. Those priorities are enumerated on the next page, and the report further identifies the reasons behind these recommendations.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION

- Build upon the existing collaborative infrastructure in Rhode Island by moving Adult Education from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education into the Governor's Workforce Board, which is located within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training;
- Authorize an Adult Education advisory committee within the Governor's Workforce Board to address all relevant cross-departmental issues and solutions relating to Adult Education needs and services. This work should include seeking guidance from providers and students for the development of the state's plan on Adult Education;
- Require the Adult Education advisory committee to ensure that the state's plan on Adult Education includes a comprehensive framework developed in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and school districts for evaluating the needs of nontraditional students who are 16 or 17 years old and preparing these individuals to enter the workforce and/or postsecondary education. The K-12 education system shall be the first option for such students, before the state plan may allow a determination about whether such students may fit within Adult Education programming under certain circumstances;
- Ensure that Adult Education data is appropriately collected and evaluated in order to guide the state's Adult Education policy and to assist in determining the future needs, demands, and progress of Adult Education programs;
- Require the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training to develop a centralized data intake system to be used by all Adult Education providers so that the needs of Adult Education students can be considered and accommodated, with an emphasis on reducing the current waiting list for services and keeping that list manageable; and
- Allow for a six (6) month transition period to move Adult Education into the Governor's Workforce Board within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, with the transition to be completed by December 31, 2019.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

As the Senate Education Committee began preparations for its seventh annual Senate Education Summit, the Committee recognized that Adult Education services and programs in Rhode Island were a crucial component of the state's education system. The Committee also understood the need to examine the state's Adult Education programs to determine ways they might better serve Rhode Islanders. In 2018, the Rhode Island Senate approved the creation of the Special Legislative Commission to Conduct a Comprehensive Review and Make Recommendations Regarding the Appropriate State Agency to House Adult Education. After the Senate Education Committee developed its legislative action plan for 2019, the Commission began meeting to discuss and research the state's Adult Education system.

Currently, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education oversees the Adult Education system in Rhode Island, through the work of its Office of College and Career Readiness. The program provides basic education, GED preparation, and English language acquisition services through nonprofit agencies. According to research by the Education Commission of the States, the majority of states house their Adult Education programs within their state education agencies dedicated to K-12 education. However, a number of states have begun to take a different approach. Recognizing that adult learners face very different needs and challenges than youth learners, some states now operate their Adult Education programs out of their departments of higher education, their community/technical colleges, or their labor and workforce-oriented departments.

The Commission has determined that it is vital for adult learners to participate in a program that seamlessly coordinates their necessary educational courses with workforce-training programs so they may gain skills that employers in today's society need. However, the Commission also recognizes the value Adult Education offers people who may be seeking educational opportunities for a variety of reasons, including to become more active citizens, to help their children in school, and to otherwise expand their educational options. The Commission is seeking an elevated role for the Adult Education programs available in Rhode Island. Furthermore, the Commission is committed to developing a centralized intake system so that programs may be offered that are especially tailored to the needs of people seeking Adult Education services. The Commission is hopeful that a more centralized intake system may help reduce the numbers of people on a waiting list for Adult Education programs, in part by creating the ability to recognize when many people on a waiting list may benefit from a similar course. When possible, the Commission hopes the Adult Education program may be able to implement new courses as necessary to meet particular needs if multiple people on a waiting list seek similar programs.

The Commission recommends moving the state’s Adult Education program from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education into the Governor’s Workforce Board, which is located within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training. The Governor’s Workforce Board (GWB) exists in R.I. General Laws § 42-102 and is the primary policy-making body for workforce development in Rhode Island. The Board has statutory responsibility and authority to plan, coordinate, fund, and evaluate workforce development activities. The GWB consists of 22 members, who represent business, labor, education, community, and government. The Board establishes workforce development policy, allocates Job Development Funds (JDF), and administers the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The GWB assembles these interdisciplinary fields to collaborate and develop policy for the state’s workforce initiatives. In order to receive WIOA funds, every state must have a workforce development board. Rhode Island is a bit unique in that it also has the Job Development Fund. When employers pay their unemployment taxes, a fraction of the tax collections is allocated into the Job Development Fund. It is essentially an unemployment-prevention fund that is used to help and train people who are presently employed, who are low-income, or who are unemployed, all of whom may benefit from gaining additional education and workplace skills.

The Commission is committed to addressing the needs of all of Rhode Island’s adult learners. Despite the necessity for the program to ensure that Rhode Island has an educated workforce, the Commission recognizes that Adult Education also serves other student needs, such as the ability to learn English for the purpose of taking citizenship tests and otherwise participating in society. The Commission intends for the Governor’s Workforce Board to preserve the variety of programs that Adult Education offers. That includes basic literacy, the lifelong pursuit of education, and career training.

The following offers additional insight into the Commission’s recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Build upon the existing collaborative infrastructure in Rhode Island by moving Adult Education from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education into the Governor’s Workforce Board, which is located within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.

Since 2007, there has been collaboration between the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Governor’s Workforce Board to target the segment of the state’s workforce population who lack the necessary adult basic education and work-readiness skills needed for today’s economy. Through this collaboration, important investments have been made, such as an expansion of Adult Education that supports career pathways for youth and

adults; the integration of Adult Education and hands-on technical training leading to academic and industry credentials for low-skilled adults; and the integration of pre- and post-release Adult Education services for incarcerated individuals. The Governor's Workforce Board has set a foundation and can prepare Rhode Island's Adult Education system for the next steps by expanding upon the existing collaboration to ensure Adult Education programming continues to grow in a way that prepares adults for today's economy.

Authorize an Adult Education advisory committee within the Governor's Workforce Board to address all relevant cross-departmental issues and solutions relating to Adult Education needs and services. This work should include seeking guidance from providers and students for the development of the state's plan on Adult Education.

Staff members at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have partnered with the Education and Employment Advisory Committee, a subcommittee within the Governor's Workforce Board tasked with overseeing the implementation of several workforce investments and programs. The Commission recognizes the diverse group of stakeholders within this existing committee and the importance of their participation. Building upon this current collaboration will be necessary to enhance the state's existing Adult Education structure.

The Commission believes there should be a permanent committee that focuses on the specific needs of Adult Education programs and services in the state. In addition to current members of the Education and Employment Advisory Committee, it will be important to include representatives from the Department of Human Services, the Office of Postsecondary Education, and the Office of Library and Information Services. Additionally, the committee shall seek guidance from Adult Education providers and students to ensure their needs are met. The Commission aims to encourage an Adult Education system that is collaborative and innovative, and which includes all relevant entities that may help improve the programs and services offered.

Require the Adult Education advisory committee to ensure that the state's plan on Adult Education includes a comprehensive framework developed in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and school districts for evaluating the needs of nontraditional students who are 16 or 17 years old and preparing these individuals to enter the workforce and/or postsecondary education. The K-12 education system shall be the first option for such students, before the state plan may allow a determination about whether such students may fit within Adult Education programming under certain circumstances.

Adult learners typically enter the Adult Education system with a wide range of needs, which are

often different than the needs and goals of traditional adolescents. Although there are Adult Education programs that may be of value for certain adolescents, it is important to develop an evaluation and assessment process to ensure the program is indeed beneficial for any Rhode Island youth who may enter the program. Requiring the state plan to include a comprehensive framework developed in collaboration with RIDE and school districts will ensure a thoughtful approach is developed that recognizes the K-12 system is preferred. However, such a framework would allow for flexibility and appropriate alternatives for nontraditional students who may benefit from Adult Education programming.

Ensure that Adult Education data is appropriately collected and evaluated in order to guide the state’s Adult Education policy and to assist in determining the future needs, demands, and progress of Adult Education programs.

Evaluating policy initiatives is important in order to understand if an initiative is effective. Data collection helps policy analysts and program directors better understand if an initiative is creating intended results and is efficient, or if adjustments must be made. Developing mechanisms for collecting appropriate data and evaluating data related to Adult Education is important as Rhode Island makes the transition from RIDE to the Governor’s Workforce Board. This data may also help the Adult Education program understand future needs and demands of the Adult Education system and its participants, and it may help inform additional improvements for Adult Education policy in Rhode Island.

Require the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training to develop a centralized data intake system to be used by all Adult Education providers so that the needs of Adult Education students can be considered and accommodated, with an emphasis on reducing the current waiting list for services and keeping that list manageable.

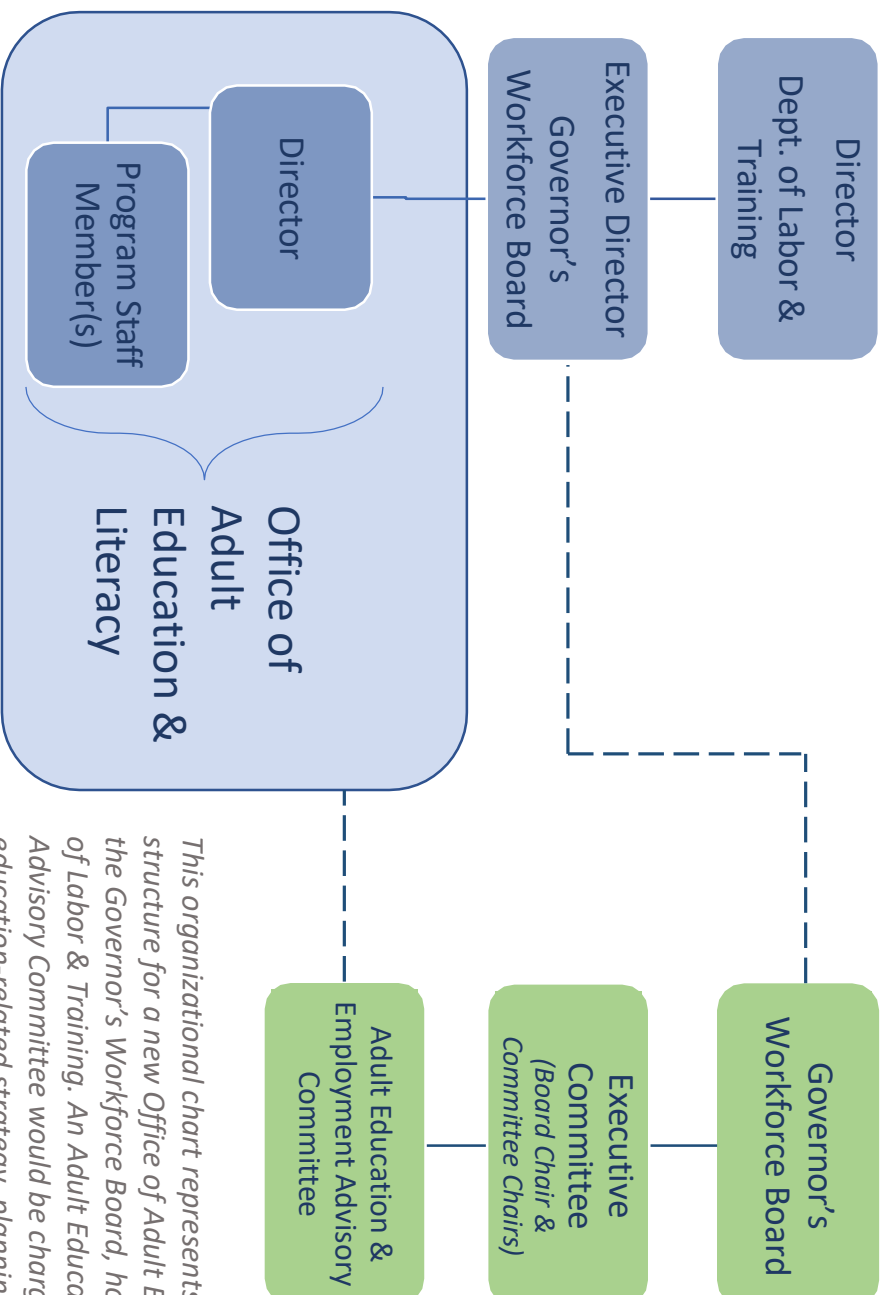
Currently, the waiting list for Adult Education services is around 1,500 people, but that includes some duplication because various providers maintain their own lists and people seeking services may sign up for multiple programs. Creating a centralized data intake system that is used by all Adult Education providers will build uniformity and streamline the intake process. It will allow policy makers to understand why individuals are seeking Adult Education services and their specific needs; to know how long people may wait to be served; and to analyze whether their needs are being met. This information has the potential to encourage providers to create programming based on current demands of people who are on the waiting list. The Commission believes this data should be collected in a way that is easily manageable for students.

Allow for a six (6) month transition period to move Adult Education into the Governor’s Workforce Board within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, with the transition to be completed by December 31, 2019.

There is no specific start date for the transition period for the move of Adult Education from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to the Governor’s Workforce Board. The intent is to provide each department with the necessary flexibility to ensure a smooth transition. Nevertheless, the Commission believes this transition should move as swiftly as possible and be completed by December 31, 2019.

The Commission wanted to ensure that Adult Education is prominently prioritized on the organizational chart within the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training and the Governor’s Workforce Board. The chart on the following page is recommended as the reporting structure that would guide the state’s Adult Education program.

Working Organizational Chart: Adult Education Programs at the Governor's Workforce Board



This organizational chart represents a possible reporting structure for a new Office of Adult Education & Literacy at the Governor's Workforce Board, housed at the Department of Labor & Training. An Adult Education & Employment Advisory Committee would be charged with advising adult education-related strategy, planning and policy for the GWB and Office of Adult Education & Literacy.

ADDENDUM

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE ADULT EDUCATION

Additional Resources from Commission Meetings

The Commission has its own page on the State of Rhode Island General Assembly webpage:

<http://www.rilegislature.gov/commissions/adulteducation/Pages/hmaterials.aspx>

PowerPoint presentations and other material shared with the Commission are available there.

Also, Capitol TV has archived video recordings of each meeting. Those on-demand video recordings are available at the following links:

Meeting 1: Held on December 18, 2018

Watch this meeting on Capitol TV:

<http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=096597ad6a6b&apg=ed687894>

Meeting 2: Held on January 14, 2019

Watch this meeting on Capitol TV:

<http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=e017e0a1386e&apg=ed687894>

Meeting 3: Held on January 28, 2019

Watch this meeting on Capitol TV:

<http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=9f87f8836da0&apg=ed687894>

Meeting 4: Held on February 11, 2019

Watch this meeting on Capitol TV:

<http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=c303bf7ed41a&apg=ed687894>

Meeting 5: Held on April 1, 2019

Watch this meeting on Capitol TV:

<http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=4a16d37b31ca&apg=ed687894>

**SENATE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

NOTICE OF MEETING

PLEASE NOTE ROOM CHANGE

DATE: Tuesday, December 18, 2018

TIME: 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: ~~Senate Lounge~~ **Room 313 - State House**

AGENDA:

1. Welcome and opening comments
2. Presentation by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) describing the current adult education programs administered by RIDE
3. Presentation by the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) describing the current adult education programs administered by DLT, including Real Pathways
4. Public comment
5. Next meeting(s)
6. Adjourn

Please contact Karyn Lowe at (401) 276-5586 with any questions or concerns.

POSTED: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018, 10:08 AM

REVISED: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018, 3:45 PM

**SENATE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Monday, January 14, 2019

TIME: 3:30 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Senate Lounge - State House

AGENDA:

1. Opening comments
2. Presentation by the Department of Labor and Training on Maryland's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, including Maryland's available programs and pathways to employment.
3. Brenda Dann-Messier, Ed.D., Commissioner of Postsecondary Education will discuss adult education from the perspective of the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, including connecting adult learners to postsecondary opportunities.
4. Public comment
5. Next meeting
6. Adjourn

Please contact Karyn Lowe at (401) 276-5586 with any questions or concerns.

POSTED: FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 2019, 10:40 AM

**SENATE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Monday, January 28, 2019

TIME: 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Senate Lounge - State House

AGENDA:

1. Opening comments
2. Presentation by Joanne McGunagle, President & CEO, Comprehensive Community Action Program regarding the current and future placement of the Adult Education programs.
3. Presentation by Meghan Hughes, Ph.D., President of the Community College of Rhode Island regarding the agency best positioned to house adult education and the principles that should support the development of a state-wide strategy on adult education.
4. Presentation by Philip Less, Ph.D., Administrator of Adult Basic Education and GED Programs, representing the adult education employees currently employed by the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
5. Public comment
6. Discussion by members regarding the best state agency to house adult education.
7. Next steps
8. Adjourn

Please contact Karyn Lowe at (401) 276-5586 with any questions or concerns.

POSTED: TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2019, 4:38 PM

**SENATE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Monday, February 11, 2019

TIME: 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Senate Lounge - State House

AGENDA:

1. Opening comments
2. Commission discussion regarding:
 - a. Current mission of Rhode Island's Adult Education system and discussing whether the mission meets the current needs of Adult learners in the system.
 - b. Information shared with the Commission by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education about its Adult Education program.
3. Public comment
4. Next steps
5. Adjourn

Please contact Katuska Perez at kperez@rilegislature.gov with any questions or concerns.

POSTED: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2019, 3:09 PM

**SENATE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE
ADULT EDUCATION**

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: Monday, April 1, 2019

TIME: 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Senate Lounge - State House

AGENDA:

1. Opening remarks – Senator Harold M. Metts, Commission Chair
2. Discussion of Adult Education Commission report and recommendations
3. Consideration of Commission report and recommendations
4. Adjourn

Please contact Katuska Perez at kperez@rilegislature.gov with any questions or concerns.

POSTED: FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2019, 1:02 PM



SENATE POLICY OFFICE
Questions for the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in advance of the fourth meeting

Adult Education

February 4, 2019

1. What is the Adult Education program's mission statement?
2. What are the program's goals?
3. Show us on RIDE's current organizational chart where Adult Education falls within RIDE, and to whom the director of Adult Education reports.
 - a. When was Adult Education higher in the organizational chart than it is now, and for how long did it hold that higher position?
4. **RIDE's annual budget for Adult Education is \$6.9 million in Fiscal Year 2019.**
 - a. How does that total of \$6.9 million compare to the total amount allocated for Adult Education in Fiscal Year 2014 and in Fiscal Year 2009?
 - i. i.e., what was total Adult Education budget in RIDE in those prior fiscal years?
 - b. How much of the Adult Ed RIDE money is state money from within the RIDE budget?
 - i. And what amounts were state/RIDE money in FY 2009 and FY 2014?
 - c. How much of RIDE's current Adult Education budget is federal money?
 - i. And what amounts were federal money in FY 2009 and FY 2014?
 - d. How much of RIDE's current Adult Education budget comes from the Governor's Workforce Board?
 - i. And how much of the Adult Ed budget came from the GWB in FY 2009 and FY 2014?
 - e. And how much of RIDE's current Adult Education budget comes from the state's Job Development Fund, the tax on employers through the Unemployment Insurance program, which is intended to prepare people for jobs?
 - i. How much of the Adult Ed budget came from the Job Development Fund in FY 2009 and FY 2014?
5. How does RIDE's Adult Education program interact now with the Governor's Workforce Board?
6. During the most recent year for which you have annual data, what percent of students who completed the education they sought through Adult Ed went on to get a job if they didn't have one when entering? And how many went on to get a better job after their Adult Ed services?

7. What percent of students who entered Adult Ed completed the course they set out to take?
8. What percent of students who graduated from Adult Ed went straight on to additional, and perhaps higher, education, such as CCRI or beyond?
9. What percent of students who graduated from Adult Ed moves into a specific certificate program or apprenticeship in an industry where they hope to work?
10. Historically, what has the peak wait list been for people seeking Adult Ed services? How many are now on the wait list? And what does RIDE know about the people on the wait list in terms of their current educational attainment and the help they're seeking?
11. In Fiscal Year 2019, RIDE has told the Senate Commission that it's serving nearly 5,700 adult learners. RIDE data indicates the number of students has fluctuated over the past 12 years, with a high of 6,787 in Fiscal Year 2006 and a low of 4,927 students in Fiscal Year 2014. What causes the fluctuation? Is it what funding might be available in a given year? Or are fewer people now seeking RIDE's help through its Adult Ed program?
12. With 94 percent of students entering the Adult Ed program at less than a 9th grade education level, what goals do those students have when they arrive?
13. RIDE data indicates that 94 percent of the students in Adult Ed are 19 or older. Do they come into the program seeking more education so they can find a job or find a better job than they might have?
14. What percentage of people seeking Adult Ed services are ESOL learners who had degrees, credentials, and good-paying jobs in their native countries but are limited to where they can work here because their English is limited? How does the Adult Ed program help people in that situation?
15. We hear from some in the Adult Education field that they don't want to lose the educational component of Adult Ed. What percentage of students come into the program hoping to further their education with no additional hope or desire to get a job or to get a better job?
16. The RIDE data presented at the January 28 Commission meeting indicated that Rhode Island has better Adult Education outcomes than all other New England states.
 - a. What does it mean when you say that 53 percent of Rhode Island students in 2017-2018 showed EFL gains of two grade level equivalents? Are they going from a sixth-grade educational level to an eighth-grade level? And then what do they do?
 - b. When you compare your students to others across New England, do you know what percentage of Adult Ed students in other New England states arrive at their programs with less than a 9th grade education level [In RI: You've said that 94 percent of students here do so]?

- c. And while 94 percent of the students in Rhode Island's Adult Ed programs are 19 or older, do you know the percentage of students in other New England states who enter their programs at 19 or older?
 - d. Of the groups whom you serve through Adult Ed, what is the largest group that's unemployed and being serviced? Rank the age groups according to those that have the most unemployed to the least (i.e., ages 16-18, 19-24, 25-44, 45-54, and 55+)
17. For the latest year available, tell us how the Adult Education students met the state and federal performance outcomes you've told us that you measure:
- a. % of learners who make measurable skill gains during a program year
 - b. # of learners who earned a GED or high school equivalency credential
 - c. # of learners who earn an industry-recognized credential
 - d. # of learners who earn a digital literacy credential
 - e. # of learners who are employed two quarters after leaving the program and their median earnings
 - f. # of learners who retain employment four quarters after they leave the program
 - g. # of learners who enter postsecondary education or further training programs
18. For the latest year available, tell us the number of Adult Education students who qualified to go into an apprenticeship program after they completed their Adult Ed course of study?
19. Does RIDE have any relationship with organized labor and does it work to ensure that Adult Ed recipients meet labor requirements for entry-level and/or apprenticeship candidates?
20. What is the working relationship between DLT and RIDE today?

Response from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

Adult Education Responses to Senate Questions of February 4, 2019

1. Adult Education Mission:

Adult Education will enable Rhode Island adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary and post-secondary education, enhanced family life, attain citizenship and participate in job training and retraining programs.

To deliver on this promise, RIDE identified three key strategic themes that guided the development of the recent 2018 Request for Proposal. These themes were informed by a combination of state and federal priorities – all geared towards positioning students for lifelong success.

RFP Priorities focused on Student Pathways: RIDE recognizes that to serve our adult students – all who bring their own unique strengths, passions, and challenges – to succeed in tomorrow's economy will require ensuring that all students have a pathway to lifelong success. These student pathways should result not only in successful educational skill gains, but also in a successful transition to postsecondary education and/or employment. This deep focus will also require services that offer immediate and flexible programming that is responsive to both each individual student's needs while also ultimately positioning them for jobs that meet employers' demands. RIDE has identified a series of RFP priorities in which providers can respond to, all aligned to putting a student on a pathway towards lifelong success.

The mission above was detailed in RIDE's 2018 RFP for adult education funding.

2. Adult Education Program's Goals:

The primary goals for adult education are to,
Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-entry into society

Adult Education classes are designed to improve the basic academic skills of reading, writing, math and English language for adults who function below the post-secondary level.

GED® classes are designed to assist adults in passing the GED® Credential tests.

The goals above were detailed in RIDE's 2018 RFP for adult education funding.

3. Organizational Charts showing where Adult Education falls and to whom the director of adult education reports:

See addendum.

4. Funding sources by Fiscal Years 2009, 2014, and 2019: WIA/WIOA; GWB/JDF; and General Revenue – Also added are DHS Project Opportunity and Federal Even Start funds (2009)

See addendum.

5. How does RIDE's Adult Education program interact now with GWB?

Since 2007, the Governor's Workforce Board has collaborated with the Rhode Island Department of Education to target the segment of the workforce that lacks the necessary Adult Basic Education and work readiness skills to compete in the modern economy. RIDE, on behalf of this interagency collaboration, utilizes available federal and state resources to support its network of adult education providers. Resources from the Job Development Fund are allocated to RIDE by the Governor's Workforce Board. In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, thirteen service providers are currently receiving Job Development grant funds to raise the education level of the Rhode Island workforce.

To allow the members of the Governor's Workforce Board to see what its strategic investment in its adult education priority represents, a fund-specific set of performance data is submitted by RIDE to the Governor's Workforce Board at mutually agreed upon frequency throughout the fiscal year.

Collaboration between RIDE, the Governor's Office and the Governor's Workforce Board has led to the establishment of key investment priorities

- Provision of Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English as a Second Language (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
- Expansion of adult education that is contextualized and supports career pathways for youth and adults in Rhode Island's nine critical and emerging industries.
- Integration of adult education and hands-on technical training leading to academic and industry credentials for low-skilled current and former welfare recipients and other unemployed low-skilled adults
- Integration of pre- and post-release adult education services for the incarcerated.
- Expansion of transition to postsecondary education and training/apprenticeship programs that use dual or concurrent enrollment including rigorous Adult Secondary Education for those preparing for postsecondary education based on internationally benchmarked college and career readiness standards.

RIDE state staff are fully engaged partners on the Governor's Workforce Board Education and Employment Advisory Committee

This committee is comprised of diverse stakeholders who are charged with overseeing the implementation of various workforce investments and programs that align with the Governor's

Workforce Board's comprehensive plan to ensure that all Rhode Island residents are prepared for work, achieve academic proficiency and/or industry/academic credentials, obtain employment, and/or increase their earning potential.

6. % Entered Employment; % Improved/Retained Employment
2015-2016 program year (under WIA employment outcomes): Out of the unemployed adults at entry, 46% got jobs, as measured in the second quarter after exiting the program. 54% retained their employment in the 4th quarter after exit.
7. % "Completed the course they set out to take"
53% of all adult learners made a measurable skill gain. The primary goal of all adult learners who enter adult education programs is to improve their academic skills.
8. % Entering Higher Education
The best information we have from Post-secondary is when it was an outcome for WIA, in 2013-2014, 395 adult learners entered postsecondary institutions after they exited from the program; this equaled 7% of the total enrollment.
9. % certificate or apprenticeship
We started collecting industry certificates and apprenticeship information this year for GWB/JDF only.
10. Peak WAIT LIST; how many now; current educational level and services seeking:
The highest the wait list has been is over 1,500 adults; it is currently at 1,217. Of those waiting, 350 are waiting for ABE instructional services (grades 1-8), and 867 are waiting for ESOL instructional services.
11. What causes enrollment fluctuation?
The majority of enrollment fluctuation is caused by the increases and decreases in funding available. Federal funds were decreased due to sequestration in 2014 and state General Revenue and Job Development Funds have also been reduced from a high point in 2006. Through various efficiencies, including implementing the consortium model, enrollment has started to climb slowly since 2014.
12. Goals of students entering with less than 9th grade (94% of all students):
RIDE allows local adult education providers to develop and administer their own student intake procedures, including which goal statements they collect from students. Programs typically attempt to serve students according to their authentic goals, which can include improving their literacy/language skills, getting a secondary credential or help with preparing for or training for a job/career. If students have goals that fall out of the purview of the program or are much longer term than the student's abilities, staff likely work with them to relate their goals to literacy/work related ones that can be achieved in the short and long term.
13. 94% are 19 or older – goals of those students:

In seeking out adult education services, those students aged 19 or older are aware of their need for increased literacy, language skills or a secondary credential usually for a reason that could include getting a job or improving their employment prospects. Others seek these educational opportunities to improve the quality of their life and to generally increase their ability to participate in an increasingly literate society. For example, some students who are parents need improved literacy/language skills to be able to help their children with homework or otherwise participate in their child's education program. Also, more writing and digital literacy skills than ever are required in today's workplace.

14. % ESOL who have degrees in their countries

Out of 3,517 adult learners last year who attended school outside the United States, 727 had high school diplomas, 417 had some college, and 410 had postsecondary degrees. Counting the high school credential, that is 44%. Counting only those with postsecondary degrees, it is 12%.

Programs are working with these students on determining whether they are limited as to where they can work due to limited English. This is an area that is a focus of goal setting early on and also later when students transition out of the program or into an employment training opportunity within the program. Many programs assist students in having home country credentials translated into US equivalency at the outset of starting the program so that both the program and student can put a plan in place to identify next steps for participating in programming aligned to the home country credentials or another pathway altogether.

15. % who are not seeking employment or improvement in employment

RIDE does not track the percentage of students that come into programs to further their education with employment goals or not. It is the case that it depends on the life circumstances and ages of students to some degree, whether they hope or desire to gain employment/better employment as a result of participating in Adult Education classes.

As to the statement before the question, it may be more the case that this group is concerned about preserving the education component that would ensure that students with lower levels of literacy/language are not given an employment focus only, which would place them on a career pathway prematurely. If this is the case, their chances of progressing on that pathway is limited since they need the educational component to progress.

16. COMPARISON STATS TO NEW ENGLAND STATES

- a. Yes, the example is good; however, from 6th to 8th grade happens to be the Educational Functioning Level 4 which is unique because it contains three grade level equivalents, so to make a gain in that particular level, a student must move up from 6th grade to 9th grade in either reading or math.

What do students do after they make an educational gain? As has been mentioned earlier, students stay in their programs until they reach their personal academic, training, or employment goals. If a student's goal is to pass the GED, then they will stay until they are ready to test and pass successfully. If a student wants to enter a training program that has a minimum test score for entry, then they will stay until they reach that score. If a student wants to learn enough English to communicate better on the job and perhaps move up to a higher position, then they will stay until they feel they have reached that goal. If a student

wants to learn enough English to navigate our systems or help their children at school, then they will stay until they have reached that level of confidence and competence in English.

- b. RI = 94% of students enter with less than 9th grade reading or math level

MA = 87%

ME = 84%

CT = 82%

NH = 80%

VT = 67% (there are far fewer ESOL students in Vermont)

- c. RI = 94% are 19 or older

MA = 97%

NH = 92%

CT = 91%

ME = 88%

VT = 68% (Vermont Adult Education receives state funding to serve youth)

- d. Age Ranking by % Unemployment:

16-18 = 57%

19-24 = 50%

55+ = 46%

25-44 = 43%

45-54 = 39%

17. Statistics related to RI outcome measures (2017-2018):

- a. 53% made measurable skill gains – Federal WIOA target and state GWB target was 51%.

Targets were met and exceeded (104%).

- b. 279 learners earned a GED credential – No Federal target yet (states are still collecting baseline data) – GWB target was 328 (85% of target was met).

- c. (and d.) We did not collect industry-recognized credentials separately from digital literacy credentials – 1,129 credentials in total last year. There is no federal credential target under WIOA – GWB target was 840, target was met and exceeded (134%).

- d. (see c.) Digital Literacy Credentials and industry-recognized credentials totaled 1,129 credentials.

- e. 1,238 learners (or 32% of those who exited) were employed in the second quarter after exit – No Federal Target yet (still collecting baseline data). The median earnings statewide were \$4,342 in quarter 2.

- f. 409 learners (or 31% of those who exited) were employed in the fourth quarter after exit – No Federal Target yet (still collecting baseline data)

18. # of apprentices.

We started tracking this information this year and do not yet have annualized data to report.

19. Relationship with organized labor

While RIDE does not collaborate directly with organized labor, local adult education programs funded by RIDE engage in robust partnerships with employers and their area One Stop Centers. RIDE encourages and incentivizes partnerships between adult education providers, postsecondary institutions, and industry/business partners. Partnerships with industry – including Real Pathways and Real Job Rhode Island partnerships – will ensure that students are receiving integrated educational training to help them receive the skills and postsecondary credentials for jobs that meet employers’ needs. Both forms of partnerships also present opportunities that are ripe for innovation, including, but not limited to the proposed “RI-BEST” model, based on a successful evidence-based model from Washington state that integrates adult education, post-secondary education, and career development services.

20. Relationship with DLT

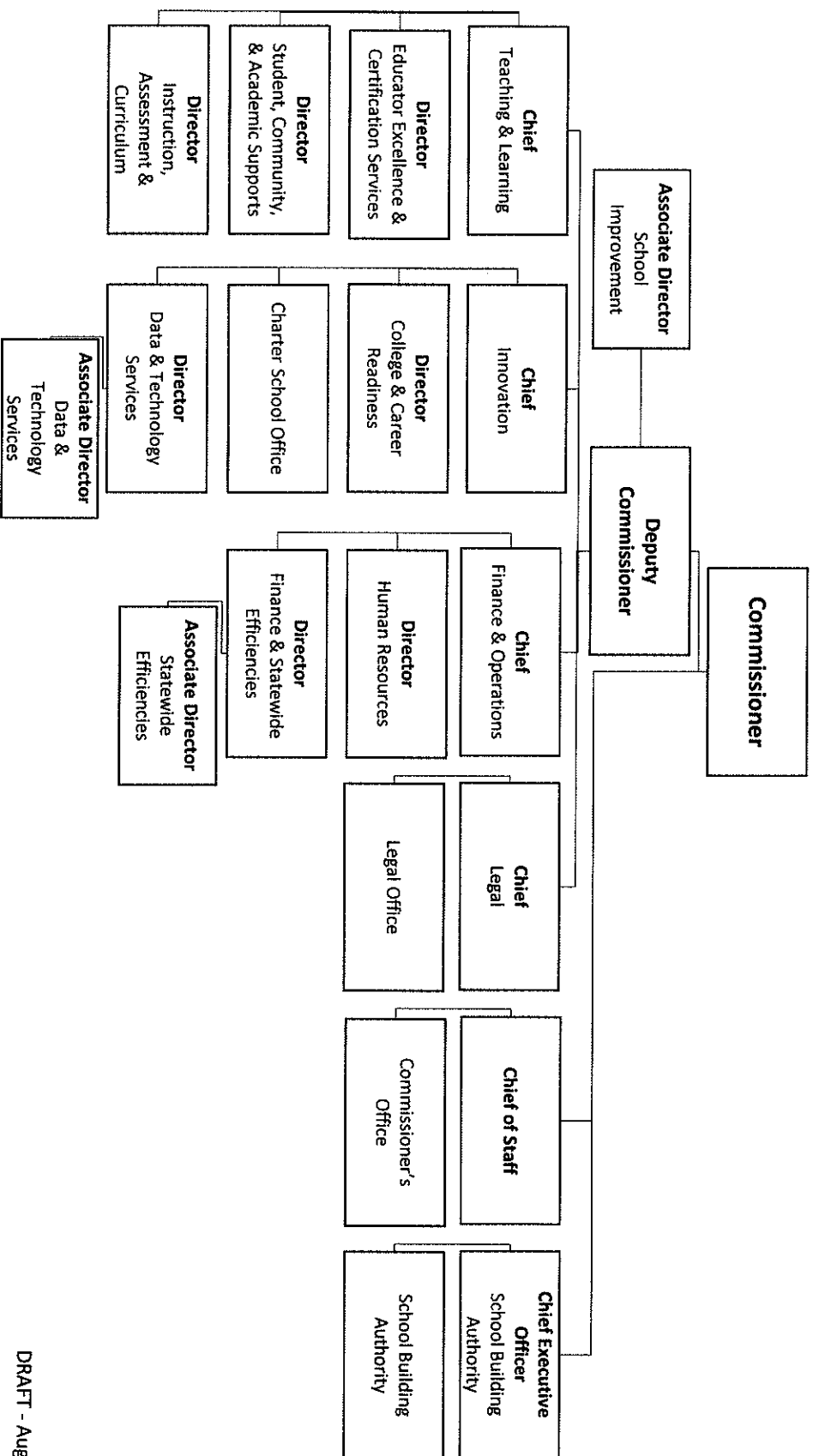
RIDE state staff are fully engaged partners on the RI WIOA Interagency Workgroup team with DLT staff. The team is convened for the purpose of establishing common goals and objectives, improving access to comprehensive services, and enhancing career services through the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination of efforts between the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Rhode Island Governor’s Workforce Board, Labor and Training, Health and Human Services, both Local Workforce Development Boards and Rehabilitation Services.

WIOA Interagency Workgroup team member agencies are currently engaged in creating stronger and renewed partnerships for program alignment including intake, case management, assessment and data system integration between partners to allow for more efficient access to high-quality services.

Agencies are working to be more effective, particularly in the development of a formal referral system, which builds on the excellent partnerships that exist, allowing for better documentation and tracking of educational and employment successes. The team has begun to identify gaps in the services needed to fulfill the requirement of a comprehensive and seamless one-stop customer experience.

RIDE has a long-standing contract with DLT for TAA/TRADE services for those who have become unemployed due to work being traded to areas outside of the United States. RIDE-funded adult education programs serve eligible TRADE Adjustment Assistance (TAA) clients who are in need of adult basic education, GED preparation, or English as a second language classes in order to be eligible for employment. Eligible TRADE customers are referred to adult education programs by DLT TRADE counselors.

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



RIDE Equity Teams

RHODE ISLAND ADULT EDUCATION FUNDING

Answer to Question 4 - from February 4, 2019 Senate Commission

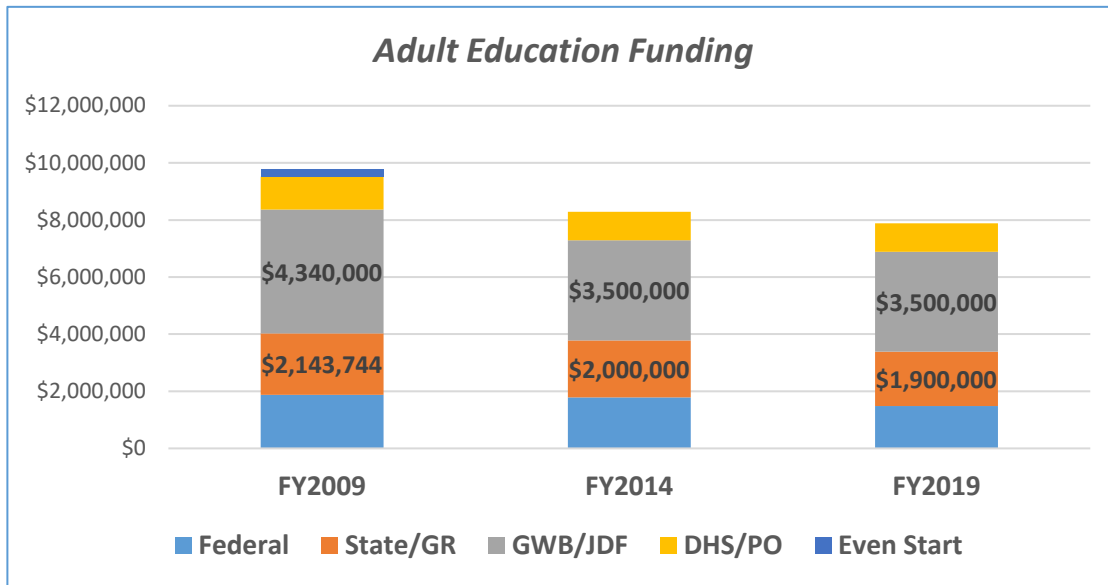
Funding Type	FY2009	FY2014	FY2019
Federal	\$1,878,600	\$1,784,529	\$1,484,572
State/GR	\$2,143,744	\$2,000,000	\$1,900,000
GWB/JDF	\$4,340,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
DHS/PO	\$1,153,493	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Even Start	\$281,235	\$0	\$0
	\$9,797,072	\$8,284,529	\$7,884,572

Federal=WIA, or WIOA

GR=General Revenue in RIDE's budget

GWB/JDF= Job Development Funds from the Governor's Workforce Board

DHS/PO=Dept of Human Services/Project Opportunity (TANF clients only)



2018 Senate Resolution No. 2960

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

SENATE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE ADULT EDUCATION

Introduced By: Senator Harold M. Metts

Date Introduced: June 07, 2018

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

WHEREAS, The state agency with authority over adult education in Rhode Island is the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

WHEREAS, Adult learners usually have multi-level responsibilities, including work and family; and

WHEREAS, Adult learners have different needs and goals from traditional adolescents in the K-12 system; and

WHEREAS, Adult learners are also more likely to have been away from the classroom for a significant period of time and require unique resources to bring them to the level of competency that will enable their successful completion of the GED; and

WHEREAS, A recent study of LaGuardia Community College at the City University of New York and Northeast Wisconsin College in Green Bay, Wisconsin, showed that adults who attended Bridge GED programs were 20 percent more likely to complete GED classes and exams and to enroll in higher education courses; and

WHEREAS, While the majority of states house adult education within their Departments of Education that are responsible for grades K – 12, a number of other states have placed adult education in different state agencies; and

WHEREAS, Nineteen states house adult education in either the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Labor or Workforce Development, or the Department of Community and Technical Colleges; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created consisting of thirteen (13) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, or designee; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of Labor and Training, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Board, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Community College of Rhode Island, or designee; one of whom shall be an adult education provider that offers GED courses, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be an adult education provider of English for Speakers of Other Languages, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be the Director of the Department of Corrections, or designee; one of whom shall be a representative of the RI Resource Hub or a similar organization committed to connecting adults with educational opportunities, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and one of whom shall be a current or former recipient of adult education in Rhode Island, to be appointed by the President of the Senate.

In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu of a legislator, provided that the Senate President or the Minority Leader of the political party that is entitled to the appointment consents to the appointment of the member of the general public.

The purpose of the said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive review and make recommendations regarding the appropriate state agency to house adult education.

Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at the call of the Chair, who shall be appointed by the President of the Senate.

Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information, documentary or otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the President of the Senate on or before March 1, 2019, and said commission shall expire on July 1, 2019.

EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

SENATE RESOLUTION

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE
APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO HOUSE ADULT EDUCATION**

This resolution would create a thirteen (13) member special legislative study commission whose purpose it would be to conduct a comprehensive review and make recommendations regarding the appropriate state agency to house adult education, and who would report back to the Senate no later than March 1, 2019, and whose life would expire on July 1, 2019.

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