

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

J O I N T R E S O L U T I O N

**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$500,000 TO THE RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF THE
POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER FOR THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR
PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION**

Introduced By: Representatives Morales, Alzate, Stewart, Giraldo, Diaz, J. Lombardi,
Tanzi, Potter, Kislak, and Handy

Date Introduced: February 28, 2024

Referred To: House Finance

1 WHEREAS, There is an urgent need to diversify the teaching profession in Rhode Island
2 and nationally to address the large and growing gap between the percentage of students of color
3 and the percentage of teachers of color. Currently, fewer than five percent of teachers in Rhode
4 Island identify as people of color; and

5 WHEREAS, Teachers from a similar background as their students are uniquely
6 positioned to explain new material in a culturally relevant way. Although more teachers of color
7 are being recruited across the nation, the pace of increase is slow and attrition rates are high,
8 leaving growing gaps between the demand for such teachers and the supply; and

9 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School for Progressive Education (RISPE) has the
10 intentional mission to recruit more teachers of color to RI's public schools as a means of
11 correcting centuries of injustice in the educational field. All the data shows that having teachers
12 of color in the classroom improves outcomes of all kinds, academic and otherwise, for all our
13 children; and

14 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School for Progressive Education trains aspiring
15 educators of color in high-quality teacher preparation programming that is accessible, affordable,
16 and designed specifically for the needs of Rhode Island's public school children. RISPE will train
17 a critical mass of educators who can contribute to a school culture shift in Rhode Island's public
18 schools for the benefit of all the children who attend these schools; and

19 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School for Progressive Education's highest aim is to

1 ensure a strong educational system for a strong democracy and is committed to building a
2 powerful educational workforce that reflects the strengths and diversity of our State's
3 communities; and

4 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School for Progressive Education alone cannot create
5 opportunity for the many aspiring educators of color across our State without the financial
6 contributions that support their program; now, therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That there is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the treasury not
8 otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year 2024-2025, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars
9 (\$500,000) to the RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner for the Rhode Island School for
10 Progressive Education, and the state controller is hereby authorized and directed to draw his
11 orders upon the general treasurer for the payment of said sum, upon receipt of properly
12 authenticated vouchers.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$500,000 TO THE RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF THE
POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER FOR THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR
PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

- 1 This resolution would authorize the appropriation of the sum of \$500,000 to the Rhode
- 2 Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner for the Rhode Island School for Progressive
- 3 Education.

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LC005125
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