

2019 -- H 5862

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- RHODE ISLAND PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP

Introduced By: Representatives McNamara, Amore, Serodio, Diaz, and Lyle

Date Introduced: March 15, 2019

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-107-3, 16-107-6 and 16-107-7 of the General Laws in Chapter
2 16-107 entitled "Rhode Island Promise Scholarship" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **16-107-3. Establishment of scholarship program.**

4 Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2017, it is hereby established the
5 Rhode Island promise scholarship program that will end with the high school graduating class of
6 ~~2020~~ 2022. The general assembly shall annually appropriate the funds necessary to implement the
7 purposes of this chapter. Additional funds beyond the scholarships may be appropriated to
8 support and advance the Rhode Island promise scholarship program. In addition to appropriation
9 by the general assembly, charitable donations may be accepted into the scholarship program.

10 **16-107-6. Eligibility for scholarship.**

11 (a) Beginning with the students who enroll at the community college of Rhode Island in
12 fall of 2017 and ending with students who enroll at the community college of Rhode Island in the
13 fall of ~~2020~~ 2022, to be considered for the scholarship, a student:

14 (1) Must qualify for in-state tuition and fees pursuant to the residency policy adopted by
15 the council on postsecondary education, as amended, supplemented, restated, or otherwise
16 modified from time to time ("residency policy"); provided, that, the student must have satisfied
17 the high school graduation/equivalency diploma condition prior to reaching nineteen (19) years of
18 age; provided, further, that in addition to the option of meeting the requirement by receiving a
19 high school equivalency diploma as described in the residency policy, the student can satisfy the

1 condition by receiving other certificates or documents of equivalent nature from the state or its
2 municipalities as recognized by applicable regulations promulgated by the council on elementary
3 and secondary education;

4 (2) Must be admitted to, and must enroll and attend the community college of Rhode
5 Island on a full-time basis by the semester immediately following high school graduation or the
6 semester immediately following receipt of a high school equivalency diploma;

7 (3) Must complete the FAFSA and any required FAFSA verification by the deadline
8 prescribed by the community college of Rhode Island for each year in which the student seeks to
9 receive funding under the scholarship program;

10 (4) Must continue to be enrolled on a full-time basis;

11 (5) Must maintain an average annual cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or
12 greater, as determined by the community college of Rhode Island;

13 (6) Must remain on track to graduate on time as determined by the community college of
14 Rhode Island;

15 (7) Must not have already received an award under this scholarship program; and

16 (8) Must commit to live, work, or continue their education in Rhode Island after
17 graduation.

18 The community college of Rhode Island shall develop a policy that will secure this
19 commitment from recipient students.

20 (b) Notwithstanding the eligibility requirements under subsection (a) of this section
21 ("specified conditions"):

22 (i) In the case of a recipient student who has an approved medical or personal leave of
23 absence or is unable to satisfy one or more specified conditions because of the student's medical
24 or personal circumstances, the student may continue to receive an award under the scholarship
25 program upon resuming the student's education so long as the student continues to meet all other
26 applicable eligibility requirements; and

27 (ii) In the case of a recipient student who is a member of the national guard or a member
28 of a reserve unit of a branch of the United States military and is unable to satisfy one or more
29 specified conditions because the student is or will be in basic or special military training, or is or
30 will be participating in a deployment of the student's guard or reserve unit, the student may
31 continue to receive an award under the scholarship program upon completion of the student's
32 basic or special military training or deployment.

33 **16-107-7. Reporting and disbursement.**

34 (a) On or before November 10 and May 10 of each fiscal year following fiscal year 2017,

1 the community college of Rhode Island shall submit a report to the director of the office of
2 management and budget, the state budget officer, the house fiscal advisor, the senate fiscal
3 advisor, the commissioner of postsecondary education, and the chair of the council on
4 postsecondary education detailing the number of students eligible to participate in the scholarship
5 program, the amount of federal and institutional financial aid anticipated to be received by
6 recipient students, the aggregate tuition and mandatory fee costs attributable to recipient students,
7 and the resulting total cost of the scholarship program to the state. The report shall contain such
8 data for both the current fiscal year and the most up-to-date forecast for the following fiscal year.
9 Data reported shall be subdivided by student-year cohort and shall be accompanied by a written
10 explanation detailing the estimating methodology utilized and any impact(s) the forecasted data
11 may present to institutional capacity, operational costs, and the tuition/fee revenue base of the
12 institution.

13 (b) On or before July 1, 2020, the community college of Rhode Island and the
14 commissioner of postsecondary education shall submit a report evaluating the program based on
15 the first two cohorts to the governor, speaker of the house, and the president of the senate.
16 Thereafter, these reports evaluating the program, which shall include data based on subsequent
17 cohorts, shall be submitted annually on or before July 1 until the program is discontinued. ~~This~~
18 ~~evaluation~~ These evaluations and reports shall include the following:

- 19 (1) The number of students who started in each cohort;
- 20 (2) The number of students in each cohort who have attained a degree or certification in
21 an on-time manner;
- 22 (3) The number of students in each cohort who have not attained a degree or certification
23 in an on-time manner and an analysis of why that has happened;
- 24 (4) The number of students in each cohort who began the program but have been unable
25 to continue or complete the program and an analysis of why that has happened;
- 26 (5) The costs of the program and the costs of continuing the program;
- 27 (6) Suggestions for ways to increase the success of the program;
- 28 (7) Recommendations as to modifying, continuing, expanding, curtailing, or
29 discontinuing the program; and
- 30 (8) Any such other recommendations or information as the community college of Rhode
31 Island and the commissioner of postsecondary education deem appropriate to include in the
32 evaluation.

33 (c) The office of management and budget, in consultation with the office of the
34 postsecondary commissioner, shall oversee the apportionment and disbursement of all funds

1 appropriated for the purpose of the scholarship program.

2 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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- 1 This act would extend the Promise Scholarship program for two (2) years through 2022.
- 2 The act would also require reports and evaluations on student cohorts entering CCRI continue to
- 3 be provided until the program is discontinued.
- 4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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