

# Children's Cabinet

## December 16, 2021

# Agenda – 4-5pm

- Welcome, Introductions, and adoption of minutes
- OPC Advisory Committee Final Report Presentation
- Preschool Development Grant Birth through Age 5 Update
- Public Comment
- Adjournment



# OPC Advisory Committee Recommendations Review

Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

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# Agenda

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1. The Problem
2. Committee Members
3. Process of the Advisory Committee
4. Overview of the Recommendations
5. Next Steps



Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

# The Problem

**New leadership, stimulus funding, and interesting data before and during the pandemic drove the need for OPC to gather state leaders to consider R.I. students' postsecondary system needs.**

- **Economic Trends:** 72% of R.I. jobs in 2030 will require education beyond high school, and in 2021 only 52.9% of RI working-age adults have completed a postsecondary credential.
- **Major Gaps in Attainment Based on Race:** Compared to the postsecondary attainment rate of the White population:
  - The attainment rate for Black residents is **17%** lower
  - The attainment rate for Indigenous residents is **27%** lower
  - The attainment rate for Latinx residents is **29%** lower
- Rhode Islanders who did not have a college degree were much more likely to have been affected by the economic shock caused by the pandemic.
- **Workforce Needs:** Across the country more people are retiring than entering the workforce. Specifically in New England, fewer students in the K-12 pipeline.

# Committee Composition

The Advisory Committee was comprised of 43 state leaders representing different perspectives and levels of involvement in R.I.'s postsecondary system

## Institutions of Higher Education

CCR • RIC • URI • JWU • College Unbound

## Elected Officials

R.I. State Senators • R.I. State Representatives

## State Agencies

OPC • RIDE • DLT • EOHHS • Corrections • Veterans • Governor's Office

## Community-Based Organizations

Building Futures • Nonviolence Institute • United Way • Progreso Latino • Kids Count • RI Indian Council • Reentry Campus • League of Cities & Towns • RI Foundation • AICU-RI

## Education Leaders

Board of Education • Council on Postsecondary Education • Council of Elementary & Secondary Education • National Experts

## Economic Interest/Business

Fidelity Investments • Partnership for RI • Economic Progress Institute • RIPEC

# Process

In partnership with the Hunt Institute, State leaders convened for 3 day-long meetings. They heard presentations from local and national experts as well as postsecondary students, and then engaged in breakout discussions.

The focus for each was:

## Meeting 1: Creating a Prosperous Economy

- ✓ Increasing access and participation in workforce development opportunities, with an emphasis on state priority sectors
- ✓ Credential pathways: Providing building blocks to a more educated RI

## Meeting 2: Equity in Enrollment, Persistence and Affordability

- ✓ Closing equity gaps in RI's postsecondary system
- ✓ Affordability and its role in equity

## Meeting 3: Understanding the Needs of Today's Students

- ✓ Who are today's students and how can we better support their needs?
- ✓ Charting a path forward

# Recommendations

## Working to Eliminate Equity Gaps



01

Policy review to identify equity imbalances within system and change policies

02

Guidance for programs to better support students from under-resourced communities

03

Connection of students with resources — both for tuition and other expenses

04

Expand eligibility to Promise and other last-dollar scholarships, including for baccalaureate degrees

05

Improve enrollment of BIPOC, immigrant and low-income adults in credit- and certificate-bearing programs

# Recommendations

## Providing Direct Support to Students

06

Expand access to support services — including RI Reconnect and programming on campus

07

Build a library of resources of different programming to ensure clear, accurate access of information for students and prospective students

08

Invest in people to help students and prospective student navigate the different supports





# Recommendations

## Removing Structural Policy Barrier

09

Establish predictable funding for higher education at levels comparable to other New England states

10

Improve and expand statewide longitudinal data system

11

Create a statewide Prior Learning Assessment program

12

Support the transition between K-12 and postsecondary programs

13

Align workforce needs with workforce and academic training programs

# Next

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1. **Create partnership** across government, non-profits, public and private IHEs, to operationalize the 13 recommendations and drive this work at the local level
2. **Formalize a state higher education agenda** by working with municipal and state leadership
3. **Continue to use data to illuminate the state of post-secondary attainment throughout the state**
4. **Advocate for greater investment** to turn these recommendations into a reality

## Immediate Next Steps:

- Plan
- Coalition
- Resources

# Thank you

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For more information or additional feedback, please contact Catherine McConnell at [Catherine.McConnell@riopc.edu](mailto:Catherine.McConnell@riopc.edu)





## Implementation Updates: RI's Preschool Development Grant

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# Presentation Overview

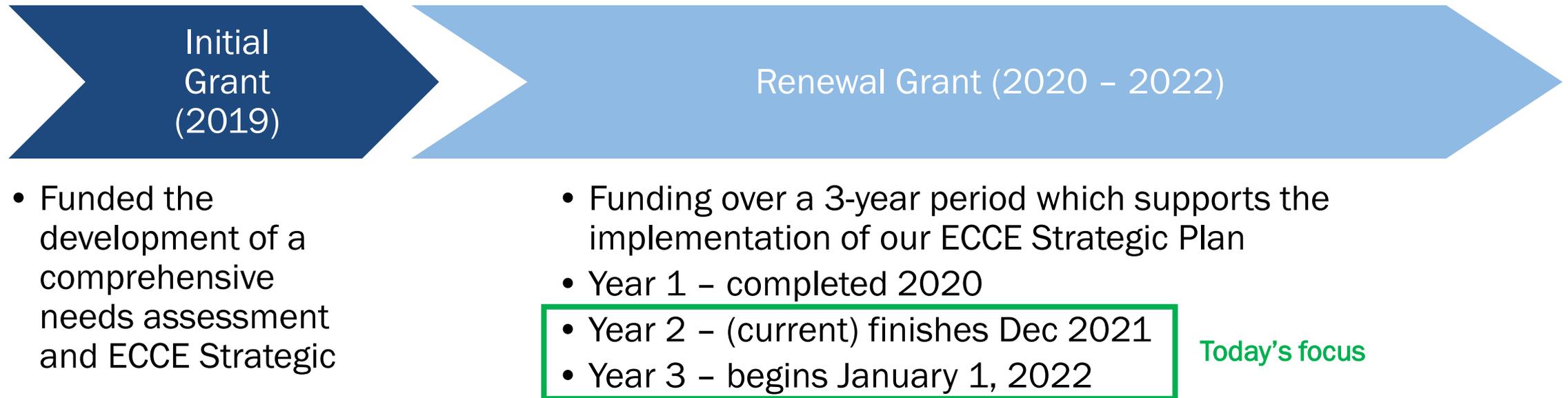
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Today's presentation will provide an update on RI's Preschool Development Grant.

1. Review of the grant
2. Implementation updates
  - Highlights of Year 2 Activities
  - Looking ahead to Year 3 Activities

# PDG is a competitive federal grant with the overall goal to support states' development of early childhood care and education systems.

After receiving funding for an initial planning grant, in 2020, RI received a three-year \$27 million Renewal Grant. Funding flows to various state agencies (EOHHS, DHS, RIDE, and RIDOH) to enhance our birth through five system.



# RI's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Strategic plan has five core objectives to ensure that all children are on a path to reading proficiently in third grade.

## ECCE Governance Committee

### Objective 1:

Rhode Island's early childhood programs meet high-quality standards for care and education as defined by our Quality Rating and Improvement System

### Objective 2:

Children and families can equitably access and participate in the early childhood care, services, and supports that will help them reach their potential and enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

### Objective 3:

All four-year olds in Rhode Island have access to high-quality Pre-K, inclusive of parental choice and student needs.

**Objective 4:** Secure the quality and delivery of ECCE through increased and sustainable funding and operational improvements.

**Objective 5:** Expand the depth and quality of family and child-level data accessible to and used by agencies, programs, and partners to drive decisions.

# Our Renewal Grant activities are aligned to our State Strategic Plan. In 2021, we've made substantial progress on implementation.

ECCE Strategic Plan Objective Area	Number of PDG Activities
Objective 1: High Quality Programs	5
Objective 2: Equitable Access and Targeted Supports	9
Objective 3: Universal Pre-K	4
Objective 4: Sustainable Operations and Funding	3
Objective 5: Data Systems and Performance Evaluation	4

- In Year 2 of PDG, we've made considerable progress across activities, including:
  - **Further expanding RI Pre-K** - PDG funds 658 RI Pre-K Seats
  - **Child care workforce pre-service trainings** – more than 1,050 providers have completed one on-line course
  - **Resources to Health Equity Zones** – PDG funds both evidence-based direct programming to families and Family Navigators who can connect families to supports in HEZs.
- Despite our continued progress, some challenges remain:
  - **On-going pandemic** – continues to alter service delivery, especially for young children who are still currently ineligible for vaccines.
  - **Staffing capacity & turnover** – like many sectors, early childhood is facing staffing shortages which have impacted implementation.

# Activities Supporting Objective 1: Strengthening the quality of our care and education programs with targeted supports

- **Pre-service training** – DHS has worked to offer pre-service training modules for child care providers online in both English and Spanish. This allows providers to access trainings at their own pace, whenever is convenient for them. More than 1,050 providers have logged on to complete a course.
- **Infant / toddler Registered Apprenticeship** – DHS continues to pilot this model to support the incumbent workforce. One Level I (CDA coursework) cohort has completed their coursework and another cohort began during Q3. The DHS team continues to refine and build out a Level II of the RA model which would support infant-toddler lead teachers to advance their competencies and skills.
- **Infant / Toddler Care Expansion** – Children’s Friend is partnering with 13 child care providers to increase high-quality infant/toddler seats by providing additional technical assistance and resources to the partners.
- **Facilities Planning Grants** – DHS continues to work with LISC to offer grant funding for pre-development and feasibility work (architectural design, site analysis, legal services, etc.) for child care providers. In Q3, ten eligible programs were selected for grants. This supports the Early Childhood Facilities bond work as well.
- **Credential Pathways** – RIDE ran a competitive process with higher-education partners to plan and execute a credential pathway for the incumbent ECCE workforce to become a certified PK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher. Following a planning grant, RIDE awarded URI – in collaboration with CCRI – an implementation grant to build their new pathway.

## Activities Supporting Objective 2: Ensuring children and families have equitable access to care, services, and supports.

- **Health Equity Zones (HEZ)** - PDG funds two types of programming at a majority of HEZs to support family knowledge and choice about programming in the birth through five system. This includes:
  - **Evidence-based family programs** such as Incredible Years and **Family Navigators** who can help families access needed services for them and their young children. In Q3, more than 151 families were supported by FNs, with 156 referrals to services.
- **Parent / Caregiver Advisory Council (P/CAC)** – Throughout the year, RIDOH worked with caregivers to hold monthly meetings. Participants from the P/CAC were elected as officers this year and they facilitate meetings. If you're interested in joining the P/CAC email [emily.eisenstein@health.ri.gov](mailto:emily.eisenstein@health.ri.gov)
- **Professional Development I/T Mental Health** - RI is working with Bradley Hospital to implement Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC) for family home visiting to support children's social, emotional, and behavioral health needs.
- **Family Home Visiting Expansion** – PDG funds 300 Parents As Teachers slots which nearly doubles capacity statewide. At the end of Q3, 261 out of 300 PAT slots were filled with some sites completely full.
- **Child Care Health Consultation Model** – DHS worked with a vendor to offer a hotline for child care providers to call and talk with nurses about health questions (both covid and non-covid questions). Additionally, the vendor offers some professional development for providers on health-related topics such as Safe Sleep.

# Activities Supporting Objective 3: Expanding access to high-quality RI Pre-K, inclusive of parental choice and student need.

- **RI Pre-K** - In Year 2, PDG funded 230 additional RI Pre-K seats which brings the total number of seats funded through PDG to 658.
  - In the 2021 – 2022 School Year we have 2,364 RI Pre-K seats in 18 communities across community-based centers, Head Starts, and Local Education Agencies.
  - The governance work that PDG supports has enabled an inter-agency team to expand Pre-K in innovative ways which support our entire birth through five system.
  - PDG funds some dedicated staff capacity at RIDE to support implementation.
- **Pre-K Technical Assistance and Monitoring** - A hallmark of RI Pre-K continues to be strong technical assistance, professional development, and monitoring of classrooms. To support teachers and ensure overall program quality, PDG funds the PD/TA/monitoring for the seats paid for through the grant. This year, providers have had access to various PD offerings including implementation of Teaching Strategies Gold and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.
- **Kindergarten Transitions** – In Year 2, RIDE offered another cohort of communities the opportunity to receive coaching and support to develop a community plan to strengthen coordination of transitions to kindergarten. This year, Central Falls, Cranston, Pawtucket, and Westerly participated.

# Activities Supporting Objective 4: sustainability for ECCE sector through governance, funding, and operational improvements.

- **ECCE Governance** – PDG continues to be foundational for strong inter-agency collaboration and governance.
- **Public Awareness Campaign** – highlighting various birth through age five program opportunities for families. Assets have been created in both English and Spanish.
  - **RI Pre-K Enrollment** – encouraged RI Pre-K lottery sign ups by hosting an informational Facebook Live event, new stories, and targeted social media ads. Together these efforts had more than 1.8 million impressions.
  - **Child care** – sharing parent and provider experience to give families information about health and safety practices and highlight the incredible workforce. This is on-going so data on reach will be available later.



RI children 4 years old by 9/1/21 may be eligible for a free RI Pre-K seat for the 2021-2022 school year. Apply by July 11, 2021.

The advertisement features a close-up of a smiling woman with dark hair wearing a pink top, holding a young child who is laughing joyfully. The child is wearing a white patterned shirt. In the bottom left corner, there is a small map of Rhode Island with the RIDE logo. The text "RIDE RI Pre-K Lottery Now Open" is prominently displayed. Below the image, the URL "WWW3.RIDE.RI.GOV" is provided, followed by "Apply: RI Pre-K Lottery" and a "Thank you for your interest in enro..." message. A white button with the text "APPLY NOW" is located in the bottom right corner.

WWW3.RIDE.RI.GOV  
Apply: RI Pre-K Lottery  
Thank you for your interest in enro...  
APPLY NOW



# Activities Supporting Objective 5: improving data quality and depth in our state.

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- **Needs Assessments** – this year, RI has not conducted an additional Needs Assessment, but has been planning for our Year 3 efforts. This includes creating targeted questions that will be part of the 2022 Health Insurance Survey.
- **Enhanced data systems** – We have worked with the Department of Information and Technology to conduct “as is” reviews to understand current status and capabilities of data systems and engaged state users to discuss needs. This will inform future planning and work on the systems.
- **PDG performance evaluation** – as a State, we continue to think about ways to evaluate the work that we do to serve young children and their families. We are leveraging the expertise and capacity of the EOHHS Ecosystem to support progress monitoring.

# Looking ahead to Year 3: Leveraging grant activities to add scope to activities and respond to current agency needs.

Nearly all of RI’s current PDG activities will continue into Year 3 (2022) – following discussions with agencies, we have altered the scope of a few activities to ensure that we are responsive to emerging needs.

Strategic Plan Objective	Increase high-quality early childhood programs by investing in and supporting the early childhood workforce	Ensure equitable access to supports & services	Expand high-quality Pre-K for all 4-year-olds
Year 3 PDG Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Child Care Workforce Pipeline:</b> Invests in a proposal to support the workforce pipeline by encouraging connections between CTE programs, existing scholarship offerings, and the ECCE field.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Doula Workforce Pipeline:</b> Funds capacity building for doulas as their services become reimbursable in July 2022 by building on investments being made from the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant at RIDOH.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pre-K PD/TA for Special Populations:</b> Funds pre-k providers continued development in supporting special populations including multi-lingual learners and differently-abled students. This includes curriculum alignment for ECSE coursework in higher-education and opportunities for LEAs to access high-quality curriculum.</li> <li><b>Kindergarten Transition supports:</b> Responds to stakeholder feedback surrounding about engaging with trusted messengers such as Family Child Care Providers and directly with families.</li> </ul>

## **Looking ahead: RI's PDG work has created strong foundation that will allow us to leverage future federal investments.**

**Congress continues to debate the Build Back Better proposal which includes massive investments in early learning through expanded access to child care and universally accessible Pre-K.**

- PDG has supported key activities which will allow RI to successfully implement Build Back Better. This includes:
  - Setting up inter-agency governance processes and state staff collaboration
  - Piloting various funding opportunities for Pre-K classrooms
  - Piloting models to support the incumbent workforce

# Questions?

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# Public Comment

