



RI

Office of the
Postsecondary
Commissioner



Getting Our BEARINGS

Key Facts about Postsecondary Education in Rhode Island

RHODE ISLAND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

PUBLIC

- Community College of Rhode Island
- Rhode Island College
- University of Rhode Island

PRIVATE

- Brown University
- Bryant University
- College Unbound
- Johnson & Wales University – Providence
- New England Institute of Technology
- Providence College
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Roger Williams University
- Roger Williams University – School of Law
- Salve Regina University



RI

**Office of the
Postsecondary
Commissioner**

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INTRODUCTION



In February 2022, the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education approved the 2022–27 Rhode Island Strategic Plan for Postsecondary Education to help more Rhode Islanders attain credentials that will lead to careers with livable wages, stronger families and communities, and a Rhode Island economy boosted by a trained workforce aligned to industry standards. The plan was developed by the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) after months of engagement with state institutions of higher education, workforce training partners, Board of Education members, students, municipal and state elected leadership, sister state agencies, and nonprofit and business leaders. It lays out an ambitious agenda for the course ahead, focusing on five key priorities:

- ① Closing equity gaps;
- ② Increasing affordability;
- ③ Helping more adults attain degrees and certifications;
- ④ Expanding workforce training opportunities; and
- ⑤ Strengthening PK–20 alignment.

Successful implementation of the plan is anchored in understanding where we are as a state and developing a clear set of initiatives and action steps to meet our goals. This report, which is Part 1 of a two-part series, provides an overview of where Rhode Island stands on some key indicators. Over time, OPC will continue to track these and other indicators to ensure that the state is making progress on its priorities. Part 2 will detail the specific initiatives and action steps OPC will take to meet the goal of 70 percent of working-age Rhode Islanders obtaining a postsecondary credential by 2025.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER

The mission of the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) is to ensure, promote, and expand postsecondary attainment among all Rhode Islanders by providing an effective system of postsecondary education and workforce training that is high quality, equitable, accessible, affordable, and aligned to PK–12 education and the economy. Rhode Island's system of postsecondary education should foster the economic, civic, social, and cultural growth of all Rhode Islanders, their communities, and the state. To fulfill its mission, OPC:

- Performs data analysis and reporting to provide transparency about all aspects of postsecondary education in Rhode Island;
- Formulates policy to implement goals and objectives established by the Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education;
- Makes recommendations to the Council on Postsecondary Education regarding system policy and programmatic operations;
- Administers the policies, rules, and regulations of the Council on Postsecondary Education;
- Develops strategic plans to meet broad goals for the state's higher education system that are aligned with the goals of the Board of Education and Council on Elementary and Secondary Education; and
- Provides leadership on financial planning, budgeting compliance, and other issues related to fiscal policy for public higher education.

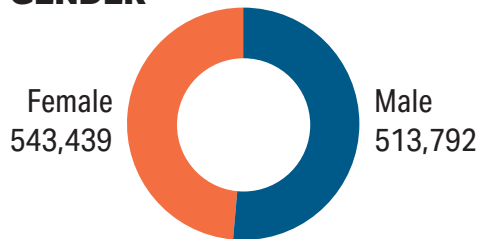
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION

in Rhode Island

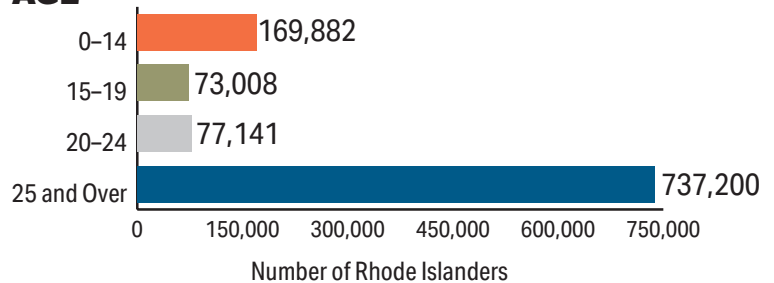
Rhode Island has a diverse population, with citizens from a wide variety of backgrounds. To ensure that all students have the preparation, access, and resources they need to reach their postsecondary goals, we need to understand who they are and the challenges they may face.

THE TOTAL POPULATION OF RHODE ISLAND IS 1,057,231 —
a number that has held relatively steady in recent years.

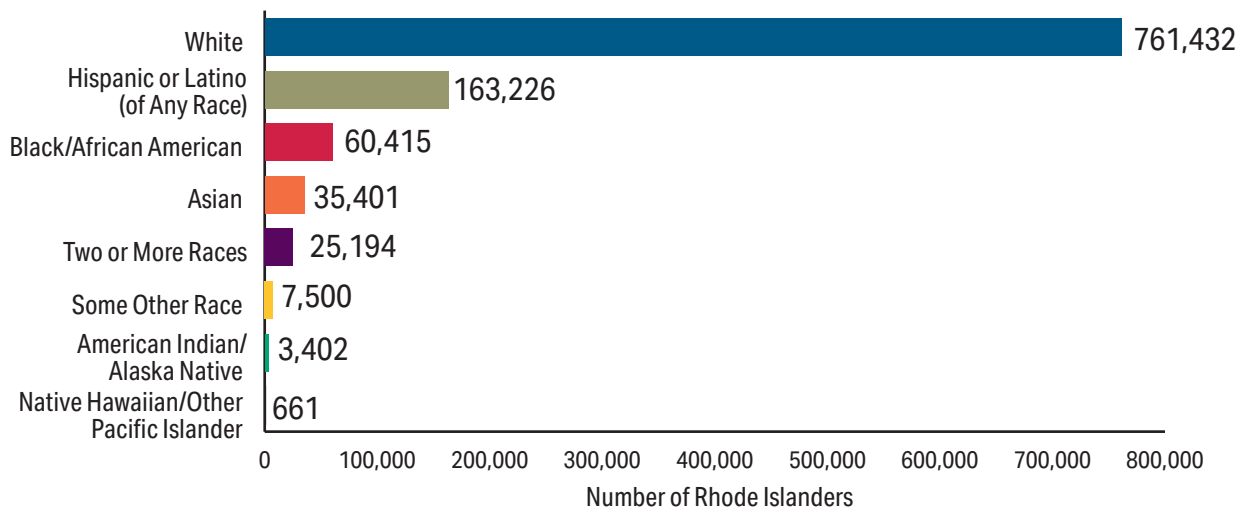
GENDER



AGE

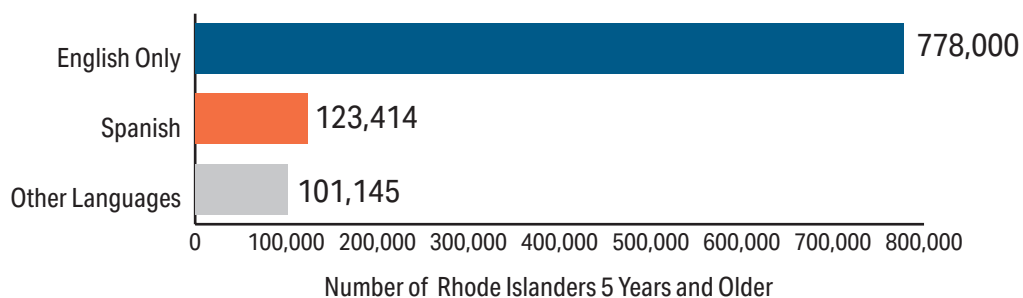


RACE/ETHNICITY

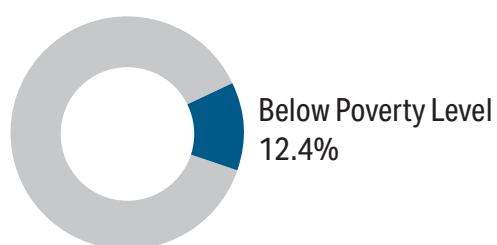


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015–19 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

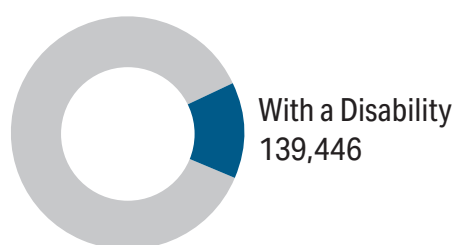
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME



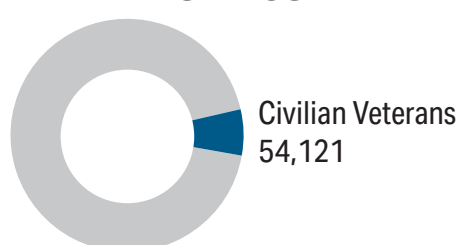
POVERTY STATUS



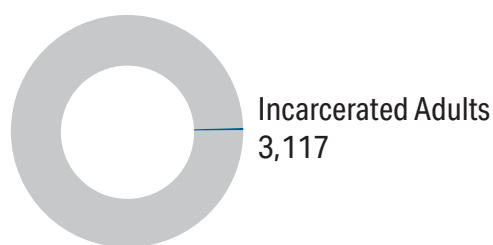
DISABILITY STATUS



VETERAN STATUS



INCARCERATED STATUS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015–19 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

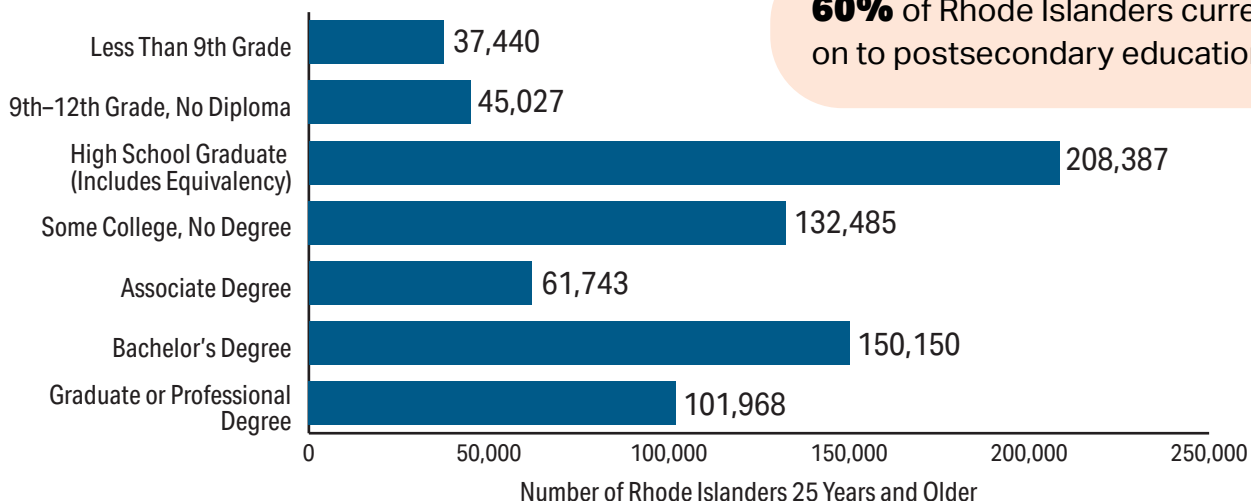
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

in Rhode Island

Our goal is for 70 percent of working-age Rhode Islanders to have a postsecondary credential by 2025. To reach that goal, we must uncover and dismantle systemic inequities embedded in policies and practices that foster persistent gaps for students in Rhode Island's postsecondary education system and prevent our students, communities, and state from reaching their full potential.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

OVERALL ATTAINMENT

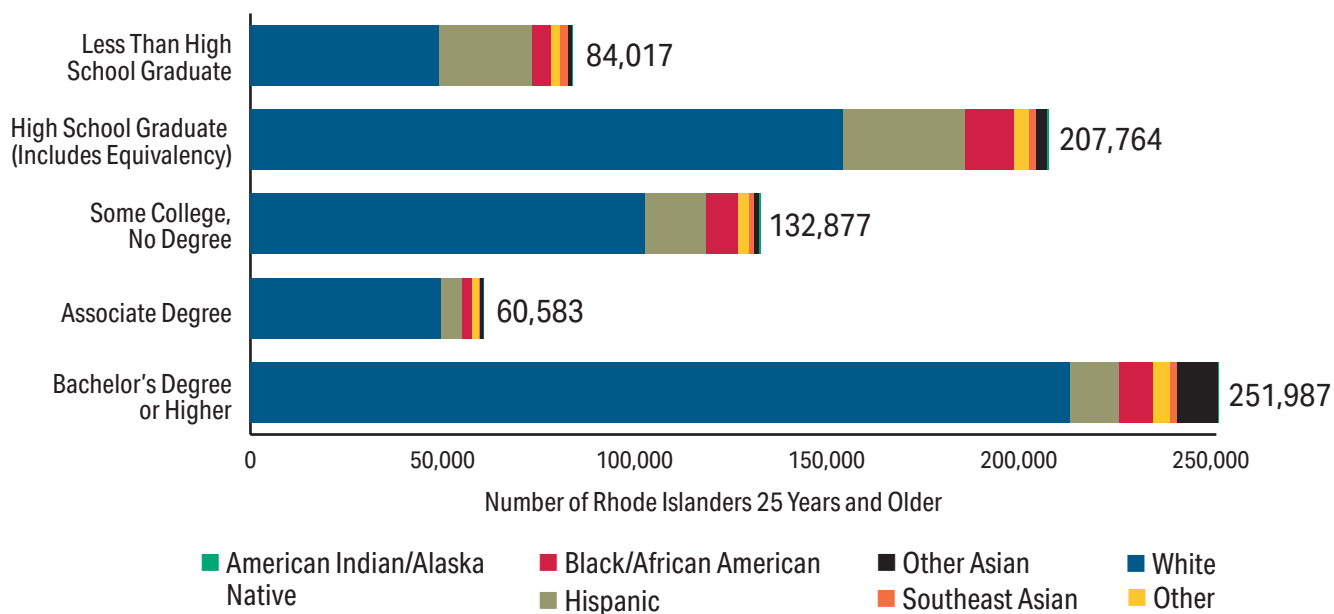


60% of Rhode Islanders currently go on to postsecondary education.

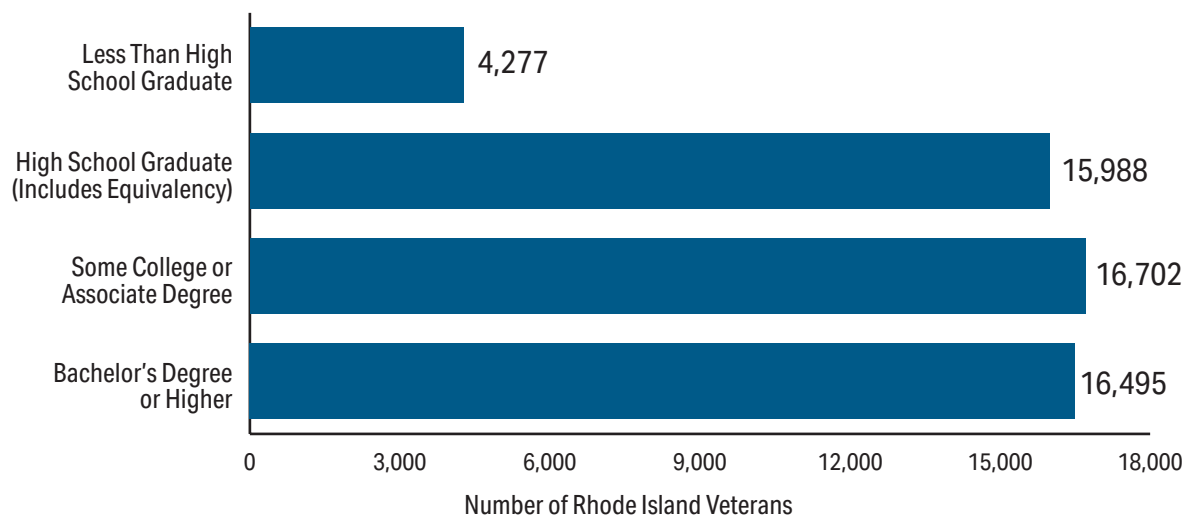
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015–19 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



ATTAINMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



ATTAINMENT BY VETERAN STATUS



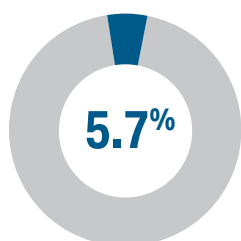
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015–19 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

in Rhode Island

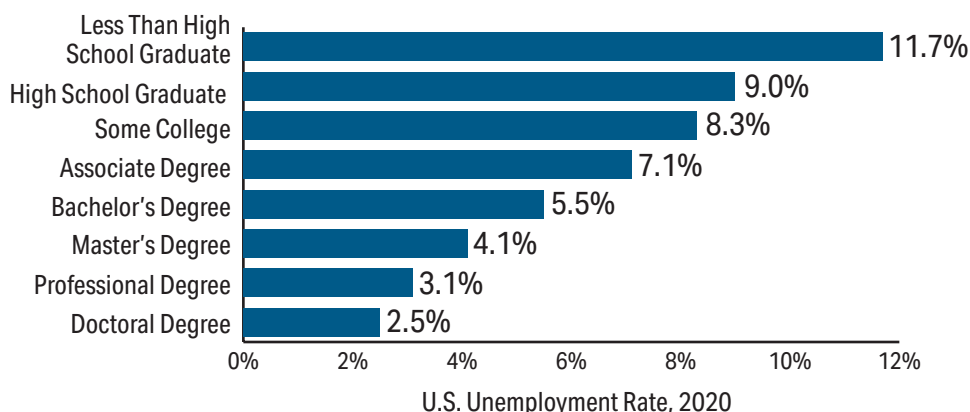
Understanding the state's current and future workforce needs is key to developing and scaling the educational, workforce, and industry training programs we need to serve the Rhode Island economy and to create clear pathways to success for many more students, particularly from under-represented communities.

UNEMPLOYMENT



Average Rhode Island Unemployment Rate, 2021

Source: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization for Rhode Island

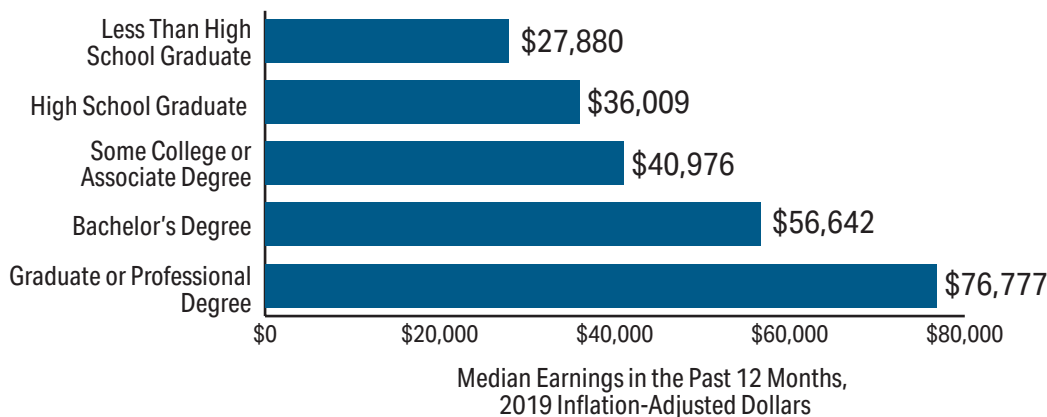


Source: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics

626,000 JOB OPENINGS are projected for Rhode Island between 2018 and 2028.
27.8% will require a postsecondary degree or award.

Source: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, 2019–2020 Rhode Island Employment Trends and Workforce Issues, p. 29

EARNINGS BY ATTAINMENT LEVEL



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015–19 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

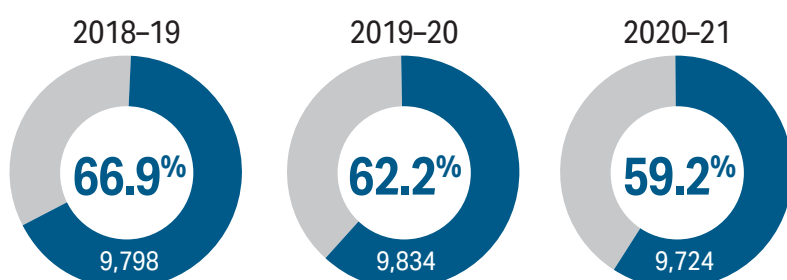
in Rhode Island

Reaching our postsecondary attainment goal requires ensuring that more students leave high school prepared for college and creating seamless transitions to higher education so that more students go on to earn a postsecondary degree or credential. Among the ways we will meet these priorities is providing early access to college-level coursework and ensuring that students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

Six Months After Graduation From a Rhode Island Public High School

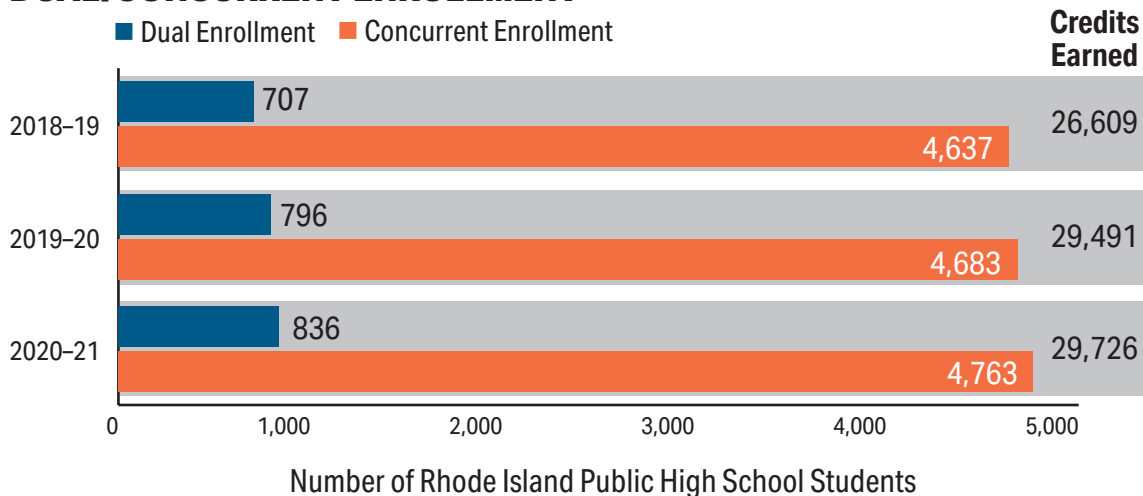


Number/Percentage of Rhode Island Public High School Graduates

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Data and Technology Services

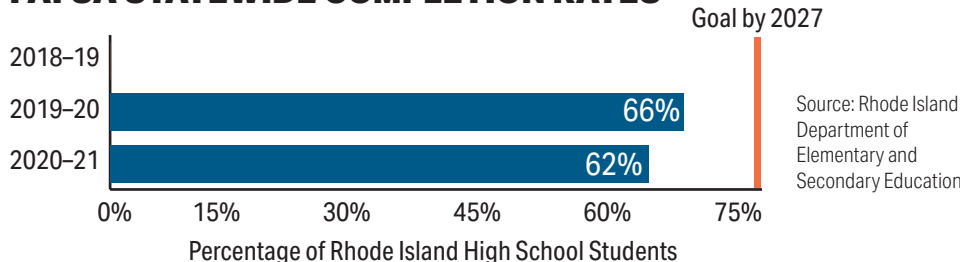
Even as the number of high school graduates has held steady, **postsecondary enrollment rates have declined.**

DUAL/CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT



Note: Unique student count within each enrollment type.
Source: Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner

FAFSA STATEWIDE COMPLETION RATES



Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION

in Rhode Island Colleges and Universities

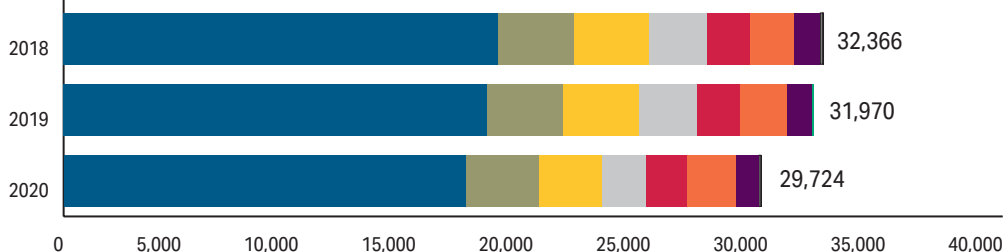
As it has across the country, the pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on enrollment and completion rates in Rhode Island's postsecondary education system. The new strategic plan will work to reverse these trends and remove barriers to access and success, including by increasing the affordability of state higher education institutions.

FALL UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



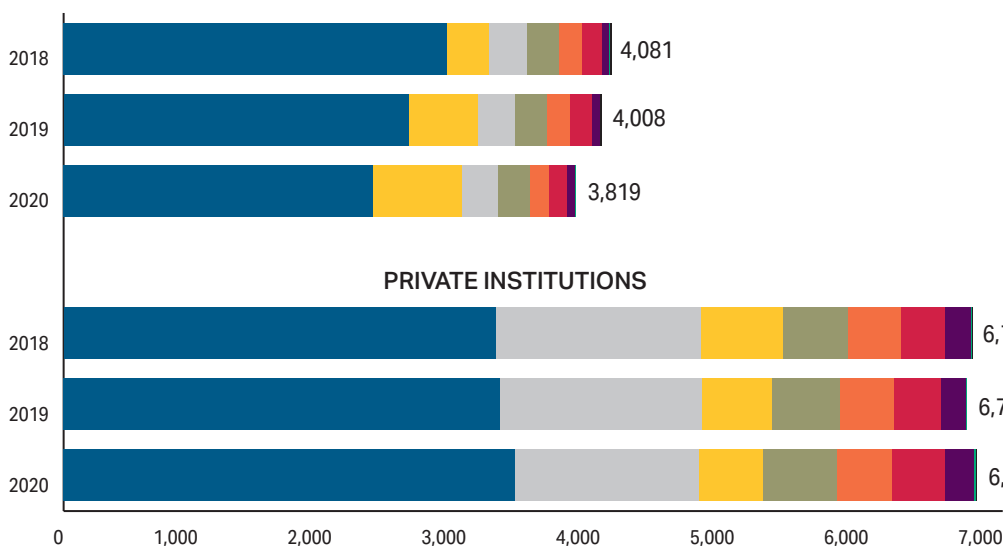
PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS



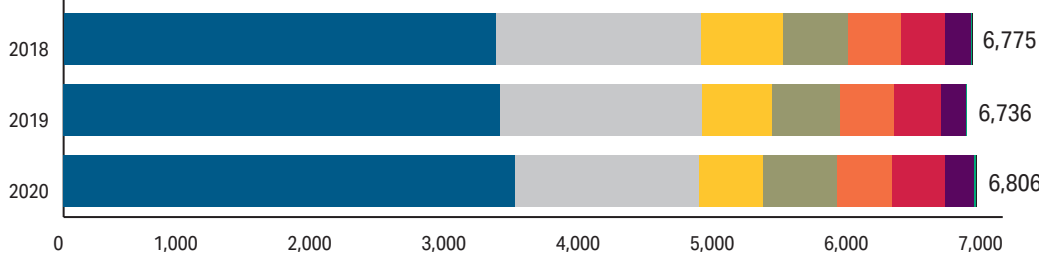
Even prior to the pandemic, **fall undergraduate enrollment** at Rhode Island's colleges and universities **was declining**.

FALL GRADUATE ENROLLMENT

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

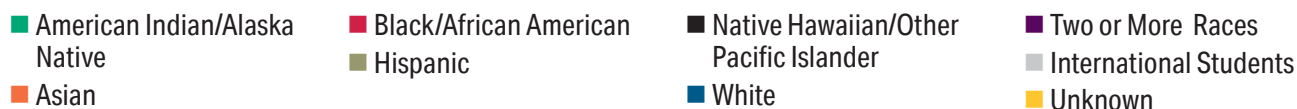


PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

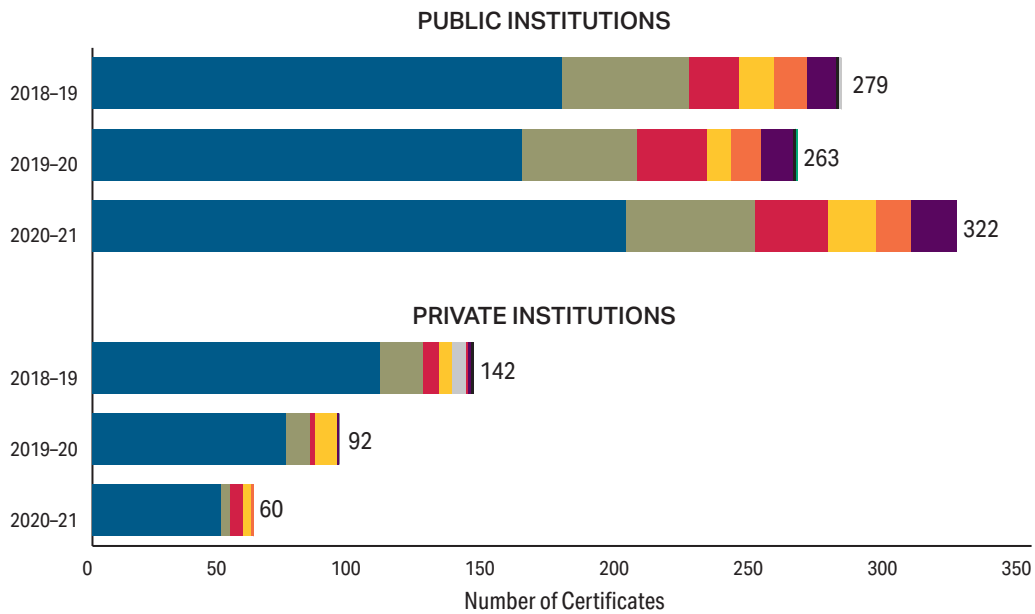


Graduate fall enrollment at both private and public institutions **has remained relatively stable** over the past five years.

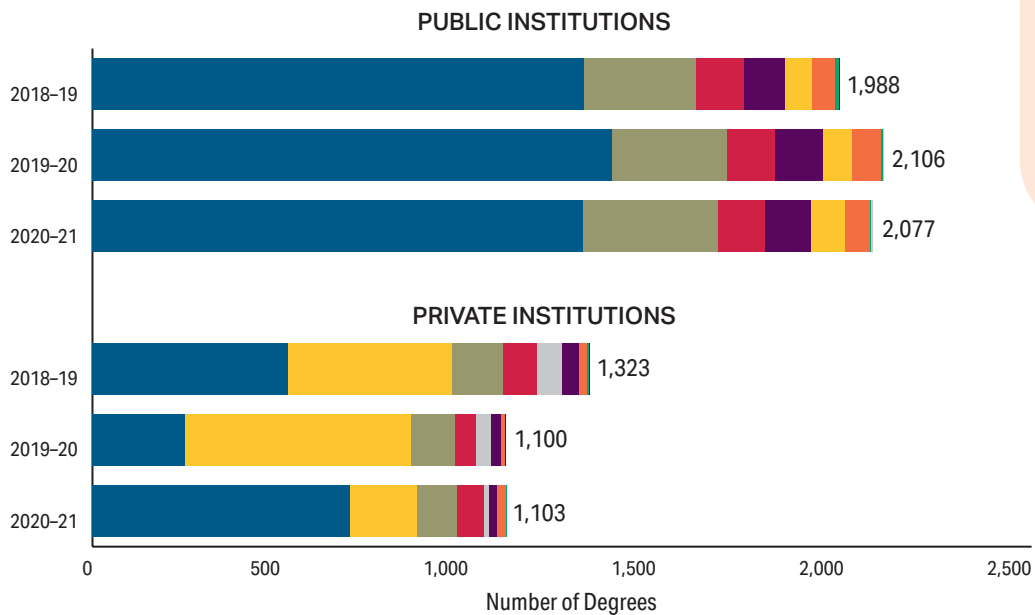
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2016 through Fall 2020, Fall Enrollment survey



CERTIFICATES



ASSOCIATE DEGREES



American Indian/Alaska Native
Asian

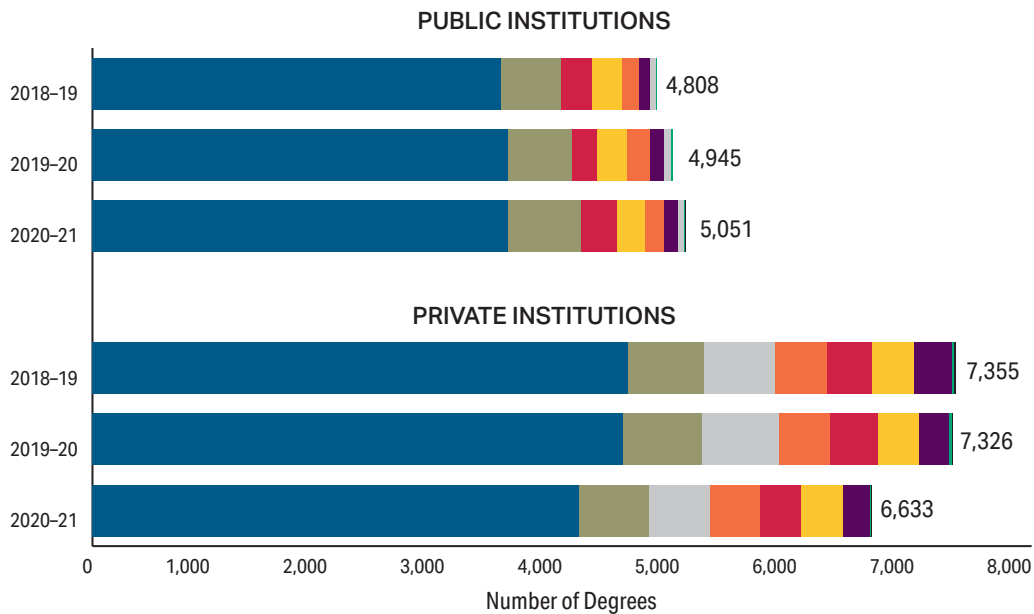
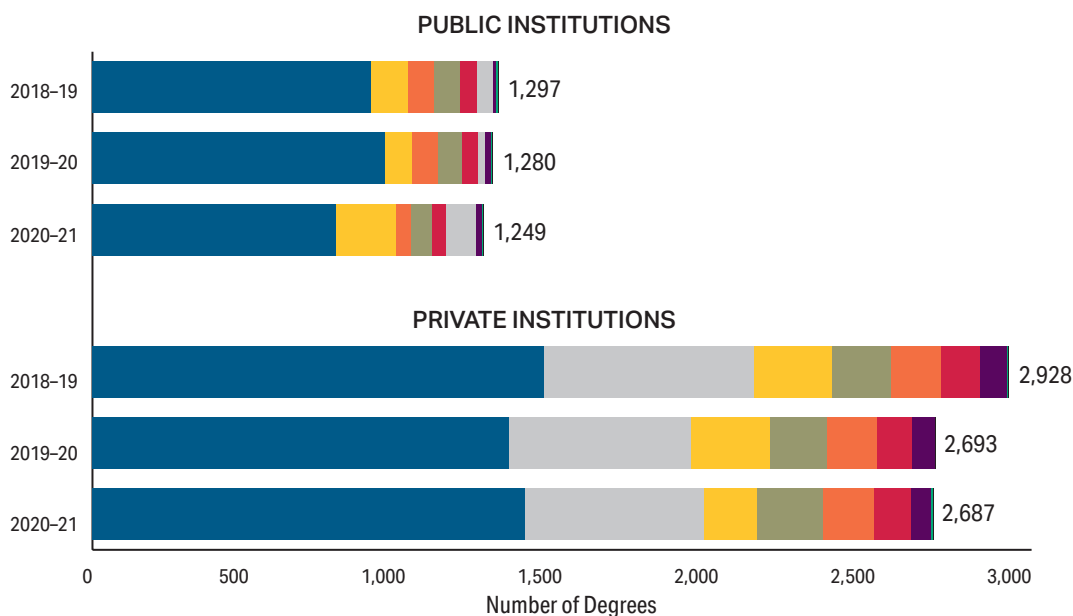
Black/African American
Hispanic

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
White

Two or More Races
International Students
Unknown

Degrees earned by [race/ethnic group] have been increasing, while closing equity gaps.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2018-19 through 2020-21, Completions survey

BACHELOR'S DEGREES**GRADUATE DEGREES**

American Indian/Alaska Native

Asian

Black/African American

Hispanic

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

White

Two or More Races

International Students

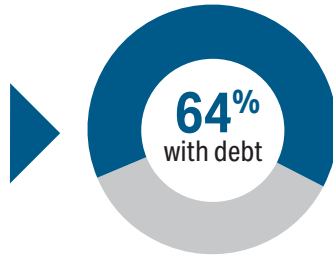
Unknown

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2018-19 through 2020-21, Completions survey

STUDENT DEBT

\$36,791

Average Debt
RI Class of 2020

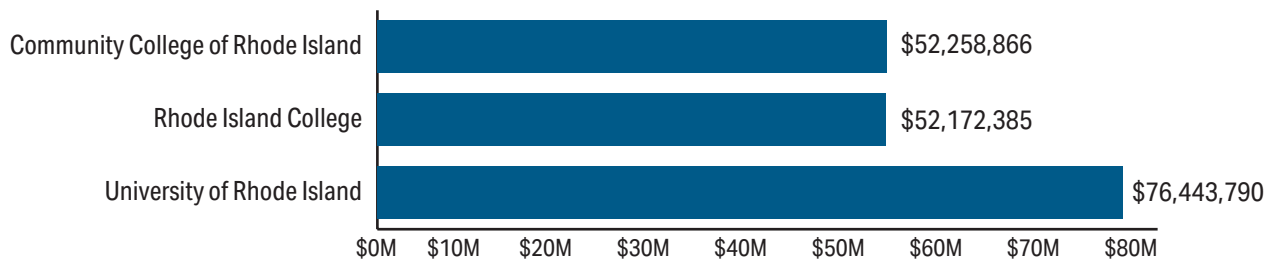


Source: The Institute for College Access & Success, November 2021. Student Debt and the Class of 2020. classof2020.pdf (ticas.org)

The state last dollar scholarship program awarded a total of **\$9,595,000** in 2020–21 to its public and private institutions, serving **8,069 students**.

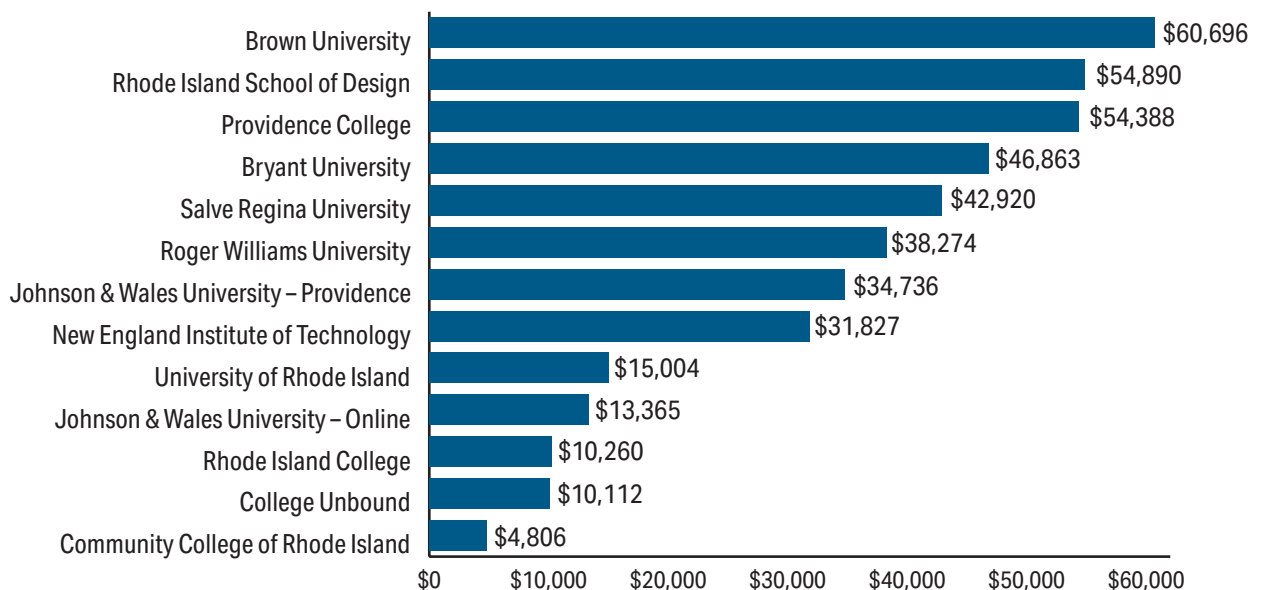
In 2020–21, the RI Promise program awarded a total of **\$7,030,366** to **1,627 Community College of Rhode Island students**.

RHODE ISLAND STATE APPROPRIATIONS, FY21



Source: ?

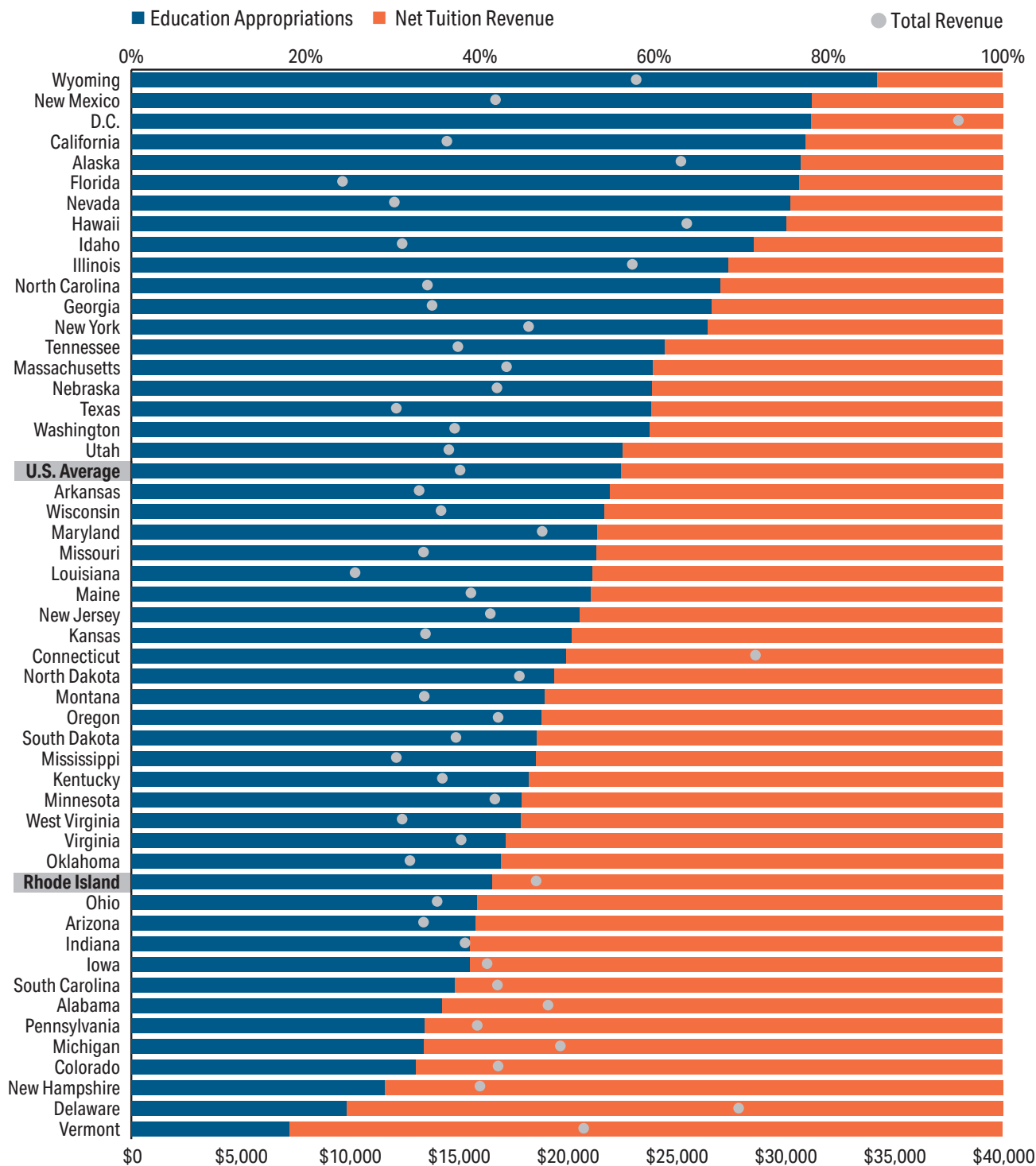
2020–21 IN-STATE TUITION AND FEES



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020 Institutional Characteristics survey

TOTAL REVENUE

Education Appropriations vs. Net Tuition by State



Source: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association. (2021). State Higher Education Finance: FY 2020

As the proportion of state funding increases, the proportion that comes from net tuition decreases. **Rhode Island is on the lower end of the spectrum** in terms of state appropriations.



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