



Meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education
Thursday, October 23, 2025

Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Avenue
Warwick, RI 02886, Room 4090
Meeting Minutes

Chair David Caprio called this meeting to order at 8:46 a.m. and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

Council on Postsecondary Education members present:

David Caprio, Chair, Council on Postsecondary Education
Dennis Duffy
Dennis Algieri (departed at 10:56 AM)
Michael Grey
Jeffery Williams
Gianna Rose, Student Member

Council on Postsecondary Education members absent:

Marcy Reyes
Lawrence Purtill
Rachel Green
Michael Mello

Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) staff present:

Shannon Gilkey, Ed.D., Commissioner
Melanie Bowdish, Director of RIDS
Ronald Cavallaro, Esq., General Counsel
Anne Marie Coleman, Esq., Assistant Commissioner, Human Resources and Labor Relations
Jailene Colon, Administrative Assistant
Sarach Cote, Assistant Director of RILDS
Zachary Saul, Chief Financial Officer
Andrea Spargo, Research Specialist

Rhode Island College (RIC) participants:

President Jack Warner
Manyul Im, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Jenifer Giroux, Vice President of Corporate Relations and Professional Studies
Clark Greene, Senior Advisor to the President & Chief of Staff (departed at 10:56AM)
Cindy Kozil, Vice President for Student Success

Margaret A. Lynch-Gadaleta, General Counsel/Interim Assistant VP of Human Resources
Anastasia Rodriguez, Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance

Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) participants:

President Rosemary Costigan
James N. Bradley, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology
Jenifer Johnson, Interim AVP, Institutional Advancement, and College Relations,
Executive Dir. CCRI Foundation, Division of Workforce Partnerships
Amy Kacerik, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Amy Kempe, Senior Advisor to the President & Chief of Staff, Marketing and Communications
Greg LaPointe, Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Outcomes Officer
Barbara Nauman, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
Alix Odgen, Vice President of Institutional Equity, Human Resources, and Organizational Development
John Renza III, Interim Associate Vice President for Workforce Partnerships
Rich Sullivan, Vice President, Administration and Finance

1. Acceptance of the Agenda

Chair Caprio asked for a motion to accept the agenda for the meeting on October 23, 2025.

On a motion made by Dennis Duffy and seconded by Jeffery Williams, it was:

VOTED:	THAT	The Council on Postsecondary Education accept the agenda for the meeting on October 23, 2025.
	VOTE:	5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.
	YEAS:	David Caprio, Dennis Duffy, Dennis Algieri, Michael Grey, and Jeffery Williams.
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0

2. Discussion Items

A. Presentation: RI ‘Systemness’ in Action

Commissioner Shannon Gilkey provided an overview of the concept of systemness, emphasizing the importance of coordinated action across Rhode Island’s public higher education institutions. The discussion focused on how a unified governance structure allows institutions to function collectively in ways that improve efficiency, expand access, and strengthen student outcomes statewide. Participants discussed the value of shared resources, aligned priorities, and cross-institutional collaboration as key drivers of systemwide impact.

B. Strategic Initiative 1: Increasing Emphasis on Retention and Completion

Commissioner Gilkey, on behalf of Assistant Commissioner Greg Ebner, along with senior academic and student affairs leadership, led a discussion on efforts to improve retention and completion across the system. The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee's planned work for 2026 was outlined, including collaboration among the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island. The discussion centered on identifying research-based strategies and focusing on common measures of student success that can be applied consistently across institutions.

C. Systemwide Capacity and Infrastructure

Assistant Commissioner Anne Marie Coleman discussed the need for a coordinated approach to systemwide capacity and infrastructure challenges. Participants reviewed preliminary conversations among CCRI, RIC, and OPC regarding the need for a comprehensive safety and security assessment. In addition, the discussion addressed the importance of upgrading enterprise resource planning systems and approaching these investments as shared, system-level initiatives rather than institution-specific efforts.

D. Proactive Strategies to Improve Business Services and Address the Changing Higher Education Finance Landscape

Chief Financial Officer Zachary Saul led a discussion on strategies to improve the efficiency of business services and the effective use of system infrastructure. Participants discussed the evolving financial landscape facing public higher education and the need for adaptable financial strategies that support institutional missions. Topics included delegated purchasing as a means to increase efficiency and a broader financial framework focused on facilities utilization and long-term sustainability.

E. Routines, Processes, and Schedules for FY 2026

A discussion was held regarding Council routines, processes, and meeting schedules for fiscal year 2026. While the proposed meeting and committee schedules were reviewed, no approval could be taken due to the absence of a quorum.

F. RIOPC SLDS and Institutional Research Potential

Director of RILDS Melanie Bowdish and Assistant Director of RILDS Sarah Cote provided an overview of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and its potential to support institutional research and decision-making. The discussion highlighted opportunities to leverage shared data to improve planning, accountability, and outcomes across the postsecondary system.

3. Action Items

A. Approval of the Council on Postsecondary Education 2026 meeting schedule, including committee schedule.

Chair Caprio announced that due to the lack of quorum, the Council would vote on the 2026 meeting schedule at the next Council meeting.

