

Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
R372A230023

Project Title: Reimagining College and Career Pathways

Project Description: The Rhode Island (RI) Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) is pleased to partner with the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC), and the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) to pursue a FY23 U.S. Department of Education Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant focused on College and Career. This collaboration builds on Rhode Island's decades of experiences in removing silos and connecting data to support policymakers and practitioners in improving outcomes and closing equity gaps. RIDE will lead and manage this project, serving as the fiscal agent for the grant, but the funding will primarily support the Rhode Island Longitudinal Data System Center (RILDS Center, f.k.a. DataSpark). The RILDS Center, a distinct entity located within OPC, is legislatively entrusted with the management and operation of the Rhode Island Longitudinal Data System (RILDS, f.k.a. Rhode Island DataHUB).

In 2018, Rhode Island committed to reimagining high school. The results of this data- and community-informed process are new Secondary Regulations that establish college and career-ready coursework as the default expectation for every child in Rhode Island regardless of where they live, their parent's income, the language they speak at home, or their disability status. The work doesn't end there. To support this radical transformation, Rhode Island proposes two parallel workstreams.

First, Rhode Island needs to reimagine the data collected along the entire P-20W+ continuum. We aim to redesign and streamline the K-12 datasets essential for these new regulations to include more information about real-world relevant learning; student's academic, career, and personal/social goals; as well as their commitments outside of the classroom. To improve our understanding of RI college and career pathways, we'll also enhance data collections along the P-20W+ continuum and integrate education and workforce records held either at the local level, by private institutions, or otherwise outside of the states' education and workforce agencies, into the RILDS. Outcomes of this workstream include revised K-12 data collection specifications and a comprehensive, linked, longitudinal college and career dataset.

Second, this proposal will enhance the capacities for the RILDS to share data with districts, schools, parents, and students with the goals of informing decisions about college and career pathways and reducing inequities in student opportunities and outcomes. We'll collaborate with learners, families, and educators plus relevant data stewards to draft and disseminate two data stories exploring predictive factors associated with college and career success. Under this workstream, we'll also reimagine the RI Talent Dashboard, creating a data tool displaying college and career outcomes by pathway and subgroup. To improve data accessibility and facilitate data use, RI will create resources and programs for researchers and policymakers – an updated cross-agency research agenda, an improved and expanded data dictionary, a small grants program, and a forum highlighting RI education data, RI Data Day. Through our small grant program, we'll encourage researchers investigating priority research and policy questions related to college and career pathways and the new high school graduation regulations. At this RI Data Day, we'll invite students to present data story findings, researchers to share their ongoing projects, and families, educators, Data Contributing Agency Staff and policymakers to learn more about RI student pathways.