

2024 -- S 2559

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LC004703  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE COLLEGE CRUSADE SCHOLARSHIP

Introduced By: Senators Cano, Valverde, Lawson, Lauria, Pearson, DiPalma, Bissailon,  
Acosta, Murray, and Kallman

Date Introduced: March 01, 2024

Referred To: Senate Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The title of Chapter 16-70 of the General Laws entitled "The College Crusade  
2 Scholarship [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 ~~CHAPTER 16-70~~

5 ~~The College Crusade Scholarship [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the Rhode Island Board of~~  
6 ~~Education Act]~~

7 CHAPTER 16-70

8 THE ONWARD WE LEARN SCHOLARSHIP ACT

9 SECTION 2. Sections 16-70-1, 16-70-3, 16-70-4, 16-70-5 and 16-70-6 of the General  
10 Laws in Chapter 16-70 entitled "The College Crusade Scholarship [See Title 16 Chapter 97 — the  
11 Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" are hereby amended to read as follows:

12 **16-70-1. Short title.**

13 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as ~~the "College Crusade Scholarship Act."~~  
14 "The Onward We Learn Scholarship Act".

15 **16-70-3. ~~Program for the support of the college crusade established.~~ Program for the**  
16 **support of the onward we learn scholarship established.**

17 The council on postsecondary education is empowered to establish and provide as part of  
18 the operation of the office of the postsecondary commissioner methods and procedures for the  
19 state's support of the ~~college crusade~~ onward we learn scholarship and provide financial and

1 technical assistance as needed.

2 **16-70-4. Council on postsecondary education support program — Powers and duties.**

3 The council on postsecondary education shall have the following powers and duties:

4 (1) To prepare with the assistance of the commissioner of postsecondary education and to  
5 present annually to the state budget officer in accordance with § 35-3-4, as part of the state higher  
6 education budget, a line-item budget request specifically designated as the state’s share of support  
7 for ~~the college crusade of Rhode Island~~ [the onward we learn scholarship program](#). The budget shall  
8 be designated as a specific, line-item budget request and shall be presented as part of the budget of  
9 the postsecondary commissioner.

10 (2) To provide, through its office of the postsecondary commissioner, the authority to  
11 designate ~~the college crusade of Rhode Island~~ [the onward we learn scholarship program](#), a 501(c)(3)  
12 nonprofit organization registered with the Rhode Island secretary of state, as the entity that will  
13 administer and operate all program services and manage scholarship resources [associated with the](#)  
14 [federal GEAR UP program](#).

15 **16-70-5. Budget and appropriations.**

16 The general assembly shall annually appropriate any sums as it deems necessary as the  
17 state’s share for the support and maintenance of ~~the college crusade~~ [the onward we learn](#)  
18 [scholarship program](#), including operational and scholarship support, and the state controller is  
19 authorized and directed to draw his or her orders upon the general treasurer for the payment of the  
20 appropriations upon receipt by him or her of the proper voucher the office of the postsecondary  
21 commissioner may provide. The office of the postsecondary commissioner shall present the  
22 voucher to the state controller no later than the last day of the first month of the fiscal year for  
23 which the appropriation is made and this appropriation shall be remitted to the accounts of ~~the~~  
24 ~~college crusade of Rhode Island~~ [the onward we learn scholarship program](#) by the state treasurer no  
25 later than the last day of the second month of the fiscal year.

26 **16-70-6. Audit requirements.**

27 ~~The college crusade of Rhode Island~~ [The onward we learn scholarship program](#) shall  
28 complete an annual audit completed by prior to the employment of private auditors. Audit work  
29 papers of the private auditors shall be made available upon request to the auditor general and/or the  
30 director of administration for their review, at the completion of the audit. The audit report shall be  
31 furnished to the auditor general and the director of administration.

32 SECTION 3. Chapter 16-70 of the General Laws entitled “Onward We Learn Scholarship  
33 Act” is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

34 **16-70-4.1. Administration of onward we learn scholarship program.**

1           Scholarships that onward we learn program participants receive directly from the onward  
2 we learn scholarship program shall not be considered federal or financial aid in conjunction with  
3 chapter 107 of this title ("Rhode Island Promise Scholarship") or chapter 113 of this title ("Rhode  
4 Island hope scholarship pilot program act").

5           **16-70-4.2 Access to student information systems.**

6           To ensure that program participants in the onward we learn scholarship program receive  
7 the best possible services and supports, local education agencies (LEAs) whose students participate  
8 in this program shall provide the organization with individual-level access to student information  
9 systems and other data related to established college readiness metrics including, but not limited  
10 to: attendance, course schedule demographics, discipline, grades, and test results.

11           SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE COLLEGE CRUSADE SCHOLARSHIP

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1           This act would change the name of The College Crusade Scholarship to the Onward We  
2 Learn Scholarship and provide that those scholarships would not be considered federal or financial  
3 aid with regard to the Promise Scholarship or Hope Scholarship Pilot Program. The act would also  
4 require that Local Education Agencies provide the program with individual-level access to student  
5 information systems and other data related to established college readiness metrics.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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