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Enclosure 8b  
April 1, 2015

To: Council on Postsecondary Education

From: Commissioner Jim Purcell, Ed.D

Date: March 27, 2015

Subject: Mission, role, and scope documents

Overview

At the April 1, 2015 Council on Postsecondary Education meeting, mission, role, and scope statements for the Rhode Island public postsecondary institutions will be introduced. The powers given to the Council on Postsecondary Education under Article 20, section 16-59-4.11.i and iii include approving the mission, role and scope statements of the public higher education institutions:

1. To approve the role and scope of programs at public institutions of higher learning with the assistance of the commissioner of postsecondary education which shall include but not be limited to populations to be served, type and level of programs, and academic fields offered.
2. To approve a clear and definitive mission for each public institution of higher learning with the assistance of the commissioner of postsecondary education that is consistent with the role and scope of programs at the public institutions.

The Council on Postsecondary Education, as required by Article 20, will be asked to approve the mission, role and scope statements for the institutions. While this is a requirement imposed by the General Assembly, it is also an opportunity to help the public institutions of higher education in Rhode Island to coalesce into a stronger and more productive system. Once approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education, the following outcomes are expected:

- Clear and updated statements of role and scope provide guidance to the institutions for the appropriate development of new programs and services while allowing them latitude to develop new programs more quickly and in response to verified needs.
- With less oversight of new programs developed within the purview of the institutions, the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner may focus on overarching policy development, institutional effectiveness, academic quality, and duplication and gaps in programs or service needs.

The approach used in developing the role and scope statements reflects the work at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). NCHEMS has consulted in Rhode Island on governance and coordination issues and in several states on developing statements of the system's mission, role and scope.

The role and scope statements now being presented to the Council were developed with reference to previous Board of Governors' documents and input from the public postsecondary institutions. Draft versions of the mission, role, and scope document were sent out to the institutions for review and their comments were incorporated into the version presented to the Council.

The mission, role, and scope documents are being presented to the Council on Postsecondary Education for discussion at the April 1 Council on Postsecondary Education meeting; at the next meeting, the documents will be presented for further discussion and approval of the documents as noted in the motion below.

#### Council motion

#### **Motion**

It is recommended-

-THAT-The Council on Postsecondary Education approve the mission, role and scope statements for the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island that were developed in accordance with the Council's powers as enumerated in Article 20 as amended.