



New England Higher Education Policy Updates

Snapshot of Adopted Legislation (2023) & Budget Overview (2024)

Adopted Legislation (2023)

Connecticut

[Public Act 23-3: An Act Concerning the Foundations of the Regional Community-Technical Colleges](#)

- Allows the individual campuses of the community-technical colleges to establish or maintain respective foundations following their merger into a single institution, Connecticut State Community College.

[Public Act 23-8: An Act Requiring Reporting on the Implementation of the Students First Plan](#)

- Requires the Board of Regents to report annually to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee on the results of the consolidation of the regional community-technical schools into CT State Community College, including student performance indicators and personnel/faculty metrics.

[Public Act 23-14: An Act Prohibiting an Institution of Higher Education from Withholding Transcripts](#)

- Prohibits institutions of higher education from withholding student transcripts from employers, prospective employers or any branch of the military service of the United States as a means to collect a student debt.

[Public Act 23-41: An Act Concerning Access to Reproductive Health Care by Students at Public Institutions of Higher Education](#)

- Requires the Board of Regents and the UConn Board of Trustees to establish and update as needed a plan to provide reproductive healthcare services by a licensed healthcare provider to students who live on residential campuses under the Board's jurisdiction by January 1, 2024.

[Public Act 23-61: An Act Establishing a Green Jobs Corps Program](#)

- Requires the Connecticut Clean Economy Council to develop a workforce training plan for green jobs, including development of work-based learning programs and certificate and degree programs related to the green technology industry.

[Public Act 23-151: An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Connecticut Open Educational Resource Coordinating Council](#)

- Requires the Connecticut Open Educational Resource (OER) Coordinating Council to establish an OER program to lower the cost of textbooks and course materials for high-impact courses at state higher education institutions.



Maine

[L.D. 5: An Act to Expand Access to Postsecondary Education for Low-Income Parents](#)

- Increases the eligibility threshold of the Higher Opportunity for Pathways to Employment Program created in 2017 by changing the income requirements from 185% to 225% of the federal poverty line.

[L.D. 32: An Act to Update the Maine State Grant Program](#)

- This update replaces “estimated family contribution” with “student aid index” in assessing students’ eligibility to receive the Maine State Grant. (Student aid index is a calculation that reflects an evaluation of a student’s approximate financial resources to contribute toward the student’s postsecondary education for an academic year).

[L.D. 343: An Act to Invest in an Educational Technician Training Program to Address Shortages in Public Schools](#)

- Provides one-time funds to support the Learning Facilitator Credential Program at Eastern Maine Community College.

[L.D. 830: Resolve, Directing the Maine Community College System to Study Providing On-Campus Housing on All Campuses](#)

- Requires the Maine Community College System to study providing on-campus housing to all students, with a particular focus on campuses that do not currently provide housing. They must report to the Joint Standing Committee on predicted costs and other specific metrics by December 2023.

[L.D. 1264: Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Update Maine’s Public Policy on Higher Education](#)

- Establishes a Commission to review all laws and rules related to the State’s public policy on higher education and analyze present and future goals (such as expanding access to affordable, high-quality education to help students achieve postsecondary success in the 21st century). Requires the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine system to provide any data and information the Commission determines is relevant.

[L.D. 1539: An Act to Promote a Diverse, More Experienced Workforce and Ensure High-Quality Careers by Increasing Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#)

- Updates quality standards and reporting requirements for the Maine Apprenticeship Council to ensure apprentices receive adequate wages and benefits, and employers track long-term career outcomes. Determines that the Maine Apprenticeship Council must establish a financial incentive program for recruiting historically underserved populations into apprenticeships.

[L.D. 1656: An Act to Allow Student Representation Within the Governance of the University of Maine System](#)

- Requires that by July 2024, two of the members appointed by the Governor to the University of Maine’s Board of Trustees must be full-time students in good standing in



the University of Maine system (one undergraduate and one graduate student). Students are full voting members of the Board of Trustees and serve two-year terms.

Massachusetts

In session through November 15, 2023

New Hampshire

[H 2: An Act Relative to State Fees, Funds, Revenues and Expenditures](#)

- Makes an appropriation of \$3 million to the community college system of New Hampshire for the implementation of the New Hampshire Promise Program. Additionally, appropriates \$2 million for workforce credential programs.

[S.B. 24: An Act Relative to Conferring Degree-Granting Authority to the New England Aeronautical Institute](#)

- Authorizes the New England Aeronautical Institute to confer degrees.

[S.B. 45: An Act Relative to National Guard Educational Benefits](#)

- Allows eligible national guard members to transfer their national guard tuition waiver benefit to their spouse to be used in a degree-enhancing curriculum in the university system of New Hampshire.

[S.B. 152-FN: An Act Relative to New Hampshire Workforce Training Programs](#)

- Requires the department of education to establish a marine trades pathway at a regional career technology center, establishes a career and technical education workforce development and innovation fund, and establishes an offshore wind industry workforce training center committee in the department of business and economic affairs.

Rhode Island

[S 0077: An Act Relating to Education—Rhode Island Hope Scholarship Pilot Program Act](#)

- Creates the Rhode Island Hope Scholarship for juniors and seniors at Rhode Island College, covering up to two years of mandatory tuition and fees.

[S 0178: An Act Relating to Education—Apprenticeship Pathways to Earning a Bachelor's Degree Act](#)

- Requires that by January 2024, each RI state public higher education institution must adopt policies establishing nontraditional pathways to a bachelor's degree at state public higher education institutions through the inclusion of credits earned through apprenticeships.

[S 0373: An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government—Corrections Department](#)

- Requires the Rhode Island Department of Corrections to collect information on individuals entering its custody, including level of education, and produce an annual summary of findings.



[H 5782: An Act Relative to Property Subject to Taxation](#)

- Includes nonprofit higher education institutions among properties subject to taxation.

Vermont

[H 452: An Act Relating to Expanding Apprenticeship and Other Workforce Opportunities](#)

- Expands apprenticeships and other workforce opportunities; includes provisions related to stackability and reciprocity.

Budget Overview: Summary of 2024-2025 Higher Education Activities

State	2024-2025 Budget Summary for Higher Education
Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces funding for state universities and community colleges by \$115 million compared to the 2023-2024 academic year. • Expands debt-free community college program to include previously enrolled students returning from a break.
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invests \$2.75 million in a one-time workforce attraction pilot program aimed at recent college graduates. • Invests \$1.8 million in ongoing funding for the Maine Apprenticeship Program. • Provides a 4.5% increase in funding for Maine's public higher education institutions.
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes community college free for students over 25 through the MassReconnect program. • Increases funding for Early College, Innovation Career Pathways, apprenticeships and other workforce development programs. • Provides \$330 million for student financial aid, including \$84 million to expand MASSGrant Plus scholarships. • Expands in-state tuition to undocumented students.
New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintroduces the workforce development student debt assistance program, which expands student debt assistance for recent graduates pursuing careers in healthcare,



	<p>biotechnology, social work, and other in-demand fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding is maintained for college endowment funds and the UNIQUE scholarship program.
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases student aid by a combined \$14.2 million (6.8%) for Rhode Island College, University of Rhode Island, and the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI). Provides \$2.5 million to CCRI for re-enrollment efforts of students who have earned some credits previously. Invests \$8 million in the RI Reconnect program (targeted coaching and wraparound services).
Vermont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases funding to the Vermont State Colleges system by \$78.2 million. Launches a two-year pilot to reduce tuition at the Community College of Vermont (CCV) by 50%. Maintains support for the University of Vermont's (UVM) Upskill Vermont scholarship and free tuition through the 802 Opportunity program. Increases funding by \$1 million for a scholarship program introduced in 2022 to make trades education more affordable. Invests \$5 million in the Vermont Training Program to bring more federal CHIPS and Science Act dollars to the state.

Connecticut: Phaneuf, K. (2023, June 6). Senate gives overwhelming bipartisan approval to new CT budget. *CT Mirror*. <https://ctmirror.org/2023/06/06/ct-budget-senate-passed-income-tax-cut/>

Maine: Additional highlights from Governor Mills' 2024-2025 budget (n.d.). <https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/sites/maine.gov/governor.mills/files/inline-files/Additional%20Highlights%20from%20Governor%20Mills%202024-2025%20Budget.pdf>

Massachusetts: Commonwealth of Massachusetts (2023, August 9). Governor Healey and Lt. Governor Driscoll sign \$56 billion fiscal year 2024 budget [Press Release]. <https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-and-lieutenant-governor-driscoll-sign-56-billion-fiscal-year-2024-budget#:~:text=Maura%20Healey%20today%20signed%20a,more%20affordable%2C%20competitive%20and%20equitable.>

New Hampshire: Sununu, Christopher T. (n.d.) Governor's executive budget summary. <https://www.das.nh.gov/budget/Budget2024-2025/Executive-Summary-FY24-25.pdf>

Rhode Island: Office of Management and Budget (2023, January 19). FY 2024 budget overview [PowerPoint Presentation]. <https://omb.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkqbur751/files/2023-01/FY%202024%20Budget%20Media%20Presentation.pdf>

Vermont: Scott, Phil (2023, January 2020). Governor Phil Scott delivers fiscal year 2024 budget address [Press Release]. <https://governor.vermont.gov/press-release/governor-phil-scott-delivers-fiscal-year-2024-budget-address#:~:text=Across%20all%20funds%2C%20this%20is,this%20year%20took%20%24444%20million.>