

New England Tech Academy Local Impact Analysis Submission

A Pathway to Prosperity: New England Tech Academy's Role in Strengthening Rhode Island's Workforce and Educational Equity

Introduction

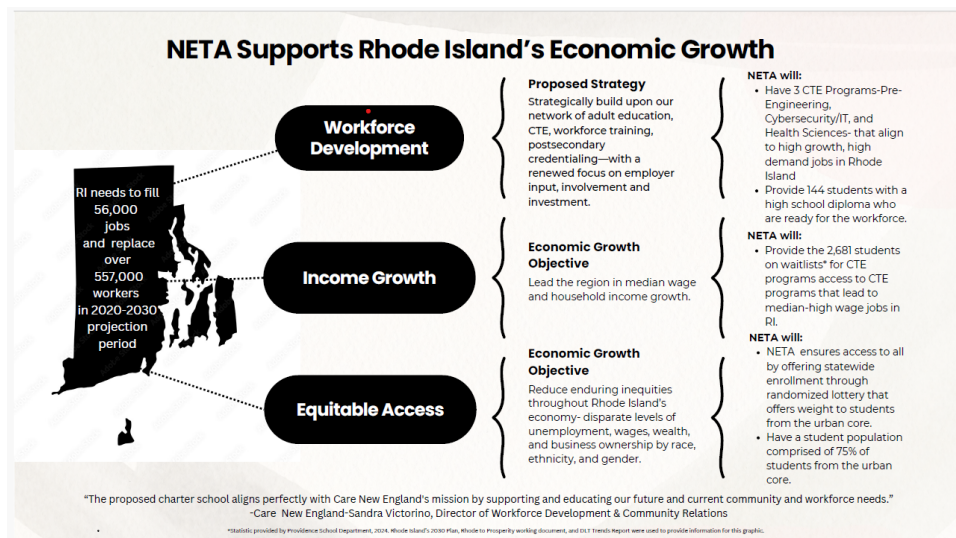
In Governor Dan McKee's State of the State Address earlier this year, he set a goal to raise per capita income in Rhode Island by a minimum of \$20,000 by the year 2030¹. The establishment of the New England Technical Academy (NETA) presents a compelling opportunity to support both Rhode Island's students and Rhode Island's economy towards this goal (see Figure 1). Scheduled to open in the 2025-2026 school year, NETA will draw 75% of students from the urban core—communities historically underserved in accessing high-quality curriculum, instruction, and career and technical education (CTE) programs—and 25% will be open to all other communities in RI. Aligned with Rhode Island's top priorities for a prosperous economy—improving educational outcomes and raising incomes—NETA provides a critical opportunity to:

1. Provide historically marginalized students access to high-quality curriculum and CTE programs, and
2. Drive economic growth by meeting workforce needs, increasing income opportunities, and supporting equitable career access.

Opportunity Impact for Rhode Island's Economy

NETA will positively impact Rhode Island's economy by supporting state goals to build a skilled workforce, raise incomes, and enhance wealth (see Figure 1). The Rhode to Prosperity plan emphasizes expanding CTE and work-based learning to strengthen the workforce.²

Figure 1-NETA Supports Rhode Island's Economic Growth (See Appendix A)



¹ Rhode to Prosperity, p.1 <https://www.ri2030.com/files/public/Rhode-to-Prosperity.pdf>

² Rhode to Prosperity, p.2 <https://www.ri2030.com/files/public/Rhode-to-Prosperity.pdf>

New England Tech Academy Local Impact Analysis Submission

NETA's CTE programs in Pre-Engineering, Cybersecurity/Information Technology, and Health Sciences will equip students with skills essential for high-demand fields projected to generate 32,000 jobs by 2030.³ This includes opportunities in Mechanical Electronics, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Cyber-Security, and Surgical Care. By expanding the pool of qualified graduates, NETA will be vital to Rhode Island's economic future.

Rhode Island Leaders and Employers Support New England Tech Academy

1. Care New England

“The proposed charter school aligns perfectly with Care New England's mission by supporting and educating our future and current community and workforce needs.”

-**Sandra Victorino**, Director of Workforce Development & Community Relations, Care New England

2. Lifespan

“As an organization committed to our future healthcare workforce, we are particularly excited about growing an intentional youth development strategy which focuses on promoting awareness of careers in healthcare through the New England Tech Academy as outlined in their charter school application.”

-**William Schmiedeknecht**, Senior Vice President & Chief Human Resource Officer, Lifespan

3. Congressman James R. Langevin

“The New England Tech Academy will play a critical role in preparing Rhode Island students for high-demand careers. Developing post-secondary opportunities in cybersecurity for their students aligns perfectly with the Institute's mission to help grow Rhode Island's workforce.”

-**Congressman James R. Langevin (ret)**, Distinguished Chair Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies at Rhode Island College

4. IGT

“The establishment of this school will not only enrich our educational landscape but also provide much-needed opportunities for students who would benefit from their unique programming. By supporting New England Institute of Technology's charter application, we are taking a proactive step towards ensuring that every child in our community has access to high-quality education that prepares them for future success.”

-**Jason T. Mollo, Sr.**, Manager, Global Talent Acquisition Operations & Corporate Recruitment, IGT

³ Rhode Island Employment Trends and Workforce Issues, p.25 dlt.ri.gov/media/13416/download?language=en. Accessed 11 November 2024.

**New England Tech Academy
Local Impact Analysis Submission**

5. American Council of Pre-Engineering Companies of Rhode Island

“As an organization committed to education and advocacy for Pre-Engineering and related firms, we are particularly excited about creating a school which will provide more STEM educational opportunities for students interested in Pre-Engineering and related services. As in other states, RI faces a critical shortage of students going into Pre-Engineering which contributes greatly to the workforce shortage in Pre-Engineering.”

-**Dorothy S. Davison**, Executive Director, ACEC-RI

6. Rhode Island Life Science Hub

“The STEM pathways ingrained in the New England Tech Academy proposal has the potential to develop in-state talent in the life sciences sector. Moreover, as a high school with university partnerships, this charter school plays a unique role in bridging the public and private sectors with academic institutions.”

-**Dr. Patrice Milos, PhD**, Interim President, Rhode Island Life Science Hub

Opportunity Impact for Students

The New England Tech Academy (NETA) provides Rhode Island students, particularly those from underrepresented groups, the chance to earn a high school diploma and gain skills for a competitive, high-skilled workforce and the opportunity to earn college credits towards postsecondary attainment. Drawing 75% of its students from underserved urban core areas, NETA’s student population will reflect Rhode Island’s diversity, with 35% Hispanic, 12% Black, 4% Asian Pacific, 2% Native American, and 5.5% Multi-Racial students.⁴ With over 2,600 students waitlisted for CTE programs and 30,000 applications for only 3,000 charter seats, NETA’s open-enrollment and lottery-based admissions prioritize access to career-focused education for those who need it most.⁵

Aligned with Rhode Island’s 2030 plan to reduce inequalities in employment, wages, and wealth, NETA will prepare students, including multilingual learners and students with disabilities, for fields where they have historically been underrepresented.⁶ Parallel to the national distribution, jobs requiring a high school diploma for entry into an occupation represent the largest portion of the Rhode Island labor market.⁷ By equipping students with a diploma and workforce-ready skills, NETA supports both equitable educational outcomes and Rhode Island’s economic growth.

⁴ These numbers are based on projections of students from the urban core communities. See Appendix C.

⁵ There are 2,681 students on a waitlist for CTE programs in Providence. This information is provided by Providence Public Schools. 2024.

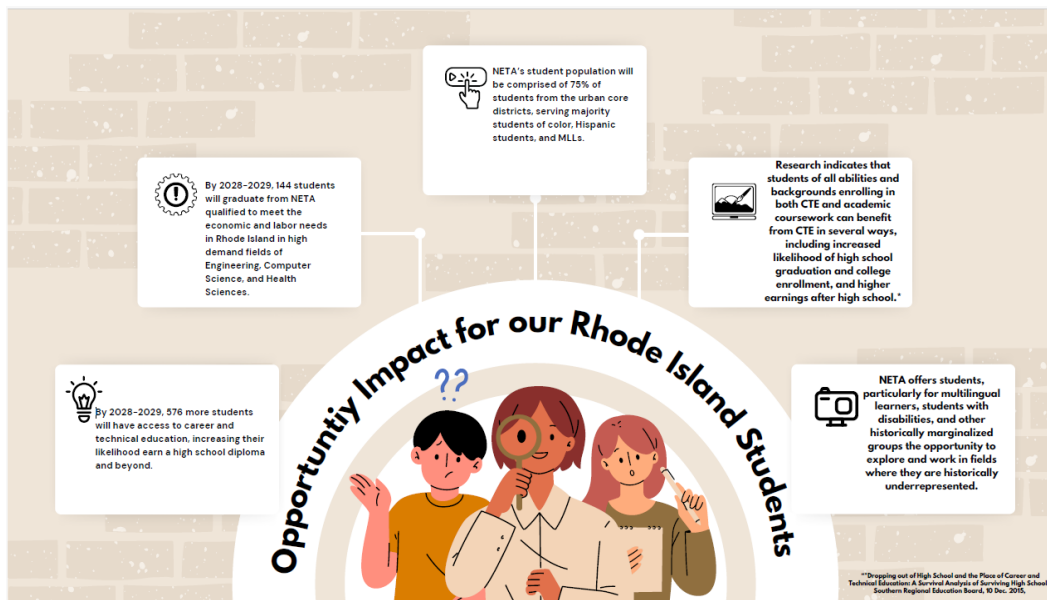
⁶ Rhode Island Trends and Workforce Issues 2023-2024. A publication of the Labor market Information Unit. Accessed 11/5/2024.

⁷ Rhode Island Employment Trends and Workforce Issues, p.28 dlt.ri.gov/media/13416/download?language=en. Accessed 11 November 2024.

New England Tech Academy Local Impact Analysis Submission

According to the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner's "Key Facts About Postsecondary Education: RI 2024" the average Rhode Islander with less than a high school diploma makes \$33,759, \$41,968 with a high school diploma, and \$66,011 with a Bachelor's degree.⁸ New England Tech Academy will ensure that students are ready to enter into the workforce earning high wages and are also prepared for higher education opportunities which will in turn continue to further raise family incomes. Research indicates that students of all abilities and backgrounds enrolling in both CTE and academic coursework can benefit from CTE in several ways, including increased likelihood of high school graduation and college enrollment, and higher earnings after high school, thus aligning to the Governor's goal to raise per capita income in Rhode Island by the year 2030.^{9,10}

Figure 2- Opportunity Impact for Our Rhode Island Students (See Appendix B)



Furthermore, as shown in the July 2024 "Enrollment in Rhode Island's Career and Tech Programs: Perkins Data Analysis" by the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC)-- 55% of students in the state are white, however, white students are making up approximately 66% of all CTE slots¹¹. However, this school presents an opportunity to close this gap by prioritizing enrollment in communities that have higher percentages of Latino and Black/African American students.

⁸ Key Facts About Postsecondary Education: RI 2024, p.6. Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. https://riopc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/RI-State-of-State-Final_2024.pdf. Accessed 14 November 2024.

⁹ Rhode to Prosperity, p.1 <https://www.ri2030.com/files/public/Rhode-to-Prosperity.pdf>

¹⁰ "Dropping out of High School and the Place of Career and Technical Education: A Survival Analysis of Surviving High School." Southern Regional Education Board, 10 Dec. 2015, www.sreb.org/publication/dropping-out-high-school-and-place-career-and-technical-education-survival-analysis.

¹¹ "Enrollment in Rhode Island's Career and Tech Programs: Perkins Data Analysis" by the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC)," July 2024, pg. 3

New England Tech Academy
Local Impact Analysis Submission

Closing

In closing, the time is now, as NETA's approval is a timely opportunity to make lasting impacts on both individual lives of students in underserved communities and our state's economy. By investing in career and technical education that meets current labor market demands, Rhode Island is taking a proactive approach to support its economic growth and workforce development. With its commitment to Rhode Island's students and delivering a high-quality, inclusive educational experience, NETA will be a cornerstone institution that propels Rhode Island's students—and its economy—forward.

Appendix

Appendix A- NETA Supports Rhode Island's Economic Growth

NETA Supports Rhode Island's Economic Growth

RI needs to fill 56,000 jobs and replace over 557,000 workers in 2020-2030 projection period

- Workforce Development**

Proposed Strategy
Strategically build upon our network of adult education, CTE, workforce training, postsecondary credentialing—with a renewed focus on employer input, involvement and investment.
- Income Growth**

Economic Growth Objective
Lead the region in median wage and household income growth.
- Equitable Access**

Economic Growth Objective
Reduce enduring inequities throughout Rhode Island's economy- disparate levels of unemployment, wages, wealth, and business ownership by race, ethnicity, and gender.

NETA will:

- Have 3 CTE Programs-Pre-Engineering, Cybersecurity/IT, and Health Sciences- that align to high growth, high demand jobs in Rhode Island
- Provide 144 students with a high school diploma who are ready for the workforce.

NETA will:

- Provide the 2,681 students on waitlists* for CTE programs access to CTE programs that lead to median-high wage jobs in RI.

NETA will:

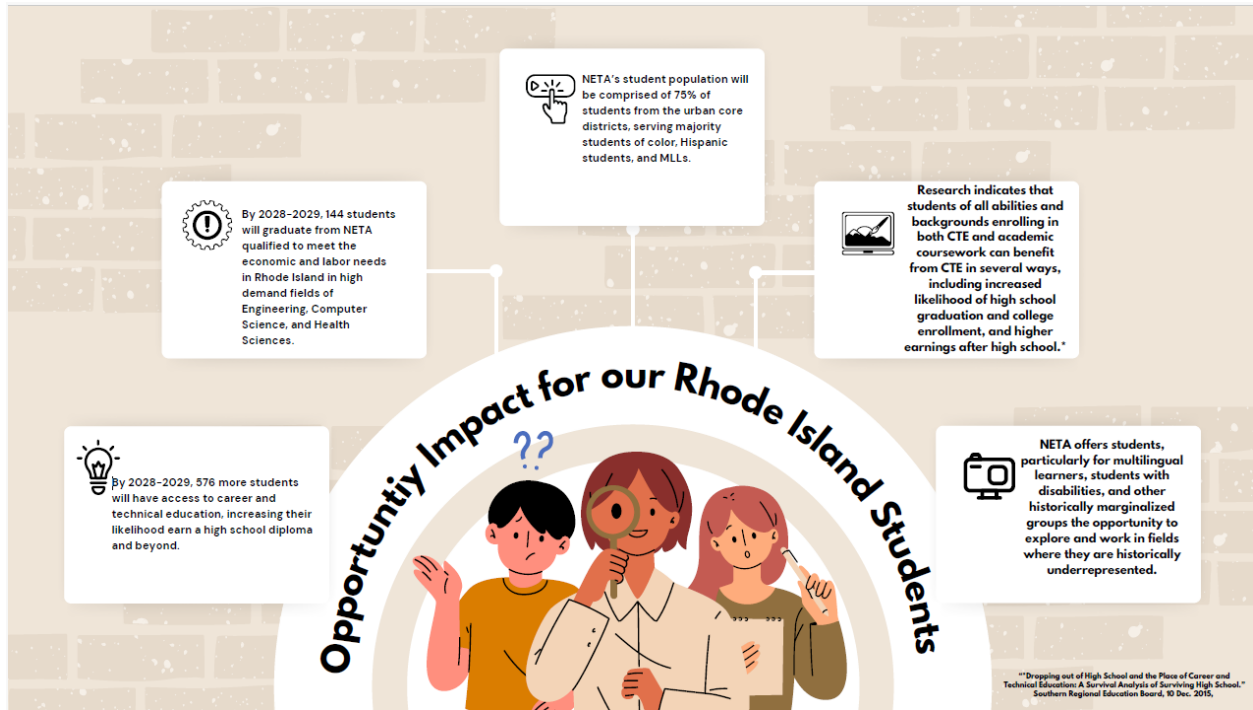
- NETA ensures access to all by offering statewide enrollment through randomized lottery that offers weight to students from the urban core.
- Have a student population comprised of 75% of students from the urban core.

"The proposed charter school aligns perfectly with Care New England's mission by supporting and educating our future and current community and workforce needs."
-Care New England-Sandra Victorino, Director of Workforce Development & Community Relations

*Statistic provided by Providence School Department, 2014, Rhode Island's 2030 Plan, Rhode to Prosperity working document, and DLT Trends Report were used to provide information for this graphic.

**New England Tech Academy
Local Impact Analysis Submission**

Appendix B-Opportunity Impact for Our Rhode Island Students



Appendix C-Projected Student Population Data
[Projected Student Populations](#)