RHODE ISLAND CENTER FOR FREEDOM & PROSPERITY

The Math of Educational Choice

Introducing the RI-DIMES Fiscal Modeling Tool

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Rhode Island Center for Freedom & Prosperity | **www.RIFreedom.org** | PO Box 10069 | Cranston, RI 02910

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Empowering parents with greater choices when it comes to determining the best educational path for their children is not only supported by strong moral arguments, but can also lead to a net positive fiscal impact on the bottom line of public school districts, very different from the math of charter schools.

The Center, in conjunction with a PhD economics professor, has developed a fiscal modeling tool, Rhode Island District Impact Model for Educational Scholarships (RI-DIMES), that can project the statewide and district-by-district fiscal impact of the educational scholarship program component of the 2015 bipartisan legislation submitted in both the Rhode Island House of Representatives and Senate.[1] In March 2015, the Center published a report, *The Way of the Future*, describing the Bright Today Scholarship program outlined by the legislation.[2]

The RI-DIMES projections demonstrate that conventional beliefs about the fiscal effects of voucher-type scholarship programs exaggerate the risk and, if the policy is well designed, do not apply at all.

In the first year, with fewer than 3% of public school students expected to opt for scholarships, which are capped at $6,000, RI-DIMES projects, under the "core" policy providing scholarships to current public school students who migrate out of the system (including new students), that:

- **Public school districts will see large aggregate net fiscal savings.** With statewide savings expected to reach $17 million, 33 of 36 local districts will realize net savings in the first year. This figure could rise to $32 million per year and include all districts but one, under more-optimistic assumptions.
- **Funding per public school student will actually rise in every school district,** by an average statewide increase of $316.
- **Total public and private spending on education will increase by $17.2 million,** because the scholarships will provide an incentive for families to invest more of their private dollars into their children's education.

When considering a "universal" policy as described in current legislation, in which current private school students are also granted partial scholarships, the net fiscal impact for public school districts is diminished, providing a wider range of possible first-year outcomes:

- Under the projected assumptions, statewide savings would drop to about $1.85 million, with 50% of the public school districts still realizing net savings.
- Under more-optimistic assumptions, all but one school district would realize net savings, with the statewide total savings approaching $18 million per year.

With our public school buildings in dire need of repair and maintenance, and with property taxes already high across the state, the proposed educational savings account legislation in just five years could free up $85 million to $150 million in revenue that could be applied to relieve these two pressing issues.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine an educational policy reform that would expand family involvement in choosing educational paths for children, enhance student achievement, and save money for public school districts.

National research suggests that this exactly what has happened with dozens of voucher-type programs that have been established over the past two decades in the United States of America. In Rhode Island, bipartisan legislation introduced in both the House and Senate of the General Assembly proposes a variation of such programs (H5790 and S0607).

Bright Today Scholarships, which are the centerpiece of the legislation, are a form of education savings accounts (ESAs), which are an evolved form of vouchers.[3] The top-10 goals of Rhode Island's Bright Today Scholarship legislation are as follows, with the five *fiscal* objectives, which are the focus of this document, in bold:

1. Establish Rhode Island as a national leader in education reform
2. Empower all RI parents with immediate choices to obtain an adequate education for their children
3. Meet the documented demand for school choice by increasing the supply of available options
4. Create an environment in which public schools are likely to improve academic outcomes
5. **Increase or maintain current per pupil funding levels in district schools**
6. **Save money for school districts that could be used to repair crumbling schools or for property tax cuts**
7. **Keep all local tax funds for use in local district schools**
8. **Cost nothing to implement — with zero increase in any local or state tax or fee**
9. **Provide higher value for taxpayer dollars**
10. Improve overall statewide educational performance so as to be a boost to economic development

The core component of the 2015 Rhode Island legislation, a carefully designed legislative recommendation by the Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity, meets each and every one of these goals, including the five fiscal objectives.

This policy brief examines the math of the legislation's Bright Today private school choice program, including detailed statewide and district-by-district projections. To make those projections, the Center worked with a PhD economist at Providence College to customize for Rhode Island a modeling tool developed by the Cato Institute.

THE MATH OF BRIGHT TODAY EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

RI-DIMES

The Center has developed the Rhode Island District Impact Model for Educational Scholarships (RI-DIMES), which can project the statewide and district-by-district fiscal impact of the Bright Today Scholarship program.

Taking into account the unique demographics of each district — resident income breakdowns, district financials based on the state funding formula, student data, etc. — along with the income-adjusted award schedules of the Bright

Today Scholarship Program as presented in the legislation, a projected participation rate and financial impact can be calculated for each district.

It is important to note upfront that, per the legislation, current public high school students who accept scholarships and transfer to private school are maintained in their home public school district's statewide funding formula calculations. The district continues to receive revenue credit for departing students, and there is no change to its profile of needs, for purposes of the funding formula.

In working through the district-by-district numbers, it was interesting to discover that, regardless of the diversity of the funding distributions for each district, one simple fact remains when calculating net fiscal impact: If the total amount of the scholarships in any school district is less than the cost burden associated with educating those students, then the district will actually save money — regardless of the mix of local-state-federal funding.

This is true nationally, and it is true in Rhode Island.

RI-DIMES was developed through the work of Professor Angela Dills, a PhD economist at Providence College, who over recent years has modified a model created by Andrew Coulson of the Cato Institute. The Center worked with Dr. Dills to fine-tune the model and expand its functionality.

The quality of the projections from any fiscal modeling tool is almost entirely based on the quality of the input data and the modeling assumptions. For RI-DIMES, actual Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) enrollment, funding, and expense data is utilized, as well as detailed district-by-district family income data. The Center conducted independent research to verify and supplement data concerning private school students.

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The full documentation and methodology for RI-DIMES are available upon request. However, discussion of some of the major definitions, factors, and assumptions is warranted in this brief.

Two Fiscal Scenarios

Because the 2015 Bright Today Scholarship legislation allows students currently enrolled in private schools or home schools to receive reduced scholarship awards (referred to as "grandfathering"), fiscal projections detailed in this policy brief are discussed under two distinct scenarios:

1. **Core Scholarship Scenario:** the effect of providing scholarships to current public school students
2. **Universal Scholarship Scenario:** the effect of providing scholarships to current public school students as well as current private and home school students

General Findings

Under the Core Scholarship Scenario, if the average scholarship award is less than the average variable cost per student, as designed in the legislation, then the district will save money on a net basis. The higher the average variable cost, the greater the district savings. This occurs because the total amount of state revenue redirected to fund the scholarships is less than the total amount of variable-cost reductions realized through lower enrollment levels (see the chart below).

Because participating scholarship students still count toward the district's funding formula, the mix of local versus state funding for any public school district is not a factor in calculating its net savings projections. In the end, it's one pot of funding.

The key factor is average variable cost. In RI-DIMES, the average variable cost refers to the incremental (marginal) expenses to educate an additional student, on average.

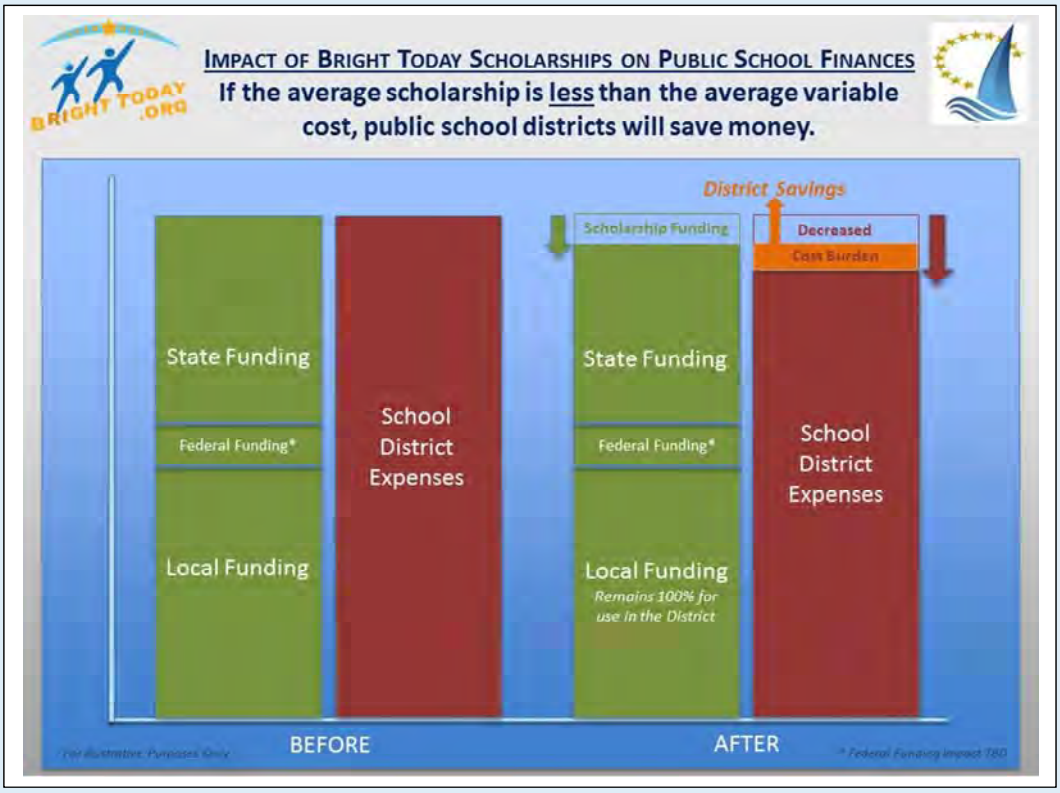
Providing public funding to students currently enrolled in private schools, as the legislation does, would further reduce state funding to districts and would necessarily reduce district savings, leading to near-term net losses in some districts. These students do not currently count toward districts' state funding. In the near future, however, all districts are projected see net savings.

Many critics of school choice point out that lower enrollment does not always translate in to lower variable costs right away. This is sometimes true … and sometimes not true.

It is true that variable cost savings are not realized on a straight-line, one-to-one enrollment basis. In reality, variable cost savings are realized in steps, as the number of students no longer enrolled in the school crosses some threshold at which changes can

How Bright Today Saves Money

If federal, state, and local funding remains constant for a school district, using funds for scholarships will represent a decrease. However, money saved by not having to educate each student will exceed that loss, becoming savings.



be made in order to collect the savings from all students. The chart below shows a theoretical illustration of how this works.

RI-DIMES takes this reality into account and does not credit districts with each student's variable cost savings until the district hits the thresholds at which it is expected to be able to realize them. In most districts, however, the number of students projected to migrate to private schools is high relative to the assumed thresholds, smoothing the curve.

DEFINITIONS

Total revenue refers to all local, state, and federal funding dedicated for education in a school district.

Total expenses refers to the sum of all fixed, semi-fixed, and variable student costs to provide educational services in that school district.

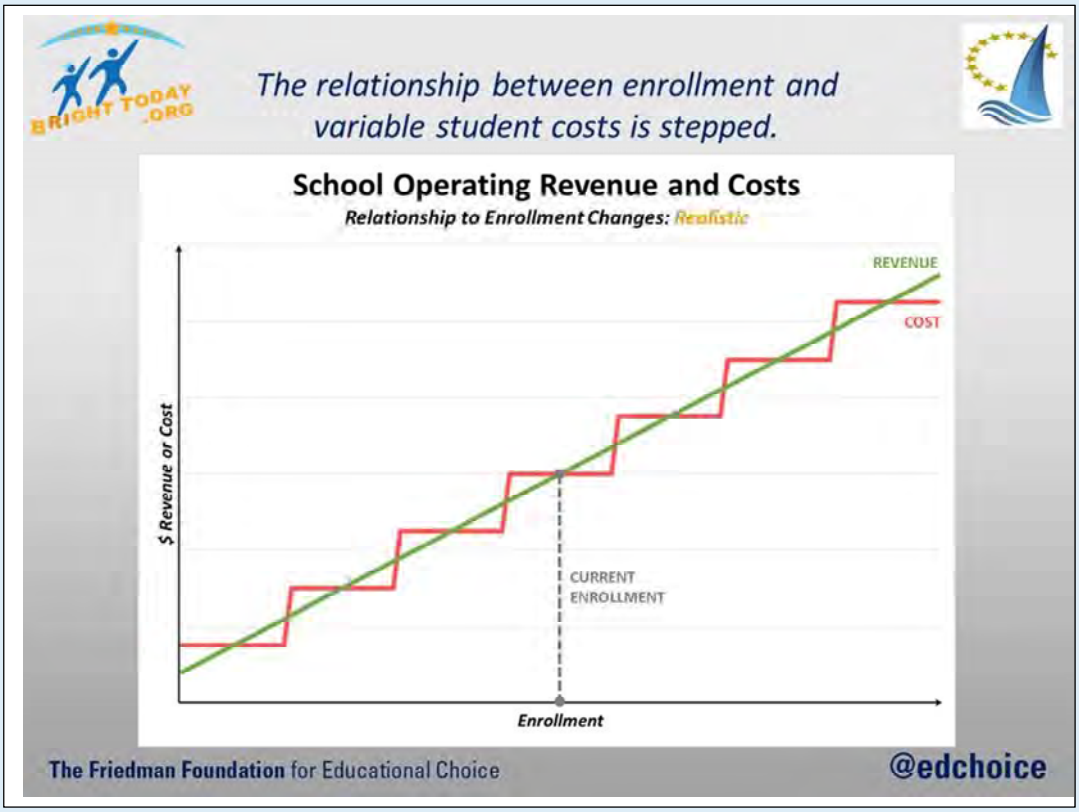
Average variable cost refers to the incremental (marginal) expenses, on average, to educate an additional student. Average variable cost looks at the longer-term, bigger-picture scenario.

Scholarship cap refers to the maximum award for any participating student for general education purposes, regardless of the family's income.

Average scholarship award refers to the mean amount of all scholarships awarded to students — for general education — from a specific public school district. This average award will always be less than or equal to the scholarship cap of $6,000. Because scholarship awards are income-adjusted, wealthier districts are expected to see lower average scholarship awards; conversely, low-income districts will realize higher average scholarship awards.

Realizing Variable Cost Savings

As students migrate to private schools, public schools save money on a stepped basis, as they cross thresholds at which they are able to make changes that save money.



Existing private school students new to the system are the approximately one-thirteenth of private school students (grades K through 12) who replace, in kindergarten, those who graduate from high school. Existing private school students new to the system are children who would have gone to private school without the scholarship program, but who will be receiving full scholarships (subject to income adjustment and the cap) because they are not migrating out of public schools. This student population is factored into the RI-DIMES calculations.

District savings refers to the net savings when reduced costs exceed reduced revenue.

Grandfathering refers to the provision of some level of scholarship award to students who are currently enrolled in private schools or other private educational curricula.

RI-DIMES: Variable Assumptions and Notes

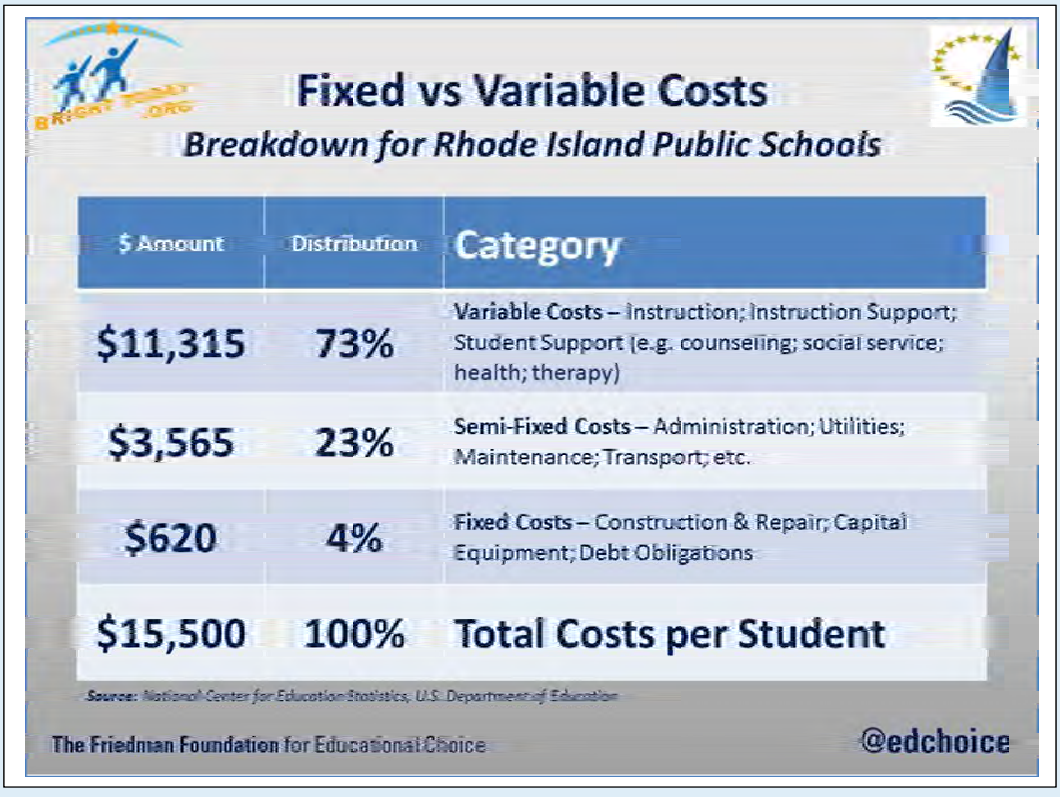
As previously discussed, **average variable cost** is a critical factor in determining a net fiscal impact for the Bright Today Scholarship program. This factor is also widely disputed, and there is no universal agreement on what costs should be considered variable, semi-fixed, or fixed.

Per the chart below, based on data from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice estimates that Rhode Island's statewide educational spending distribution is heavily weighted toward variable costs, such as teacher compensation, with unusually low percentages spent on fixed costs, such as buildings and capital equipment.

In the Center's opinion, this scenario is dramatically optimistic, fiscally, and it is not utilized in any of

Quantifying Variable Costs

There is broad disagreement about the extent of variable costs in public education. These estimates for Rhode Island are more optimistic than those that the Center uses for RI-DIMES.



our projections in this policy brief. We present it, here, as a point of reference.

With regard to the **variable cost inputs** that have been incorporated into RI-DIMES, the Center performed its own independent analysis of the Unified Chart of Accounts (UCOA) data utilized by all school districts and calculated a variable cost, a semi-fixed cost, and a fixed cost for each district. To allow for a range of results, we developed three different scenarios — object, average, and function — based on varying ways in which the UCOA divides per-student district expenses. Of the three, the function scenario provides the lowest (most fiscally pessimistic) variable cost scenario.

Each of these three scenarios produces a lower statewide variable cost than the Friedman Foundation estimate, and each is more "pessimistic" from a fiscal-impact perspective, meaning it will produce lower net fiscal savings projections. Keep in mind that the higher the variable cost, the greater the district's savings will be.

The second important component for projecting variable costs is the threshold at which districts can realize savings. For the purposes of RI-DIMES projections, our assumed threshold to realize variable cost savings is 11 students, which is the statewide average number of students per teacher. (This includes physical education, art, music, and other school- or district-wide teachers, in addition to classroom teachers.)

Thresholds are necessarily rough estimates. The ability to reduce costs will vary from district to district, as well as from year to year within a district. That said, we deemed it reasonable to expect a district to be able to save variable costs at the threshold at which it could begin to consolidate teaching positions.

It is also reasonable to assume that certain **semi-fixed costs** may be reduced if the number of migrating scholarship students reaches a certain threshold. The RI-DIMES model assumes that semi-fixed cost savings can be realized at a threshold of 99 students. As with variable costs, this threshold can be adjusted up to become more fiscally pessimistic or down to become more optimistic. For our projections, we chose the number of students in the average grade level of the average Rhode Island school.

For purposes of the RI-DIMES projections, **fixed costs** remain constant under all scenarios, under the assumption that the circumstances would change in ways beyond the scope of the model before "fixed" expenses could be eliminated.

RI-DIMES does not attempt to project the financial impact of this scholarship program on federal funding to districts. We assume that federal funding will be maintained to districts. Even if some related revenue reductions are required, we consider the losses and savings to cancel each other out. It is not anticipated that such adjustments would substantially alter the fiscal dynamics for public school district.

Grandfather Scholarship Adoption Rate

We also deem it reasonable to assume that some families currently enrolled in private schools will not accept Bright Today scholarships, whether because of a lack of knowledge about the program, an aversion to accepting public funding, or the determination that low scholarship award levels are

not worth the effort to complete the application process or the divulgence of information that may be required as part of it.

RI-DIMES provides for different assumption rates for the six family income categories defined by the legislation. In the table below, the adoption rates are arranged low to high, with the further assumption that the lower its income, the more likely the family to accept grandfather scholarships.

Projection Range

The value of any economic modeling tool is to provide reasonable projections. In this regard, the versatility of RI-DIMES allows the Center to provide a range of projections based on three distinct outcomes: pessimistic, projected, and optimistic. The table below shows the different variables that lead to each result.

STATEWIDE FINDINGS

Specifically, after the projected Bright Today scholarships are awarded within each district, under the "Core Scenario" we can expect the following.

< 3% Participation Rate

One common claim against empowering parents with choice is that it will serve to "dismantle" the public school system. This is a myth about school choice. Historically, across the nation, a very low percentage of eligible students participate in such scholarship programs in the early years, giving public schools the chance to improve and make the case for themselves.

While approximately 160,000 Rhode Island students will be eligible to receive Bright Today Scholarships, it is anticipated that just 2–3% of public school students will participate in the program in the early years. This is consistent with national trends, which typically find participation rates less than 3%.[4] RI-DIMES validates these findings, with a projected 2.77% statewide participation rate, ranging from 2.35% to 3.07% among individual Rhode Island public school districts, in the first year.

This translates to about 3,682 current public school students, statewide, participating in the scholarship program in the first year. According to data available from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), school districts deal with natural

RI-DIMES Variables for Pessimistic, Projected, and Optimistic Projections

	Variable Cost Basis	Variable Cost Threshold (# of students)	Semi-Fixed Cost Threshold (# of students)	Grandfathered Scholarship Adoption Rate (low-to-high income brackets)
Core Scholarship Scenario				
Optimistic	Object	7	66	Not applicable
Projected	Average	11	99	Not applicable
Pessimistic	Function	15	149	Not applicable
Universal Scholarship Scenario				
Optimistic	Object	7	66	100%, 100%, 100%, 90%, 80%, 70%
Projected	Average	11	99	100%, 100%, 100%, 100%, 95%, 90%
Pessimistic	Function	15	149	100%, 100%, 100%, 100%, 100%, 100%

in- and out-migration fluctuations that can significantly exceed this amount. The projected participation in the Bright Today scholarship program should not be a new phenomenon for districts to deal with.[5]

With a cap of $6,000 per student, and with an income-adjusted scholarship award schedule, the average scholarship award will vary from district to district due to varying projected participation rates that are based on the unique family income and school-type makeup of each district. The statewide average scholarship award is projected to be $4,745, ranging from $3,520 to $5,732 among individual school districts. Total Core scholarship awards in the first year are projected to be $17.1 million.

In the Core scenario, total funding per student will increase in every school district for students remaining in the public school system by a statewide average increase of $316 per student, ranging from $149 to $1,322 among individual districts.

Again, in the Core scenario, all but the smallest Rhode Island school districts will realize net fiscal savings according to the standard projections from RI-DIMES. Under a slightly more optimistic scenario, every district except New Shoreham would realize monetary savings in the first year. Statewide, districts will cumulatively save over $17 million in the first year, ranging from -$62,391 to $3,951,511.

Total overall spending on education in Rhode Island (public and private) will increase on an annual basis, without any new burden placed on taxpayers. This occurs because public spending levels will remain as planned, but the scholarships will provide an incentive for families to contribute their own funds toward private education to capture the value of the scholarships. RI-DIMES projects that, in the first year, about $17.2 million in new personal money will be spent on education.

Under the Universal Scenario, the grandfathered fiscal impact must be further calculated. When grandfathering existing private school students with scholarship opportunities, about half of the school districts are expected to see minor net fiscal losses in the early years. However, in just a few years, these losses are likely to diminish to the point at which districts realize overall net savings from the legislation. With grandfathering at the 25% scholarship level, per the 2015 legislation, districts statewide would cumulatively save about $1.9 million, ranging from -$462,356 to $1,279,136.

IMPACT OF BRIGHT TODAY SCHOLARSHIPS ON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Using RI-DIMES to make financial projections for each of Rhode Island's 36 school districts, it becomes apparent that Rhode Island school districts will realize similar levels of financial savings to what national research suggests should occur.

Detailed District Findings

Public school districts can actually save money if the average scholarship awarded to students switching to private education is less than the average variable cost to educate those students. Put another way, districts can achieve net fiscal savings when the reduction in state funding (to pay for scholarships of participating students) is less than the reduction in

school district expenses (due to lower cost burdens associated with lower enrollment).

These savings calculations are not contingent on the percentage of funding derived from state versus local sources. Regardless of how funding is accumulated by districts, existing state and local funding mechanisms remain in place, and total funding available equals total funding, no matter its sources.

The only variables that have a major effect on district savings are average variable cost, average scholarship award, and participation rate of students accepting scholarships.

A Tale of Two Cities

To support this assertion, and in order to demonstrate the anticipated fiscal impact on actual Rhode Island public school districts, we analyze two widely diverse districts, with widely varying sources of educational funding, but with similar student cost structures: Narragansett and Central Falls. (Note that the projections and charts below are calculated under the Core scenario and that the figures cited are for the 2011-2012 school year, which was the latest for which all data was available.)

Narragansett is considered a relatively wealthy community. It receives only about 10% in combined state and federal funding, with total revenue per student of $19,754 and an average variable cost of $13,556 per student (67.6% of funding).

Central Falls is considered a low-income community. It receives almost 97% in combined state and federal funding. However, its per student cost structure is similar to Narragansett's, with revenue per student of $18,999 and an average variable cost of $12,068 (63.5% of funding).

Yet, despite these dramatic funding variances, both Narragansett and Central Falls are projected to save money after Bright Today scholarship awards are granted. Each district is expected to see about a 3% participation rate, but the average scholarship is projected to be over a thousand dollars higher for Central Falls because of its lower family incomes.

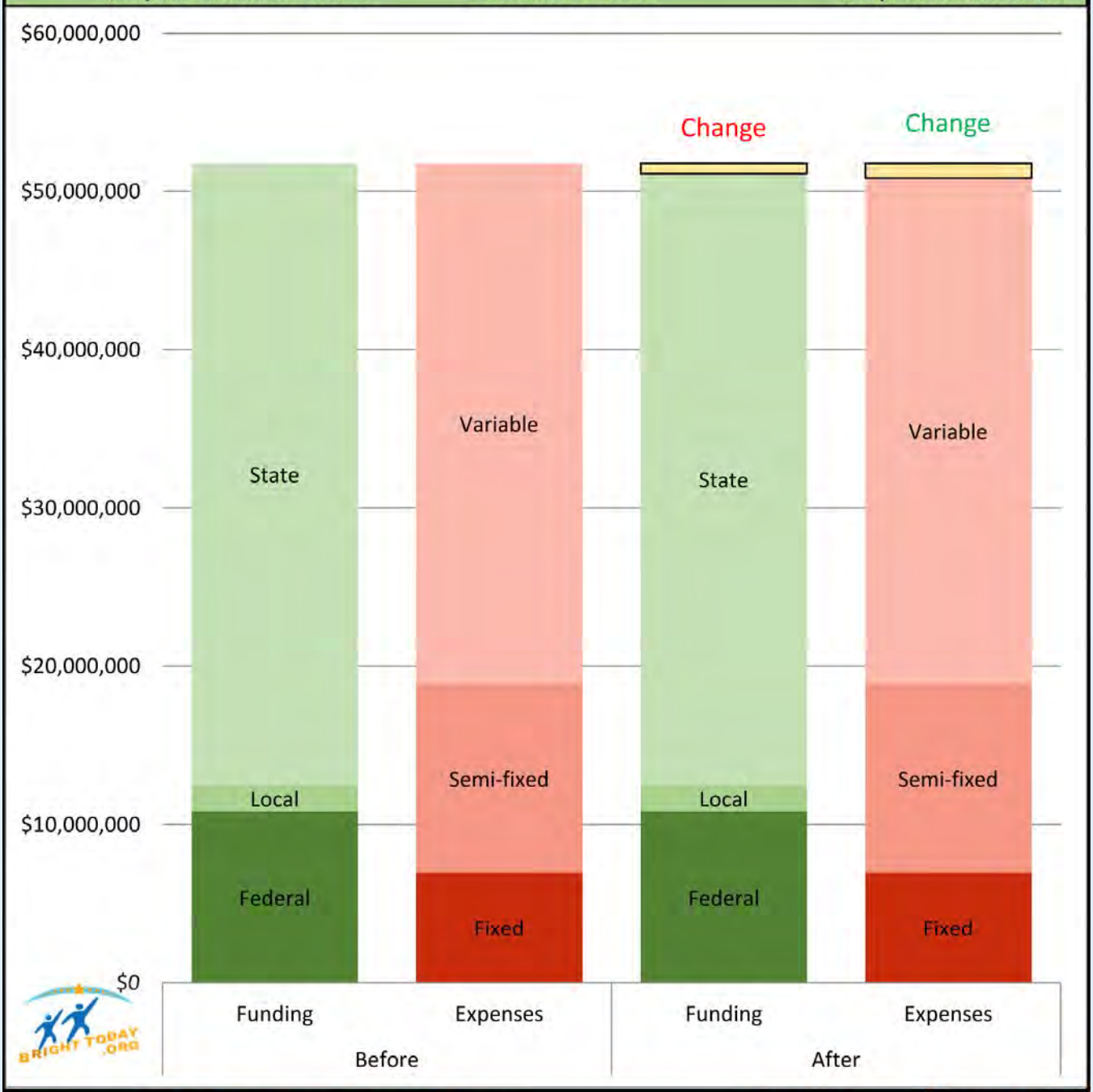
The charts below for each of these school districts provide additional details and visuals.

Each district still receives the vast majority of its state funding even after all scholarship dollars have been deducted: Central Falls at $98.7% and Narragansett at 84.7%.

Each district sees an even larger reduction in total variable expenses, greater than the total amount of scholarships awarded, resulting in overall savings: Central Falls at $413,410, or $5,042 per migrating student, and Narragansett at $194,471 or $4,743 per migrating student. Consequently, per student funding increases for each student who remains in public schools: up $394 in Central Falls and up $412 in Narragansett.

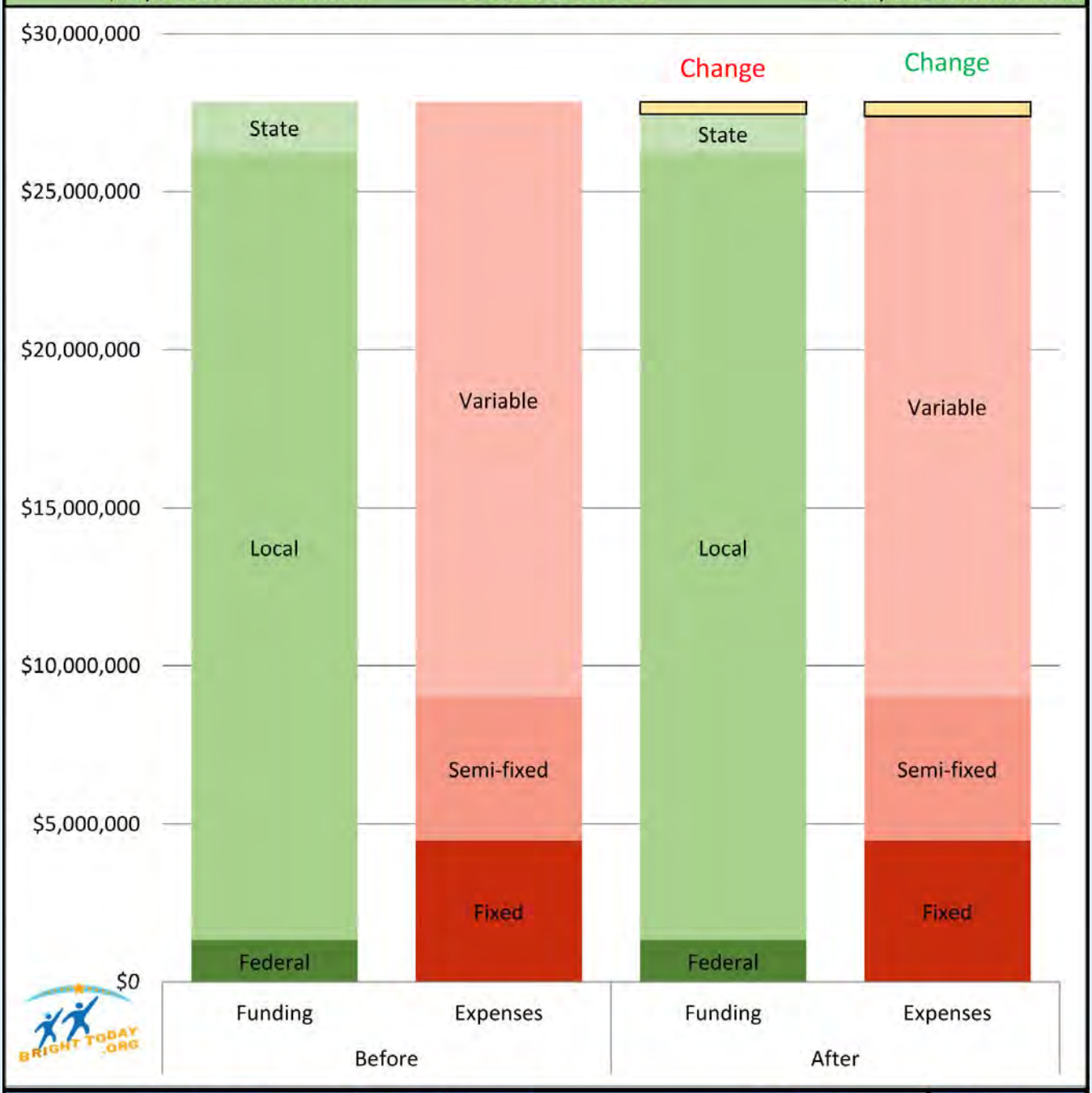
Because Central Falls has a larger school district, with more students receiving scholarships, its overall savings are higher than in Narragansett. This fact underscores an important, but double-edged, point: Because the average scholarship award is lower than the average variable cost, the more students who accept scholarships, the more money local districts will save.

FY-2012	Central Falls School District		School Choice Math Snapshot	
Scholarship Awards	Core scholarship avg.:	$5,732	Grandfathered avg.:	$1,327
	Core scholarship total:	$515,872	Grandfathered total:	$126,067
Participation: 3.0%		82	students out of	2,724
$18,999 /student before	FUNDING LEVEL			$19,346 /student after



Net Fiscal Impact, Core | Universal	$413,410	*$287,344*
Variable Savings from Current District Private School Enrollment of:	104	$1,255,135

FY-2012	Narragansett School District		School Choice Math Snapshot	
Scholarship Awards	Core scholarship avg.:	$4,560	Grandfathered avg.:	$959
	Core scholarship total:	$246,235	Grandfathered total:	$137,118
Participation: 2.9%		41	students out of	1,408
$19,754 /student before	FUNDING LEVEL			$20,066 /student after



Net Fiscal Impact, Core | Universal	$194,471	*$57,353*
Variable Savings from Current District Private School Enrollment of:	165	$2,203,527

In essence, the cost burden of educating students undergoes a mild shift away from the public sector and toward the private sector. This should not be surprising, given the existing demographics in Rhode Island. Imagine the added fiscal burden to local school districts if they were asked to absorb the cost of educating the almost 18,000 Rhode Island students currently enrolled in private schools or home schooling!

Public schools have been relieved of the associated per student cost burden when parents have chosen to send their children to private schools. Narragansett and Central Falls already realize multi-million dollar savings from this effect, as displayed in the lower, light-blue area of the charts.

Bright Today scholarships produce savings for school districts by capturing a portion of these same types of savings, even after scholarships have been awarded, by empowering more parents with the option to choose a private educational path option for their children.

District-by-District Summaries

The table on the next page provides a summary of the net fiscal impact for each of Rhode Island's 36 traditional public school districts (charter schools and special/vocational school districts are not included).

For each district, a range of net fiscal savings is calculated for the pessimistic, projected, and optimistic fiscal scenarios.

Under the projected scenario, only the three smallest public school districts of Foster, Little Compton, and New Shoreham — each with fewer than 300 enrolled students — are projected not to achieve net savings in the first year. This outcome results from the generally low participation rates. Not enough students will switch from a public school to a private school, so the "stepped" nature of variable cost savings prevents the districts from realizing the savings associated with migrating students.

However, within just a few years, even these districts will see net savings, as soon as the initial variable cost threshold is surpassed.

Under an optimistic scenario, every school district except New Shoreham realizes net savings in the first year and every year thereafter.

Bright Today Scholarship Projection	# of Public School Students	Projected Variable Cost (average)	Projected Average Scholarship (average)	Projected Participation Rate (average)	Increase in Per-Pupil Spending (average)	Core Net Fiscal Impact	Pessimistic Core Net Fiscal Impact	Optimistic Core Net Fiscal Impact	Grandfathered Net Fiscal Impact	Pessimistic Grandfathered Net Fiscal Impact	Optimistic Grandfathered Net Fiscal Impact
Statewide	**132,933**	**69.1%**	**$4,697**	**2.77%**	**$316**	**$17,132,949**	**$8,038,034**	**$32,181,394**	**$1,858,198**	**($7,681,200)**	**$17,936,154**
Barrington	3,301	72.5%	$3,815	2.35%	$201	**$344,592**	*$181,128*	*$698,656*	**$102,488**	*($76,422)*	*$488,211*
Bristol Warren	3,390	67.5%	$4,607	2.78%	$308	**$410,087**	*$130,242*	*$1,062,793*	**($31,913)**	*($329,194)*	*$660,766*
Burrillville	2,418	69.8%	$4,961	2.67%	$193	**$119,248**	*$75,183*	*$428,531*	**($18,153)**	*($65,883)*	*$298,993*
Central Falls	2,724	63.5%	$5,732	3.00%	$394	**$413,410**	*$136,546*	*$1,014,152*	**$287,344**	*$9,049*	*$890,162*
Chariho	3,422	70.6%	$4,923	2.86%	$354	**$527,608**	*$245,079*	*$1,185,382*	**$241,846**	*($49,044)*	*$921,395*
Coventry	4,971	75.9%	$4,621	2.67%	$201	**$651,288**	*$224,775*	*$1,013,263*	**$140,045**	*($301,559)*	*$535,479*
Cranston	10,031	71.4%	$4,711	2.72%	$206	**$1,210,018**	*$797,115*	*$2,130,510*	**($8,371)**	*($454,210)*	*$989,109*
Cumberland	4,470	70.1%	$4,262	2.48%	$153	**$432,139**	*$15,004*	*$683,304*	**($29,749)**	*($460,841)*	*$256,368*
East Greenwich	2,324	72.2%	$3,520	2.36%	$207	**$245,686**	*$146,324*	*$544,134*	**($52,632)**	*($172,203)*	*$288,906*
East Providence	5,338	62.9%	$4,948	2.83%	$235	**$628,020**	*$55,247*	*$1,157,015*	**($155,044)**	*($744,132)*	*$413,738*
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,679	69.7%	$4,440	2.84%	$391	**$302,979**	*$143,324*	*$537,421*	**$120,363**	*($48,436)*	*$376,032*
Foster	265	76.3%	$5,121	2.78%	$265	**($46,090)**	*($34,350)*	*$55,503*	**($72,302)**	*($61,474)*	*$31,405*
Foster-Glocester	1,227	69.3%	$5,076	2.96%	$434	**$250,951**	*$42,697*	*$398,955*	**$176,230**	*($34,669)*	*$330,811*
Glocester	555	75.2%	$4,860	2.84%	$358	**$52,852**	*($71,075)*	*$125,719*	**$5,460**	*($120,169)*	*$82,155*
Jamestown	482	55.5%	$4,836	3.07%	$559	**$28,727**	*($103,869)*	*$140,449*	**($123,857)**	*($265,525)*	*$8,106*
Johnston	2,918	67.5%	$4,770	2.87%	$279	**$231,405**	*($74,261)*	*$842,840*	**($462,356)**	*($785,364)*	*$194,849*
Lincoln	3,237	72.2%	$4,431	2.64%	$269	**$370,307**	*$245,515*	*$881,797*	**$115,397**	*($21,140)*	*$651,664*
Little Compton	295	58.5%	$4,456	3.06%	$512	**($62,391)**	*($47,481)*	*$60,175*	**($117,058)**	*($105,487)*	*$13,295*
Middletown	2,360	68.3%	$4,482	2.67%	$268	**$204,312**	*$147,806*	*$600,971*	**($58,354)**	*($125,210)*	*$360,648*
Narragansett	1,408	67.6%	$4,560	2.88%	$412	**$194,471**	*($7,006)*	*$475,641*	**$57,353**	*($151,071)*	*$353,970*
New Shoreham	112	71.2%	$5,138	3.06%	$1,322	**($20,553)**	*($13,397)*	*($26,833)*	**($20,553)**	*($13,435)*	*($26,833)*
Newport	2,005	63.5%	$4,633	2.86%	$355	**$250,973**	*$9,224*	*$520,767*	**($191,261)**	*($448,550)*	*$117,292*
North Kingstown	4,398	71.1%	$4,072	2.51%	$207	**$621,576**	*$110,717*	*$998,612*	**$145,914**	*($386,187)*	*$572,449*
North Providence	3,302	72.3%	$4,993	2.83%	$213	**$256,888**	*$81,338*	*$615,670*	**($239,931)**	*($424,693)*	*$142,038*
North Smithfield	1,704	68.4%	$4,273	2.55%	$221	**$175,774**	*$64,961*	*$268,899*	**$67,716**	*($47,276)*	*$170,690*
Pawtucket	9,073	67.7%	$5,266	2.84%	$149	**$690,462**	*$410,339*	*$1,228,648*	**($449,216)**	*($738,263)*	*$115,167*
Portsmouth	2,590	68.6%	$4,029	2.54%	$229	**$267,640**	*$96,676*	*$597,622*	**($39,980)**	*($226,258)*	*$324,511*
Providence	22,432	65.3%	$5,206	2.87%	$275	**$3,951,511**	*$2,839,041*	*$5,583,868*	**$1,279,136**	*$114,359*	*$3,035,573*
Scituate	1,492	73.9%	$4,525	2.66%	$242	**$120,310**	*$124,045*	*$264,151*	**($7,571)**	*($8,430)*	*$147,366*
Smithfield	2,349	71.8%	$4,334	2.62%	$232	**$201,710**	*$128,935*	*$542,487*	**($31,962)**	*($113,880)*	*$330,831*
South Kingstown	3,393	72.0%	$4,431	2.76%	$336	**$557,054**	*$255,468*	*$1,206,284*	**$182,239**	*($137,567)*	*$873,636*
Tiverton	1,739	68.0%	$4,911	2.81%	$307	**$197,793**	*$93,363*	*$349,623*	**$46,610**	*($62,647)*	*$209,648*
Warwick	9,488	71.6%	$4,930	2.87%	$322	**$1,955,641**	*$1,182,246*	*$3,184,476*	**$610,110**	*($200,693)*	*$1,929,913*
Westerly	3,030	65.1%	$4,739	2.71%	$284	**$330,180**	*$193,892*	*$791,922*	**$156,235**	*$13,356*	*$631,509*
West Warwick	3,375	70.8%	$5,199	2.92%	$324	**$556,352**	*$157,380*	*$1,108,528*	**$156,712**	*($247,680)*	*$728,054*
Woonsocket	5,636	69.0%	$5,285	2.80%	$174	**$510,019**	*$55,862*	*$909,459*	**$77,264**	*($390,373)*	*$488,247*

[1] See 2015 House bill H5790 and Senate bill S0607, available at: www.rilin.state.ri.us/pages/legislation.aspx

[2] Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity. "The Way of the Future in Rhode Island: Bright Today Scholarships for Every Family." March 2015. Available at: rifreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/ricfp-brighttoday.pdf (Accessed 3/23/15.)

[3] Ibid.

[4] The Center for Education Reform. "School Choice Today: Voucher Laws Across the States." 2014. Available at: www.edreform.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/VoucherRankings-Report5.pdf (Accessed 3/2/15)

[5] RIDE provides a variety of ways to address this question, including enrollment data as well as Stability and Mobility Indices for the state and each district, available on its Web site, at www.ride.ri.gov.