

Office of Higher Education

DHE66500

Permanent Full-Time Positions

Fund	Actual FY 23	Actual FY 24	Appropriation FY 25	Governor Recommended		Legislative	
				FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
General Fund	26	27	28	29	29	28	28

Budget Summary

Account	Actual FY 23	Actual FY 24	Appropriation FY 25	Governor Recommended		Legislative	
				FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
Personal Services	1,699,766	1,626,550	1,811,589	1,855,031	1,855,031	1,855,031	1,855,031
Other Expenses	482,183	1,227,589	1,081,175	781,175	781,175	2,563,079	3,142,258
Other Current Expenses							
Minority Advancement Program	2,127,566	1,690,528	1,659,292	1,674,835	1,674,835	1,674,835	1,674,835
National Service Act	234,779	454,740	296,810	320,151	320,151	320,151	320,151
Minority Teacher Incentive Program	505,280	446,669	570,134	570,134	570,134	570,134	570,134
CT Loan Reimbursement	-	-	6,000,000	-	-	5,000,000	6,000,000
AmeriCorps State Matching Funds	-	-	-	1,404,214	2,808,429	-	-
Other Than Payments to Local Governments							
Roberta B. Willis Scholarship Fund	32,998,277	8,017,698	24,888,637	24,888,637	24,888,637	26,288,637	41,288,637
Health Care Adjunct Grant Program	-	260,000	500,000	-	-	260,000	260,000
Agency Total - General Fund	38,047,851	13,723,774	36,807,637	31,494,177	32,898,392	38,531,867	55,111,046

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Policy Revisions

Provide Funding for Willis Scholarship

Roberta B. Willis Scholarship Fund	-	-	1,400,000	16,400,000	1,400,000	16,400,000
Total - General Fund	-	-	1,400,000	16,400,000	1,400,000	16,400,000

Background

The Roberta B. Willis Scholarship provides need-based and need-merit grants to eligible Connecticut high school graduates. The Office of Higher Education (OHE) awards need-merit grants directly to students based on academic achievement and the student aid index (a measure of a student's family's ability to contribute to their education) as reported on the federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid. OHE provides funding for need-based grants to participating institutions of higher education in the state to award to their enrolled students based on the student aid index. In FY 24 and FY 25, General Fund appropriations to the Willis Scholarship were supplemented by ARPA funding.

Legislative

Provide funding of \$1.4 million in FY 26 and \$16.4 million FY 27 for the Willis Scholarship. This funding, combined with an anticipated carry forward pursuant to CGS Sec. 10a-173(b), maintains Willis Scholarship funding at FY 24 expenditure levels.

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Adjust Funding for Newer Programs, Including Student Loan Assistance

CT Loan Reimbursement	(6,000,000)	(6,000,000)	(1,000,000)	-	5,000,000	6,000,000
Health Care Adjunct Grant Program	(240,000)	(240,000)	-	-	240,000	240,000
Total - General Fund	(6,240,000)	(6,240,000)	(1,000,000)	-	5,240,000	6,240,000

Background

PA 23-204, the FY 24 and FY 25 Budget, established two new programs within the Office of Higher Education (OHE):

CT Loan Reimbursement: Section 174 of PA 23-204 established the CT Loan Reimbursement Program. Funding began in FY 25. This program provides grants of up to \$5,000 annually for up to four years to eligible Connecticut residents. The grants are reimbursements for student loan payments. To receive a grant, recipients must: (1) have outstanding student loans; (2) have graduated from an in-state college or university; (3) meet certain income requirements; and (4) perform at least 50 hours of volunteer work during each year they receive a grant. OHE received 1,430 applications as of February 2025 and began awarding grants after March 31.

Health Care Adjunct Grant Program: Section 133 of PA 23-204 established the Health Care Adjunct Grant Program, which provides grants of \$20,000 to health care providers who accept positions as adjunct professors in health care related fields at a public institution of higher education and remain in such positions for one year. Each grant recipient who remains in the position for a second year may receive an additional \$20,000 grant. Funding began in FY 24. There were 13 applicants in FY 24, each of whom received a grant, for a total of \$260,000 in awards. The FY 25 application deadline was April 30.

Governor

Eliminate funding of \$6,240,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27 to reflect the elimination of the health care adjunct and student loan assistance grant programs.

Legislative

Reduce funding for CT Loan Reimbursement by \$1 million in FY 26 and maintain funding of \$6,240,000 in FY 27 for the health care adjunct and student loan assistance grant programs.

Provide Funding for the Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation

Other Expenses	-	-	1,231,904	1,311,083	1,231,904	1,311,083
Total - General Fund	-	-	1,231,904	1,311,083	1,231,904	1,311,083

Background

The Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation conducts research, provides training, and offers technical assistance to local and regional school districts regarding school safety. Western Connecticut State University operates the center. PA 23-204, the FY 24 and FY 25 Budget, provided \$552,009 to the Center in both FY 24 and FY 25.

Legislative

Provide additional funding of \$1,231,904 in FY 26 and \$1,311,083 in FY 27 for the Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation.

Provide Funding for the Connecticut AI Alliance

Other Expenses	-	-	500,000	1,000,000	500,000	1,000,000
Total - General Fund	-	-	500,000	1,000,000	500,000	1,000,000

Background

The Connecticut AI Alliance is a consortium of 18 academic institutions and 16 community organizations established to advance AI development in Connecticut.

Legislative

Provide funding of \$500,000 in FY 26 and \$1 million in FY 27 to the Connecticut AI Alliance for high performance computing.

Provide Funding for Open Education Resources Grant Program

Other Expenses	-	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total - General Fund	-	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000

Background

PA 19-117 established the Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council. The statewide body includes representatives from Connecticut's public and private institutions of higher education. The council's goal is to promote and support the adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) which are free online and openly licensed instructional materials. The council focuses on "high impact" course areas that see the largest enrollments and also involve the highest textbook costs. Funding of \$100,000 for this initiative was eliminated by PA 23-204, the FY 24 and FY 25 Budget.

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Legislative

Provide funding of \$50,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27 for the Open Education Resources grant program.

Adjust Funding for AmeriCorps Expansion

AmeriCorps State Matching Funds	1,404,214	2,808,429	-	-	(1,404,214)	(2,808,429)
Total - General Fund	1,404,214	2,808,429	-	-	(1,404,214)	(2,808,429)
Positions - General Fund	1	1	-	-	(1)	(1)

Background

AmeriCorps is a federal program that provides a wide range of volunteer and service opportunities across the country in the areas of disaster relief, economic development, education, environment, physical and mental health, and veterans' services. There are approximately 2,400 volunteers in AmeriCorps programs across Connecticut. Each program has its own sponsor responsible for 24% of the program budget; the federal government provides funding up to 76% of the remaining budget on a competitive basis.

Governor

Provide one position and funding of \$1,404,214 in FY 26 and \$2,808,429 in FY 27 to expand AmeriCorps opportunities for Connecticut residents. It is anticipated that this would result in matching federal funding of up to \$4.4 million in FY 26 and up to \$8 million in FY 27, supporting an additional 500 volunteers by FY 27.

Legislative

Do not provide one position and funding of \$1,404,214 in FY 26 and \$2,808,429 in FY 27 to expand AmeriCorps.

Current Services**Annualize the Cost of Existing Wage Agreements**

Personal Services	143,442	143,442	143,442	143,442	-	-
Minority Advancement Program	15,543	15,543	15,543	15,543	-	-
National Service Act	23,341	23,341	23,341	23,341	-	-
Total - General Fund	182,326	182,326	182,326	182,326	-	-

Background

The Governor's Recommended Budget provides funding of \$124.4 million in FY 26 and FY 27, across nine appropriated funds, to reflect current wage-related adjustments resulting from existing wage agreements.

Governor

Provide funding of \$182,326 in both FY 26 and FY 27 to reflect this agency's increased wage costs.

Legislative

Same as Governor

Adjust Funding to Reflect Current Requirements

Personal Services	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	-
Total - General Fund	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	-

Governor

Reduce funding by \$100,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27 to reflect current agency requirements.

Legislative

Same as Governor

Reduce Funding for Adjunct Professor Grant Program

Health Care Adjunct Grant Program	(260,000)	(260,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)	20,000	20,000
Total - General Fund	(260,000)	(260,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)	20,000	20,000

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Governor

Reduce funding by \$260,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27 for the Health Care Adjunct Grant Program to reflect actual FY 24 expenditures. (The Governor also proposes to eliminate the program; see Policy Revisions.)

Legislative

Reduce funding by \$240,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27. This ensures that \$260,000 is available for grants in FY 26 and FY 27, matching FY 24 spending levels.

Eliminate Funding for IT Functions Performed by DAS

Other Expenses	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	-	-
Total - General Fund	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	-	-

Background

The Bureau of Information Technology Solutions within the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) has provided IT services to the Office of Higher Education since FY 23.

Governor

Eliminate funding of \$300,000 in both FY 26 and FY 27 for agency IT needs that are now fulfilled by DAS. This funding was for software maintenance for the financial aid processing system used for the Willis Scholarship program.

Legislative

Same as Governor

Totals

Budget Components	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
FY 25 Appropriation - GF	36,807,637	36,807,637	36,807,637	36,807,637	-	-
Policy Revisions	(4,835,786)	(3,431,571)	2,181,904	18,761,083	7,017,690	22,192,654
Current Services	(477,674)	(477,674)	(457,674)	(457,674)	20,000	20,000
Total Recommended - GF	31,494,177	32,898,392	38,531,867	55,111,046	7,037,690	22,212,654

Positions	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
FY 25 Appropriation - GF	28	28	28	28	-	-
Policy Revisions	1	1	-	-	(1)	(1)
Total Recommended - GF	29	29	28	28	(1)	(1)