



June 16, 2020

Representative Marvin L. Abney
House Finance Committee, Chair

Senator William J. Conley, Jr.
Senate Finance Committee, Chair
The State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H7170 SubA

Dear Chairmen Abney and Conley:

On behalf of all three Mayoral Academy public school systems in Rhode Island, Rise Prep, Blackstone Valley Prep and Achievement First we offer you the following observations on the supplemental budget, which includes a provision to claw back federal Payroll Protection Program funding from charter schools.

First and foremost, we believe we did the right thing by applying for these funds. We all believed we had a fiscal responsibility to protect our students, our teachers and Rhode Island jobs during these unprecedented times. At this moment, we also believe we have done the right thing for the State of Rhode Island's fiscal woes as we have accessed federal funding that will allow you to plug the state's deficit. We are grateful we made the decision not to return the money like some organizations did, as it would have forced you to make greater cuts elsewhere impacting other Rhode Island organizations.

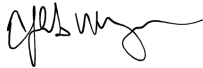
We simply ask that you consider the following. We do not yet know if this is a grant or a loan, and we may not know for several months – in fact we may not know the answer to this question until 2021. We did the right thing by our students, our teachers and the state; in return all we ask is that we be held revenue neutral and treated equitably from a funding standpoint going forward. There are so many unknowns right now with regard to future federal stimulus money. We ask that you recognize these unknowns and that there are potential scenarios where additional federal monies could come to Rhode Island to support cities and towns that we may not be able to access. Again, we are only seeking fair and equitable funding and do not want to be fiscally punished for trying to protect Rhode Island jobs.

We are certainly happy to answer any questions you may have and respectfully ask for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Chiappetta', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Jeremy Chiappetta, CEO, Blackstone Valley Prep

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Winangun', with a cursive style and a long, sweeping tail.

Elizabeth Winangun, RI Director, Achievement First

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosalind DaCruz', with a cursive style and a prominent loop at the end.

Rosalind DaCruz, Head of School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy

Cc: Sharon Reynolds Ferland, House Fiscal Advisor
Stephen Whitney, Senate Fiscal Advisor