

**Association of RI Administrators of Special Education: In support of H 7561**

***Sent via email to [houseeducation@rilegislature.gov](mailto:houseeducation@rilegislature.gov)***

April 3, 2024

Rep. Joseph McNamara, Chairman  
House Education Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
73 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara,

I write as legal counsel for the Association of Rhode Island Administrators of Special Education (“ARIASE”) to submit this written testimony in support of H 7561. ARIASE is the lone statewide association of special education administrators in Rhode Island, and its members are passionately committed to serving students with disabilities and working collaboratively and constructively with their families to enhance their educational opportunities and outcomes.

The members of ARIASE enthusiastically support H 7561, and congratulate North Kingstown High School senior Ryan Lukowicz on his exemplary efforts to collaborate with Representative Casimiro to get this bill introduced. I listened to Ryan’s testimony in support of this bill in the House Education committee last month, and I know that ARIASE’s leaders were able to see it via Capitol TV as well. We were impressed in equal measure by his eloquence and pragmatism in shedding light on – and proposing a viable solution to – an issue that otherwise may well have gone unnoticed.

ARIASE applauds all efforts to increase opportunities for regular education students and students with disabilities to engage with and support one another inside and outside of the classroom, or the gymnasium. If a regular education student has a desire to serve as a partner for a peer in a specially designed physical education class, school leaders should be free to give that student full “PE” credit for that service. We appreciate that H 7561 would offer options rather than mandates, and ARIASE leaders would gladly offer their advice and support to RIDE if and when it is crafting rules and regulations to put the ideals of H 7561 into practice.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Timothy J. Groves, Esq.