

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Crystal Felix, and I serve as a Math Teacher at the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP).

For more than 37 years, UCAP has provided accelerated, personalized education to students who have struggled in traditional settings. Our students often require intensive academic and social-emotional support, and UCAP was built specifically to meet those needs.

UCAP is an important alternative space for our students to have access to. Many of the students who come to this school come here because it is a smaller environment that can better meet their needs. Students who are multiple grade levels behind, students who have issues with attendance, students who simply need a different environment where they feel more seen, these are the students we serve! Many kids come into my classroom absolutely hating math or feeling defeated by the subject. I've worked hard in my classroom to foster an environment of safety and learning, where students can realize that they ARE capable of doing math amongst any other things that they put their minds to. Our community is small but mighty! We are patient, flexible, and determined when it comes to meeting the needs of our students.

This school has been instrumental in my growth as an educator as well. I have been able to work closely with the admin in my school and have always felt supported, heard, and understood by them. It would be such a shame to have a place so special not be able to do what it was meant to do, serve our students that need us most!

S-2208 / H-7271 would modernize UCAP's statutory framework and allow additional districts to refer students. This ensures that access to UCAP is based on student need.

Our students deserve continuity and stability. I urge you to support this legislation to protect a proven public education model that has served Rhode Island students for decades.

Sincerely,
Crystal Felix, Math Teacher
Cumberland, Rhode Island