



Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Debra Ferrara, and I serve as the Admission Coordinator/Front Office Manager 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.

I have worked at The UCAP School for 12 years and have had the privilege of witnessing many *incredible student success stories* – students who once struggled but later found their path and began to thrive. When I first started at UCAP, I worked as Rob DeBlois' assistant and learned so much from him. One of the most remarkable things I saw over the years is the number of former students who returned to UCAP just to say hello or to thank Rob for giving them the second chance they needed. Seeing those moments firsthand has shown me how deeply his dedication and compassion impacted the lives of so many young people and still does today. The UCAP School is truly one of a kind, and students deserve the opportunity to attend and benefit from everything it offers.

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,

Debra Ferrara
Admissions Coordinator