

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee

My name is Gib Conover, and I serve as a board member and was the previous Board Chair of the Fund for UCAP Committee (FFU), the fundraising arm of The UCAP School.

I urge you to pass **S-2208/H-7271** which will enable the UCAP School to continue to serve some of RI's neediest students

Each fall, students arrive at UCAP at a critical point in the educational career. To be admitted to UCAP they're not meeting the academic standards for their grade level and some have already been held back a grade. Many have begun to believe that they simply can not be successful in school. They face a high probability of dropping out when they get to high school.

The first step of UCAP is to show these students that they can succeed. Every teacher at UCAP gets to know every student. There are social workers and guidance counselors to help the students work through problems that originate outside of the school. The students recognize that they are in a place that really cares about them.

UCAP also runs the BeyondU program after school, weekends, and summers. This exposes the kids not only to non-academic skills but also introduces them to parts of the greater community via many field trips. Many times siblings and parents accompany the students. Each year there is an overnight trip for 7th graders and a multi-day trip to Washington DC. All of this is provided at no cost/extremely low cost to students/families

In June of every year, UCAP holds its' graduation ceremony. This is an opportunity for kids to say, in their own words, what the UCAP experience has meant to them. Their stories are amazing: the changes in their attitude, the changes in their outlook, not only for school, but for life. They talk about how much they've learned and how excited they are to be going to high school and beyond. These kids are now on path to realize their potential.

The students of RI need UCAP. Again, I urge you to pass **S-2208/H-7271**.

Sincerely,
Gib Conover,
FFU Board Member