

March 17, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Muriel Ouellette and I served as the School Secretary for 35 years 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.

Within all my years at UCAP, I can tell you the one thing I heard most from the students. It was how fortunate they were to be able to attend our school. So many students told me that they never would have made it in their traditional schools. Some of the reasons why they loved our school was the small school setting, the one on one and the way everyone at UCAP treated them. This was something the bigger schools couldn't give them. They felt lost and behind and were on the path to failing. But UCAP changed them! Given the opportunity to choose UCAP and start fresh was a life saver to them. It was a second chance to try again. Many wished there was a UCAP High School as well. So, I beg you to reconsider and let UCAP remain open. Please let students choose that small setting and the fresh new start to find themselves again and leave there a better person and ready for success in High School and beyond.

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,
Muriel Ouellette
Glendale, Rhode Island