

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Phillip Silva and I served as a School Counselor and Social Studies Teacher for 26 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.

UCAP is more than a school; it is home. During my time there, I saw the turnaround of hundreds of students who were at risk of dropping out. Students become connected personally to their teachers and the school community. Year after year, students from previous years would return and describe how the school had given them a second chance and the confidence to succeed in school. Arguably the most enjoyable day of every one of my years there was closing ceremonies. Students and their families would share emotional and heartfelt stories about their time at UCAP. Inevitably, I would leave the day filled with pride in the work we were doing at the school. I would recommend any individual attending this event to experience the true spirit of the school.

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,
Phillip Silva, [M.Ed.](#)
Attleboro, MA