

Association of RI Administrators of Special Education: In opposition to H 8462

Sent via email to houseeducation@rilegislature.gov

May 6, 2026

Representative Joseph M. McNamara, Chairman
House Education Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
73 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara,

I write as legal counsel for the Association of Rhode Island Administrators of Special Education (“ARIASE”) to submit this written testimony in opposition to H 8462. ARIASE is the lone statewide association of special education administrators in Rhode Island, and its members are passionately committed to serving students with disabilities and working collaboratively and constructively with their families to enhance their educational opportunities and outcomes.

The members of ARIASE work every day to support the successful transitions of all students with disabilities. Local education agencies are responsible for transition planning for students with IEPs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and Rhode Island’s special education regulations, and special education directors work diligently to fulfill their obligations in that regard. However, we are unclear on the rationale for the proposed addition of students with 504 plans to the mix. As you know, 504 plans provide accommodations for students with mental or physical impairments, but not all students with Section 504 plans require transition planning. Also, because 504 plans are tailored to a particular setting, the accommodations that may be necessary for a high school student may not translate in the context of whatever workplace, job training or higher education that student may pursue next. And because 504 plans are general education support plans that do not include special education, it is unclear under H 8462 who would be responsible for the administration of the proposed 504 transition plans.

Students who are eligible for a Section 504 plan are already able to access state services such as the Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitative Services (“ORS”). At present, ORS offers

Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with 504 plans as well as students with IEPs. And public schools across Rhode Island are already engaging in post-high school planning for all students through the development and ongoing review and revision of Individual Learning Plans.

ARIASE leaders are eager to learn more about what you, Rep. Cortvriend and your co-sponsors aim to solve or improve with this bill, and we welcome the opportunity to contribute to those efforts, but at present ARIASE respectfully opposes H 8462 in its current form. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Timothy J. Groves