

Date: Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Dear Chairman Abney and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Peter Chung! I'm a parent of a 4th grader at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Elementary School and a resident of Providence. I am writing in support of House Bill No. 5976 RELATING TO EDUCATION -- BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES IN OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

I want to begin by emphasizing that the BOOST Bill is absolutely essential for families across Rhode Island!

As a parent balancing the demands of both personal and professional life, I cannot stress enough how crucial afterschool and out-of-school programs are for my child. We are incredibly grateful for organizations like the Mount Hope Community Learning Center, which provides before and after-school programs at my child's school. Their dedication and hard work have been a lifeline for our family—and for countless others—who face the challenge of juggling work schedules with school hours, especially with a school day that starts at 9:15 AM and ends at 3:50 PM. Thanks to afterschool programs like these, we not only meet our logistical needs, but our children are also able to benefit from experiences that deeply enrich their lives.

When I talk to my child about his afterschool activities, three things consistently stand out. First, he loves the opportunity to spend time with his friends from different grades. These friendships, built in afterschool programs, are priceless and create a sense of community and belonging that extends well beyond the classroom.

Second, he tells me that afterschool programs don't feel like a continuation of the school day. They offer a change of pace, allowing him to explore his many interests and engage in hands-on activities. Of course, he also likes to joke that afterschool is a chance to avoid his homework, because it's not just about academic help!

And perhaps most importantly, he simply says, "It's fun." Afterschool programs provide a dynamic, engaging environment where he and his friends can explore their creativity, curiosity, and energy. Whether they're involved in sports, arts and crafts, STEM activities, or just having free play, he loves the variety of experiences that captivate him and his peers.

But it's not just my family that benefits from afterschool programs—this is a sentiment shared throughout our community. In fact, a remarkable 89% of Rhode Island parents

support public funding for out-of-school time programming, which highlights just how widely recognized the importance of these programs is.

We are fortunate to be able to afford and access a range of afterschool and out-of-school programs for our child. However, there are still more than 59,000 students in Rhode Island who do not have access to these opportunities.

I say all of this to make one clear point: Afterschool and out-of-school programs are not just a convenience for working families—they are an essential support system that significantly enriches our children's lives. The BOOST Bill represents an investment in the future of all Rhode Island children and families!

Sincerely,
Peter Chung
Providence Resident