



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
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Peter F. Neronha
Attorney General

May 15, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
State House, Room 35
Providence, RI 02903

Re: HB 6255: Central Falls Schools

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

I write today to express my support for HB 6255, legislation that would restore local governance of the Central Falls School District and ensure the families, educators, and local leaders have a voice in the future of their schools.

The education system in Rhode Island is failing students at every level. According to the recently released Kids Count Factbook, in 2024 only 38% of third graders and 32% of eighth graders met expectations on the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) English language arts assessment; only 39% of third graders and 25% of eighth graders met expectations on the RICAS math assessment. These numbers are even more dire among low-income students in our State's more distressed communities, where only 24% of third graders and 17% of eighth graders met RICAS English language arts goals, and just 25% of third graders and 10% of eighth graders met math assessment expectations in lower-income communities. Central Falls is one of those communities, but is where, **despite 34 years of state control**, schools are unable to meet parents' and students' expectations in providing an education to prepare them for the knowledge economy careers of the 21st Century.

The time has come for the State to turn control over to Central Falls' leaders to allow educators, students, and their families to have a say and direct stake in the governance of their schools. Local control provides for more accountability, higher transparency, and a real opportunity for investment in our children's academic success. State leaders have failed Central Falls children and new leadership has to have a chance to deliver for them. This legislation is fundamental to improving the overall well-being of students and educators in Central Falls, and for those reasons I urge the committee to support HB 6255.

As always, I would like to thank the Committee for its consideration of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Peter F. Neronha
Attorney General