



April 1, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chairperson  
House Finance Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: H-7127, Governor's FY 2027 Budget, Elementary and Secondary Education, Learn365RI

Dear Chairperson Abney:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, representing Clubs in Providence, Pawtucket, Newport County, East Providence, Warwick, and Northern Rhode Island, we write to express strong support for Governor McKee's Fiscal Year 2027 Budget and the continued investment in Learn365RI.

For more than a century, Boys & Girls Clubs have partnered with schools, families, and communities to ensure young people have access to safe, structured, and enriching learning opportunities beyond the traditional school day. Learn365RI advances this mission by recognizing that youth development does not stop when the school bell rings, and that year-round learning is essential to academic success, social-emotional development, and long-term economic mobility.

Across Rhode Island, Boys & Girls Clubs serve thousands of young people each year, the majority of whom come from low-income households and communities historically underserved by public investment. For example, the Boys & Girls Clubs in Rhode Island serve more than 31,000 youth annually, 43% of whom live in poverty, while providing nearly 345,000 meals and snacks at no cost each year and comprehensive afterschool and summer programming focused on academic success, healthy lifestyles, and character development.

Across the state, Boys & Girls Clubs offer:

- Daily academic support through homework help and tutoring
- Hands-on STEM, arts, and project-based learning
- Social-emotional skill-building and mentoring
- Summer learning that prevents academic regression and supports working families

These activities directly align with Learn365RI's goals of extended learning, student engagement, and workforce readiness.

Research consistently demonstrates that participation in high-quality afterschool programs, like those operated by Boys & Girls Clubs, leads to better school-day attendance, stronger engagement, and improved academic confidence.

At a time when chronic absenteeism remains far above pre-pandemic levels nationally, afterschool and summer programs are among the most effective community-based tools for re-engaging students, particularly those most at risk of disengagement.

Despite their proven impact, demand for afterschool and summer programming far exceeds availability. Nationally, 1 in 2 children cannot access an afterschool program, and 1 in 5 youth are left alone after school, presenting risks to student safety, academic progress, and family economic stability.

Learn365RI provides a stable, state-driven solution that allows programs like Boys & Girls Clubs to plan responsibly, maintain quality, and retain staff, while ensuring accountability and alignment with statewide education priorities.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs respectfully urges the House Finance Committee to support full funding for Learn365RI as proposed in Governor McKee's FY 2027 Budget. We stand ready to continue partnering with the General Assembly, the Administration, schools, and families to ensure every young person has access to the opportunities they need to succeed, 365 days a year.

Thank you for your consideration and continued commitment to Rhode Island's youth.

Sincerely,

JR Kenny  
Director, Government Relations  
Boys & Girls Clubs of America  
Rhode Island Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs