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

RE: H-7127 – Governor’s FY27 Budget – Elementary & Secondary Education, Learn 365RI

Dear Chairperson Abney,

I am writing in support of including Teach For America’s in Governor McKee’s FY27 budget through a \$100,000 investment to expanding Teach For America’s Ignite Tutoring Program. Funding will enable Teach For America to recruit and train approximately 70 tutors to provide virtual high-dosage tutoring to approximately 200 students in at least two Rhode Island communities, including Pawtucket and Cumberland. The program, called the **Ignite Tutoring Fellowship**, is a school-integrated tutoring model designed to accelerate student achievement through consistent, small-group instruction delivered during the school day.

Ignite combines a nationally proven tutoring model with a Rhode Island-specific implementation designed in partnership with local schools and higher education institutions that accelerates student learning while helping cultivate the next generation of educators. The program is intentionally designed around evidence-based principles for effective tutoring and implemented in close partnership with school leaders to ensure instruction aligns with grade-level standards, school curriculum, and school improvement goals so that support reaches the students who need it most.

Undergraduate students are recruited, trained, and placed as part-time tutors, each working with a consistent cohort of two to three students for one hour at least three times per week over a ten-week cycle or school semester. Tutors complete two weeks of research-aligned training each semester and receive ongoing coaching and feedback from a veteran, school-selected trainer while earning a stipend for their service.

The training model draws on Teach For America’s 35 years of experience developing strong novice educators. Through differentiated onboarding tailored to each school environment and community

One Day, all children will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.



context – and led jointly by Teach For America and school site leaders – tutors receive the preparation they need to become effective instructors and mentors for students.

Ignite is built on a growing body of research showing that high-dosage tutoring – small-group instruction delivered multiple times per week during the school day – is one of the most effective strategies for accelerating student learning. The model has demonstrated strong results at scale since its launch in Phoenix, Arizona in 2021 and has grown into a nationwide corps of tutoring fellows serving students across the country, including in Rhode Island.

During the 2024-2025 school year, more than 3,000 tutors delivered nearly 194,000 hours of additional instruction to approximately 5,000 students across 43 communities and 160 schools nationwide. Students participating in Ignite achieved 1.5-2.5 times expected growth in middle school math and two to three times expected growth in fifth-grade reading assessments. In addition, 95 percent of partner schools reported positive academic impact and 94 percent reported improved student engagement, demonstrating that high-dosage tutoring is a proven strategy with measurable academic returns.

In Rhode Island, Ignite reflects a nationally proven model adapted to meet local needs. Teach For America Rhode Island launched Ignite SAT Prep in Providence Public Schools in January 2023. Following a successful pilot, the program expanded to Blackstone Valley Prep High School in Cumberland during the 2023-2024 school year and to Segue Legacy High School in Pawtucket during the 2024-2025 school year.

Today, 49 tutors serve approximately 137 students in grades 9 through 11 across Blackstone Valley Prep and Segue Legacy High School, focusing on reading and math SAT preparation. Early results demonstrate strong impact. At Blackstone Valley Prep, participating students demonstrated 46 points of growth on the SAT – nearly double expected growth according to College Board benchmarks. At Segue Legacy High School, the school led the state in daily student attendance for three consecutive months, and 100 percent of participating ninth graders reported positive relationships with their Ignite tutors. Based on this success, Segue expanded the partnership to include Ignite PSAT Reading and Math to further strengthen college readiness pathways.

Teach For America Rhode Island's Ignite Fellowship was developed through collaboration with local education leaders to ensure the program reflects Rhode Island's specific needs. State and community partners – including Providence Public Schools, Rhode Island College, the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Community College of Rhode Island, and Teach For America Rhode Island – participated in a convening to design the initiative. Through this collaboration, Ignite SAT Prep was launched as a targeted strategy to address student achievement, attendance, and college readiness priorities across the state.



The SAT serves as Rhode Island's statewide high school assessment, with student performance influencing eligibility for college enrollment and access to scholarships and other educational opportunities. Programs like Ignite SAT Prep provide additional preparation for this high-stakes assessment while strengthening students' academic skills and confidence as they pursue postsecondary opportunities.

Beyond immediate academic gains, this investment also strengthens the future educator workforce. Emerging research shows that serving as a tutor increases interest in pursuing teaching careers—particularly among men, people of color, and individuals who did not initially major in education. Programs like Ignite therefore help expand the teacher pipeline while giving students the academic support they need today.

Rather than launching a new or untested initiative, this investment will scale a model that has already demonstrated measurable results nationally and has shown promising outcomes locally. The requested funding will support 70 trained tutors serving approximately 200 Rhode Island students, providing targeted instruction in reading and mathematics skills aligned with SAT content and helping students build the academic foundation necessary to improve their scores.

The Ignite model also represents a cost-effective use of public resources. By recruiting and training undergraduate students as part-time tutors, schools can expand instructional capacity under the supervision of experienced educators without requiring significant increases in permanent staffing costs. This approach allows schools to provide high-impact academic support while maximizing the value of taxpayer investment.

By improving academic outcomes now, reducing the need for future remediation, and cultivating the next generation of educators, Ignite delivers both immediate and long-term benefits for Rhode Island students, schools, and communities. I respectfully urge the Committee to support this request.

Sincerely,
Michael Broschart
Executive Director, Teach For America Rhode Island
Providence, Rhode Island

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy