



## Testimony in Support of H7245, Relating to Education – The Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act

April 28, 2026

To the Rhode Island House Committee on Finance:

The Rhode Island League of Charter Public Schools (the League) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the intent behind H 7245. We are grateful to Representative Donovan and the co-sponsors for their attention to the funding of students with disabilities.

Rhode Island's public schools are currently under-resourced when it comes to supporting our highest-needs students, which is why we need to reform our funding formula to weight our students with disabilities and change how we finance extraordinary special education costs. Lowering the threshold for extraordinary special education costs in fiscal years 2028 and 2029 would help address current budgetary challenges. Additionally, providing support for students who move into a district after a budget is finalized is a fair way to ensure that a child's education is never compromised by the timing of their relocation.

While this bill offers positive steps toward reform, it is only one piece of the puzzle. **To truly increase opportunity for all kids, Rhode Island needs holistic reform. To that end, while we support the improvements in H 7245, we think H 8351 is a more comprehensive approach to funding reform that will enable schools and districts to better meet the needs of students.**

In addition to funding reform, we believe our state must evaluate whether we are a school system where every child belongs and grows. We must ask ourselves: How can we better instruct all kids in the least restrictive environment? Our goal should always be to meet a student's unique needs within their own school community whenever possible.

Thank you for your consideration and continued commitment to the children and families of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren K. B. Matlach".

Lauren K. B. Matlach  
Deputy Director, Rhode Island League of Charter Public Schools