

ANGÉLICA INFANTE-GREEN  
*Commissioner*



Providence Public School District  
Office of the Superintendent  
797 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903-4045  
tel. 401.456.9211  
fax 401.456.9252  
[www.providenceschools.org](http://www.providenceschools.org)

DR. JAVIER MONTAÑEZ  
*Superintendent*

FROM: Dr. Javier Montañez, Superintendent of Providence Public School District  
**Testimony Opposed to SB2208**  
**April 8, 2026.**  
TO: Senate Education Committee

Dear Chair Hanna Gallo and members of the Senate Education Committee,

I write in opposition of SB2208, which would prohibit the Providence Public School District (PPSD) from terminating participation in the urban collaborative known as UCAP without the approval of the Providence School Board.

While we appreciate the historical partnership with UCAP, the Providence Public School District notified UCAP and the Providence School Board President in December, per R.I. Gen. Laws §16-3.1-5, about the end of participation, which will be effective June 30, 2026. (Appendix A) This decision was not made lightly and comes after a comprehensive review of student outcomes, attendance data and programmatic alignment. (Appendix B)

Overall, the review found that the District has made substantial progress in these areas over the last few years. In both English Language Arts and Math, the District has seen consistent upward trends in proficiency compared to UCAP's results which have remained largely flat and near zero in recent years.

School districts have a fundamental responsibility to ensure students have access to the support and services they need to succeed. You can't meet that responsibility if kids are not showing up to class. Right now, chronic absenteeism at UCAP is 53 percent, much higher than the 39 percent across Providence middle schools.

Our review also found that UCAP has not been consistently updating students' Individualized Education Plans, or IEPs, on a yearly basis as required by law. This is not just a procedure issue. It directly impacts whether students receive the support they are entitled to. During the transition period, PPSD plans to re-assess and update these plans to ensure every student is properly supported.

At the same time, UCAP has been returning a number of students each year after determining they are not successful in its program. Our district remains committed to serving every student regardless of circumstance. PPSD does not walk away from students and are prepared to meet the needs of the students currently enrolled at UCAP.

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Bringing these students back into Providence public schools will allow us to deliver stronger instructional alignment, ensure continuity of services, and provide the stability needed to improve attendance and academic outcomes.

Other districts have already come to this determination. For example, Central Falls and Cranston have either stopped participating or drastically reduced their involvement in UCAP. Today, Providence is effectively standing alone in what was supposed to be a collaborative effort. This forces the District to bear the administrative and operational weight that becomes increasingly difficult to justify, especially when looking at the cost.

The UCAP program currently receives \$2.9M annually (\$2.3M from the state and \$600,000 from the District) to serve around 130 students. By transitioning students back to district schools, we project a combined savings of approximately \$1.25 million for the state and the district. These funds can be redirected toward supports that benefit a broader group of students.

PPSD has already developed a concrete transition plan that includes hiring additional academic interventionists specifically to support students who are over-age or under-credited. These specialists will provide targeted support to ensure students remain on track and do not fall through the cracks during the transition.

PPSD's goal is not to take opportunities away from students. This is about accountability and making sure every student has a real opportunity to succeed by providing them with stronger academic support, improved attendance outcomes, and access to the full range of services available within Providence Public Schools.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the students of Providence and for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Javier Montañez", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Javier Montañez  
*Superintendent*

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## **Appendix A**

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*Superintendent*

December 30, 2025

The UCAP School  
75 Carpenter Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Ms. Prentiss,

Please be advised that the Providence Public School District (the "District") hereby provides formal notice of its intent to withdraw from its partnership with the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (hereinafter "UCAP"), effective June 30, 2026, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-3.1-5(b).

The District is now the sole remaining member of UCAP following the withdrawal of all other participating school districts. As a result, UCAP's core purpose and statutory intent have been effectively nullified. Under R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-3.1-11, UCAP was established to enable multiple school committees to engage in cooperative efforts to provide alternative education programs and related services for students achieving limited success in traditional settings. With only one district remaining, the statutory framework for a collaborative is not satisfied.

This decision follows a comprehensive review of program utilization and fiscal impact. Given the limited number of students served and the substantial financial investment required to maintain this arrangement, the District has determined that it can provide services of equal or greater quality within its own schools. Accordingly, continued participation in this partnership is neither educationally necessary nor financially prudent.

The District also notes governance and compliance concerns. UCAP is currently listed as a Rhode Island non-profit corporation on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's website, with the undersigned, Superintendent Javier Montañez, listed as its sole Officer (President) and Director. It is the District's understanding that UCAP's 2025 Annual Report was initially rejected by the Secretary of State because it lacks the minimum three (3) directors necessary to exist as a non-profit corporation under R.I. Gen. Laws § 7-6-23. Although UCAP certified that it would amend its bylaws and vacancies with superintendents from participating districts, it does not appear that either has been accomplished as of this writing.

We request that UCAP take all steps necessary to facilitate an orderly transition. Specifically, please coordinate to meet with the District regarding the development of a transition plan in the first week of January 2026 to include:

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- Communication with students, families, and staff members
- Process for students to enroll in another Providence school
- Other items that are necessary to close out the agreement by June 30, 2026.

All obligations and responsibilities under the current agreement shall cease as of the effective withdrawal date, June 30, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Javier Montañez", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Dr. Javier Montañez  
Superintendent, Providence Public School District

CC:

Angelica Infante-Green, Commissioner of Education  
Stephanie Downey Toledo, Superintendent, Central Falls School District  
Charles Ruggiero

## Appendix B

### Providence Public Schools ends participation in UCAP Program

Providence Public School District's (PPSD) decision to stop participating and funding the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP) is driven by **student outcomes and equity**.

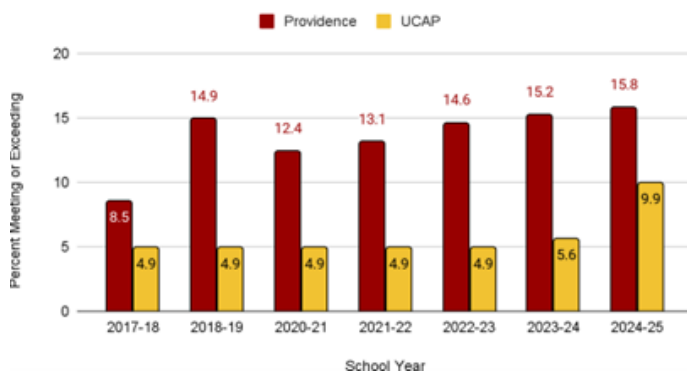
Providence Public Schools are currently outperforming the UCAP academically and in attendance. This transition will move students to a better environment, not taking something away.

### Putting Student Outcomes First

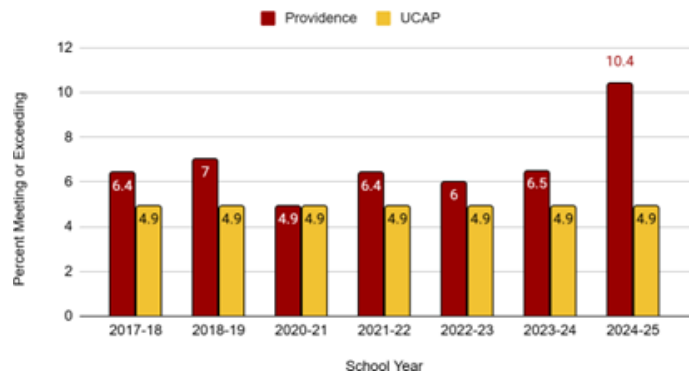
**Academic Performance:** District schools are consistently outperforming UCAP in both ELA and Math.

- *The Data:* While District schools show upward trends in proficiency (especially 8th grade ELA), UCAP results have remained flat and near zero (often <5%).

Providence and UCAP: RICAS ELA (GR 8)



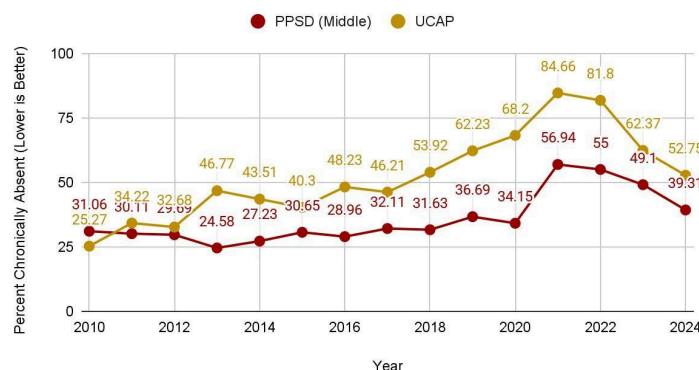
Providence and UCAP: RICAS Math (GR 8)



**Attendance:** We cannot teach students if they are not in school.

- *The Data:* Chronic absenteeism at UCAP is **53%**, compared to **39%** in PPSD middle schools.

PPSD (Middle) and UCAP



**Instructional Quality:** Our data suggests that the Tier I instruction and curriculum alignment available in our district schools provide better educational leverage than the current model at UCAP.

**Individualized Education Plan:** During the time students have participated in UCAP Individualized Education Plans have not been updated as required by law. Returning students will be reassessed and their IEPs will be updated upon their return.

**Continuity of Care:** Annually, UCAP sends back a handful of students that they feel are not successful in their school. PPSD welcomes all students.

### The "Collaborative" Model Has Shifted

- **We Are Standing Alone:** The UCAP was designed as a multi-district collaborative (Providence, Central Falls, Cranston).
- **Partners Have Left:** All other partners have either stopped or drastically curtailed participation. We are the only district actively participating in governance; Central Falls sends only 5 students and does not govern.
- **Implication:** Continuing alone forces the District to bear the administrative and operational weight of a UCAP that other communities have already deemed ineffective for their students.

### Financial Responsibility

- **High Cost, Low ROI:** The UCAP receives **\$2.9M annually** (\$2.3M State + \$0.6M District) to serve only ~130 students.
- **Better Use of Funds:** By bringing these students back to District schools, we project a combined savings of **~\$1.25M** for the state and district, which can be utilized more effectively to support student needs.

### The Transition Plan for UCAP Students

- We have a concrete plan to welcome these students back.
- We are investing in additional **academic interventionists** specifically to support over-age and under-credited students to ensure they do not fall through the cracks.