



May 6, 2026

The Honorable Hanna Gallo
Chair, Senate Committee on Education
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

RE: S 2524

On behalf of the National Education Association of Rhode Island and our 12,000 members, I write in strong support of S 2524, which establishes clear and balanced provisions to ensure student and teacher classroom safety while maintaining appropriate protections for all students.

This legislation represents a thoughtful and necessary step toward addressing one of the most pressing challenges facing educators today: maintaining safe, orderly, and productive learning environments. Across Rhode Island, educators are increasingly asked to manage significant behavioral disruptions while continuing to meet rigorous academic expectations. When classroom environments are compromised, students lose valuable instructional time and their opportunity to learn is diminished.

S 2524 provides a clear and workable framework for when and how a student may be removed from the classroom. Importantly, the bill sets a high and appropriate threshold for removal, limiting its use to instances of chronic disruption or immediate threats to safety. By explicitly prohibiting removals for minor or non-disruptive behaviors, the legislation ensures that this authority is exercised judiciously and not as a substitute for routine classroom management.

Equally important is the bill's emphasis on process, documentation, and accountability. Requiring timely administrative review, parent notification, and the development of a return-to-classroom plan ensures that removals are not punitive in nature, but instead part of a structured effort to support student success and behavioral improvement. The inclusion of a review committee when there is disagreement further reinforces fairness and shared responsibility in decision-making.

Finally, S 2524 promotes transparency and continuous improvement through its data reporting requirements. By requiring districts to track and report removal data disaggregated by key student groups, the bill creates an opportunity to monitor implementation, identify disparities, and ensure that policies are applied equitably across all schools and student populations.

At its core, this legislation recognizes that safe and supportive classrooms are foundational to student success. It provides educators with the tools they need to address serious disruptions while ensuring that students are treated fairly, supported appropriately, and returned to the classroom with a plan for success.

For these reasons, NEARI respectfully urges passage of S 2524.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alexander Lucini".

Alexander Lucini
Government Relations Director, NEARI