

Charles P. Rose
5254 North Magnolia Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60640-2203
cprose34@gmail.com
(773) 620-3207

VIA Email (SLegislation@rilegislature.gov)

May 18, 2026

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

Re: **Senate Bill S-2934**

Dear Chair Gallo and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

I write to strongly urge the Senate Committee on Education to pass Senate Bill S-2934 (SB2934) at its meeting on May 20, 2026. SB2934 would give Providence Public School District (PPSD) practical, common sense tools to retain and compensate high quality teachers, align staffing decisions with student needs, and modernize outdated personnel rules.

Across the country, many education systems still operate under structures that limit flexibility rather than support and promote effective teaching and learning. The Rhode Island Senate is to be commended for establishing a “Special Legislative Commission to Review and Provide Recommendations for Professional and Labor-Management Standards that Provide School-Based Flexibility and Accountability for Employees of the Providence Public Schools” in response to the compelling joint “Call to Action” published by former PPSD union president Steven Smith and superintendent Susan Lusi in *The 74*. Key recommendations from the Special Commission’s Report are now embodied in SB2934.

Passage of SB2934 is a vital, timely and grassroots effort to update the bygone-era statutory constraints on PPSD’s labor-management relationship. Specifically, SB2934 provides PPSD with the latitude for labor and management, in an environment of shared accountability, to negotiate changes in teacher salaries, tenure, dismissal procedures, and layoffs to better match talent to student needs and create conditions that improve teacher recruitment and retention. For example, SB2934 allows PPSD labor and management to establish:

- Alternative, “career-ladder” salary schedules, including bonuses for performance and additional responsibilities, with student needs in-mind, not simply tied to years of service.

- Criteria to address necessary reductions-in-force due to declining student populations based on evaluations, school performance, and employee skills and proficiencies.
- Balanced and efficient due process mechanisms to address the employment of teachers who do not meet clear performance standards.

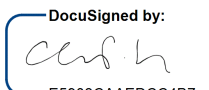
As an education lawyer who has devoted his 44-year career to representing education institutions across the country in labor-management relations and collective bargaining, and a Fellow in The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers, I have seen first-hand the transformative results when local school and labor leaders are empowered by their state legislatures to collaboratively craft workplace standards and initiatives that meet the needs of their students, teachers, support staff and broader community to improve student outcomes. Our nation's unique, one-of-a-kind system of locally-controlled, K12 public education functions best in an environment where labor and management are partners and collaborators, not adversaries.

As I witnessed on-the-ground at PPSD when I served as the General Counsel for the U.S. Department of Education from May 2009 to July 2011, the desire is there – labor and management just need the tools. Indeed, Ms. Lusi and Mr. Smith poignantly observed in their Call to Action that: “Altering the labor-management relationship in Providence Schools requires a fundamental change in the rules of engagement, starting with Rhode Island General Law. It has to be rewritten to allow for greater school-based flexibility and accountability for the professionals who best know the students.”

SB2934 is the critical step in doing just that. Please pass SB2934.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share my perspective on SB2934.

Sincerely yours,


E5903CAAEDCC4B7...
Charles P. Rose