

April 16, 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

RE: Article 6 Q 4, Article 7 1,2,3,6

On behalf of National Education Association Rhode Island, I write in strong support of the Governor's proposed budget language that strengthens Rhode Island's school funding formula through an increase in the student success factor and makes a significant investment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) through a \$50 million general obligation bond. These proposals represent important and forward-looking steps toward ensuring that all students—particularly those with the greatest needs—have access to the resources and opportunities necessary to succeed.

The proposed increase in the student success factor from forty percent (40%) to forty-three percent (43%) is a meaningful and welcome enhancement. By increasing the additional resources allocated for students experiencing poverty, the State acknowledges the well-documented reality that these students often require additional academic, social, and emotional supports. This adjustment reflects a growing commitment to equity within the funding formula and moves Rhode Island closer to aligning resources with student need.

At the same time, this provision could be more comprehensively and equitably reinforced through the adoption of S3015, which proposes broader updates to the State's education funding framework. By modernizing the formula as a whole, S3015 would ensure that enhancements like the increased student success factor are part of a more cohesive and sustainable system that better reflects the realities facing today's students and schools.

NEARI also strongly supports the proposed \$50 million general obligation bond to expand and improve Career and Technical Education programming. Investments in CTE are critical to preparing students for high-demand careers, strengthening Rhode Island's workforce, and providing meaningful, hands-on learning opportunities that engage a wide range of learners. Expanding access to high-quality CTE programs will benefit not only students, but also employers and communities across the state.

As this investment moves forward, we encourage careful consideration to ensure that funding supports and strengthens existing, high-performing programs, including the State's flagship institution, William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School. Schools like Davies have long demonstrated the value of robust, well-supported CTE programming, and ensuring their continued growth and modernization will maximize the impact of this bond investment.

Taken together, these proposals represent a thoughtful approach to improving educational equity and opportunity in Rhode Island. By increasing targeted funding for students in poverty and making strategic investments in career and technical education, the State is taking important steps to support both academic success and workforce readiness.

For these reasons, NEARI strongly urges support for these provisions in the Governor's proposed budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alexander Lucini". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Alexander Lucini  
Government Relations Director, NEARI