



The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

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

April 28, 2026

Re: Support for H8429 and S3214 - Return of Central Falls Schools to Local Control

Dear Chair Abney, Chair DiPalma, and Members of the House and Senate Finance Committees:

Please accept this letter in strong support of H8429 and S3214, which would return the Central Falls School District to local control effective July 1, 2026.

I am writing with the unique position of being the last appointed person to the Central Falls School Committee BEFORE it became a committee under the State of Rhode Island. I was filling a position left vacant when the elected member of the school committee moved to a position on the City Council and I had been a resident of the city working with students in the schools and running out of school time programs. At that time, the City was in dire financial straits and the intention was to get as much financial and educational support as available from the State to help the students of Central Falls. Local control had to become a secondary issue because the tax base generated in the square mile city simply could not support anything more.

Things have changed exponentially since then. The time has come to restore local educational self-governance in a responsible, transparent, and financially sustainable manner. The legislation proposed has been thoughtfully put together and the proposal is well studied and balanced. The current leadership is not only enthusiastic but is supportive over the long term.

As someone who has worked professionally since 1985 for the benefit of Central Falls youth and is the founder and administrator of a small charter district serving Central Falls students, I am very familiar with the expectations for districts and governance as well as the quality outcomes expected of students. This proposal is a winning one for students and the City.

I respectfully urge the House and Senate Finance Committees to support H8429 and S3214 and advance the return of Central Falls schools to local control by July 1, 2026.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely Yours,

Carolyn Sheehan
Executive Director

