



December 4, 2024

Council on Elementary and Secondary Education  
Rhode Island Department of Education  
255 Westminster St.  
Providence, RI 02903

Via Email

Dear Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education,

The National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI) is writing in opposition to the proposed amendment that RISE Prep be allowed to change its governance structure from a Mayoral Academy to that of an Independent Charter School.

RISE Prep was approved as a Mayoral Academy and should remain in that category. Less than a year ago, RISE Prep was approved by the Council for a significant expansion and at that time this issue was not raised by RISE Prep.

This proposed change would significantly increase the annual cost to Woonsocket Public Schools by approximately \$500,000 at a time when the district itself is already facing significant school budget issues. This change will only further strain the limited resources and funding of Woonsocket Public Schools by shifting those funds to a parallel school system. In reality, it will just shift one school's financial issues to another.

Woonsocket Public Schools have also had to cut programming and staff, and this will only increase their need to do so. In fact, many public schools have faced budget shortfalls in the last few years, and particularly this year with the loss of federal ARPA funding.

NEARI strongly opposes this amendment to RISE Prep's Charter and encourages the Council to reject it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Eden".

Fil Eden  
Government Relations Director  
National Education Association Rhode Island