



Central Administration • Ella Risk Lower Level • 949 Dexter St • Central Falls, RI 02863 • Phone 401.727.6430 • Fax: 401.721.2850

December 8, 2015

Dear Members of the Funding Formula Working Group,

I submit this written testimony to express a strong desire for updates and changes to the Rhode Island Funding Formula to take into consideration the following:

- Additional Support for English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Additional Support for Students with Individualized Education Programs (especially high-cost special education students)
- Additional Support for incentivizing partnerships and sharing of best practices between Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

While the current version of the funding formula provides supports for students who qualify for free and reduced priced lunch, it does not yet meet the unique needs of our neediest students. In Central Falls 24% of students are English Language Learners (ELLs), 21% have IEPs, and 4% are in high-cost out-of-district placements. These students deserve our greatest attention, focus, and support.

It is further worth noting that Central Falls has a strong history of partnerships with other non-traditional Local Education Agencies, including charter schools and mayoral academies. These are partnerships that have benefited from private philanthropy, public support, and innovative agreements. We have seen significant revenue generating and cost saving impacts. More importantly, we have seen benefits for students both in Central Falls and partner LEAs because of these partnerships.

One such example is the current partnership with Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy. Attached for your review is a Memorandum of Agreement for Special Education management services. This agreement leverages the expertise of our Special Education programming and provides revenues for Central Falls that help to offset staffing costs; importantly, this agreement also provides professional support services to Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, whose students are better served through this collaborative structure. Additional student-based supports for unique needs like special education allow LEAs the flexibility to redirect funds to create alternative, cost saving structures like this partnership to better serve students across schools.

In an of itself, the special education partnership is important, both symbolically and in practice. More important, however, is the reality that in part because of this partnership, Central Falls and Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy have sought other opportunities to fund and support collaboration. Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy recently won a Federal Charter School Program Grant to “disseminate best practices” whereby their middle school math team is working with our math team at Calcutt Middle School to review curriculum, assessments, and instruction all for the benefit of students in both programs. It is my belief that the Funding Formula should support these types of collaborations as they are proven to be both revenue generating and cost saving.

Most sincerely,



Edda Carmadello
Chief Academic Officer

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For Special Education Support Between
The Central Falls School District And Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy**

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by the Central Falls School District (hereinafter, "CFSD") and the Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy (hereinafter, "BVP") effective the First day of July, 2015.

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP fully appreciate that collaborative efforts to most effectively and efficiently serve the neediest of students will ultimately advance our collective missions to greatly improve the lives of students;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP mutually commit to the highest ethical standards respecting each other's collaborative partnership efforts and our respective employees without intentions to recruit from our respective pools;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP fully appreciate the need to improve service delivery and realize educational, financial, organizational, and operational efficiencies;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP have recognized that consolidation of services represents a potential way to achieve said improvements and efficiencies;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP have recognized that special education services is an area in which services can be consolidated in a manner that achieves said improvements and efficiencies;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP wish to ensure that said consolidation occurs in a manner that permits both the CFSD and BVP to fulfill their legal duties and otherwise receive special education services in an equitable and efficient fashion;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP recognize that consolidated special education services will involve fiduciary duties to both the CFSD and BVP;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP recognize that consolidated special education services will involve access to confidential information that must be protected;

WHEREAS, the CFSD and BVP recognize that consolidation of special education services is a major undertaking with potentially unforeseen implications, and wish initially to consolidate said services on an interim, trial basis in order to allow sufficient time to permit the parties to determine whether the arrangement is workable;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, the parties hereby agree as follows:

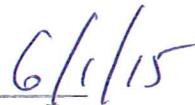
1. BVP shall utilize special education administration services from CFSD in accord with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
2. Special Education Services shall be provided by the CFSD's Special Education Director. CFSD Special Education Director remains an employee of CFSD.

3. CFSD Special Education Director shall report to the Superintendent of CFSD with respect to human resource issues relating to CFSD. The Superintendent of CFSD shall supervise and direct CFSD Special Education Director with respect to the special education issues relating to CFSD schools.
4. CFSD Special Education Director shall report to the Executive Director of BVP and/or his designee with respect to special education issues relating to BVP. The Executive Director of BVP and/or his designee shall supervise and confer with CFSD Special Education Director with respect to the special education issues relating to BVP.
5. It is understood and agreed by the parties that the CFSD Special Education Director and Employees will be privy to confidential information on behalf of the CFSD and shall not share said information with BVP unless consented to by the CFSD. It is further understood and agreed by the parties that the CFSD Special Education Director and Employees will be privy to confidential information on behalf of BVP and shall not share said information with the CFSD unless consented to by BVP.
6. It is anticipated that approximately 60% of the Director of Special Education's week will generally focus on the CFSD Special Education services, the remaining 40% of the Director's week will be focused on BVP. BVP will pay the CFSD \$6,650 per month not to exceed \$80,000 per year. However, both parties agree to cooperate in good faith in the event that either requires a greater share of time in order to deal with an emergency and/or temporary increase in workload at either BVP or the CFSD.
7. It is anticipated that three (3) to five (5) members of the CFSD Special Education staff will perform direct services at BVP and may be requested to lead professional development in their areas of specialized services respectively. BVP will pay CFSD a blended staff rate of \$100/hour not to exceed \$10,000.
8. The CFSD Superintendent, the CFSD Special Education Director, and the Executive Director of BVP will meet regularly to develop professional development plans of action as well as direct service opportunities.
9. This agreement will remain in full force and effect until June 30, 2016; however, it is acknowledged that either party may terminate this agreement for any reason with a thirty (30) day written notice.
10. The parties agree to meet and confer in good faith on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of this agreement and extensions and amendments thereto.

The Central Falls School District:

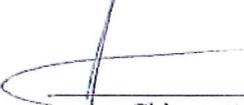


 Victor Capellan
 Superintendent

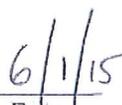


 Date

Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy:



 Jeremy Chiappetta
 Executive Director



 Date

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