



Letters to the editor

Neil D. Steinberg: Maintain school-reform momentum

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Let's applaud Governor Chafee for proposing a budget that sends a clear message about the importance of public education in Rhode Island.

It is imperative that the state maintains the forward momentum created during the 2010 legislative session, when lawmakers passed Rhode Island's first education-funding formula in more than a decade. This bold act was instrumental in Rhode Island's securing \$75 million in federal Race to the Top funds and will advance the strategic plan for achieving excellence in our public schools set forth by the state Board of Regents and the Education Commissioner Deborah Gist.

All of Rhode Island's schoolchildren deserve an education that prepares them for further learning and for jobs that will grow and sustain our state's economy. The education funding formula supported by the governor and lawmakers will help ensure that we invest as effectively and efficiently as possible so that our state's educators have what they need to deliver on this promise.

And if our well-prepared high-school graduates choose to attend Rhode Island's public institutions of higher education, these colleges and universities must also be equipped to turn out nimble, adaptive, innovative citizens of the 21st Century. The governor's commitment to public higher education as evidenced by additional funding proposed in his budget recognizes the importance of these resources to students and to our economy.

While it is true that sacrifice will be necessary and difficult decisions must be made in the coming months, we must continue to support public education.

Neil D. Steinberg is president and chief executive of the Rhode Island Foundation and co-chairs Rhode Island's Race to the Top Steering Committee.