



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND

PRESS RELEASE

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**BALDELLI-HUNT PLEASED WITH COURT DECISION IN FAVOR
OF RISE MAYORAL ACADEMY**

WOONSOCKET, RI: Lisa Baldelli-Hunt today applauded the decision of Associate Justice Michael Silverstein who denied the City Council's request for a temporary injunction that would have prevented the RISE Mayoral Academy from enrolling and opening on Monday, August 31, 2015.

"I am pleased with the decision, but more importantly, thrilled for the students and parents who have been waiting with anxiety over the last several weeks to learn if the kindergarten classes would begin," Baldelli-Hunt stated.

Soon after taking office in 2013, Baldelli-Hunt assisted RISE Mayoral Academy to establish a presence in Woonsocket by agreeing to serve as its Chairperson. However, she later voluntarily withdrew her name as Chair after the City Council passed a resolution in opposition to the public charter school. Thereafter, Ms. Paulette Hamilton, the Town Administrator of North Smithfield, substituted her name as chair while Baldelli-Hunt remained on the Board

"I am an advocate for school reform, and have always believed that this lawsuit, authorized by the majority of the City Council at taxpayers' expense, was not wise nor justified given that the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education approved the RISE Mayoral Charter after public hearings and input. As the Court noted in its decision, the plaintiffs launched a "broadside attack" on the approval process in the hopes of derailing a necessary public school option within Woonsocket, but at this stage of the proceedings, the broadside failed." she noted.

While the temporary injunction was denied, the City Council and the other plaintiffs can continue to press their case for Declaratory Judgment and Permanent Injunction which would require additional discovery, evidence, and other additional court proceedings.

“Since the City Council retained its own counsel to pursue this case without my support, it will be up to them to determine if they want to continue to spend time, resources and tax dollars to fight it,” Baldelli-Hunt said. “In light of this most recent decision, I would hope that they reconsider. I would encourage them to focus their energies and talents to improve the educational experience and opportunities of all of Woonsocket’s students,” the Mayor said.

The school is scheduled to open on August 31, 2015 at the 1 Social Street location along with Founder’s Preparatory Academy, a middle school associated with Beacon Charter School, which was not the subject of the City Council’s lawsuit.

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