

September 24, 2012

Dear Fellow East Siders:

This past Wednesday night, the School Department reported to the Education Committee on student enrollments and the registration process. The population of kindergarten-age and 6<sup>th</sup> grade children is increasing. This fall, the School Department opened more new kindergarten classes than originally planned (including one at Vartan Gregorian Elementary School). The sixth grade increase resulted in last-minute displacements. These increases will continue next year, including a projected increase of 350 middle school students. The Central Office staff are walking each building to re-confirm the actual number of classrooms. The Central Office is also reviewing the systems and the operations of the Registration Office which, as parents related at the hearing, needs to be more “user-friendly” and transparent for families. The School Department also plans to review with the School Board the student assignment plan, which as implemented is producing several cases each year where a neighborhood child is not assigned to the nearest school. You can see some of the details in the [Power Point Presentation](#) the School Department made at the hearing.

In July, the City Council approved a ballot measure for the voters to decide whether to approve a \$40 million bond for road repairs. The Mayor’s office has prepared a map of possible repairs you can view by clicking this link: [Repairs Map](#). An engineer (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin) developed the map based on a common rubric for assessing the condition of every City street. The map includes a repair to Olney Street, which has been an issue for a while. I plan to inquire whether the indicated repair to Blackstone Boulevard already is being undertaken by the Narragansett Bay Commission as part of its sewer project – if so, this may release funds for other another project. The administration will answer questions at a public meeting on **Tuesday, October 2 at 7:00 p.m. at the Nathan Bishop Middle School.**

Common Cause is contributing to governmental reform in Providence as well as the State, playing a prominent role in the Mayor’s Open Government Commission. I worked with them to develop the [Redistricting reform](#) to the City Charter that will appear on the November ballot, and I plan to work with them on the [Pay to Play Ordinance](#) I introduced earlier this month. I therefore hope you will join me for a talk with John Marion, Executive Director of Common Cause, to discuss City issues and government reform issues more generally. For example, many East Side voters became concerned in the recent primary about the process by which candidates declare their candidacy, and whether there can be a wider window of opportunity for new candidates when a current office holder chooses not to seek re-election. I also will be happy to address any neighborhood issues you may wish to discuss. The meeting will take place **Monday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m. at the Nathan Bishop Middle School Cafeteria (with doors opening at 6:30 p.m.)**

Sincerely,

