

West Hartford Public Schools

**Nutrition Services Department
50 South Main Street West Hartford, CT 06107**

**Patricia Molloy, RD, CDN Operations Manager
(phone) 860-561-6610 (fax) 860-561-6921**

Governor's bill No. 830 LCO No 2980

Testimonial in Support of Continued Current Funding Levels for School Meals

I am the Operations Manager of Nutrition Services for West Hartford Public Schools, overseeing meal service to 6000 children per day in a diverse community. The School Board signed on to follow the State Healthy Food Certification Standards because they believe in providing healthy and nourishing food to the students we serve. The .10 cents per meal in State funding helps my department pay for fresh fruit to be offered daily to all students, fresh vegetables for salads and side dishes, more whole grain products which tend to be more expensive than their refined-flour counterparts, and entrees and snacks that are lower in fat and added sugars.

The costs to purchase food for our programs have gone up, just as people's grocery bills have gone up in recent years, yet we still offer a complete meal including an entrée, fruit, vegetable and milk for \$2.00 to \$2.25. We pay competitive wages and cover all payroll expenses, food, supplies, and equipment purchases from the Nutrition Services budget.

In West Hartford, we also offer students eligible for reduced-price breakfast a free breakfast, and the Nutrition Services budget absorbs the .20 cents per meal that is normally charged. The State funding enables us to continue to offer this benefit to needy children, removing a barrier to getting a nutritious meal.

Please continue the current level of funding for school meal programs, so that we can continue to offer nourishing, low cost meals to the children of Connecticut. Thank you.

Patricia Molloy, RD, CDN
Operations Manager for Nutrition Services
West Hartford Public Schools