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Written Testimony of

**Claire Howard, Education Policy Associate
Connecticut Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, Inc.**

**House Bill No. 6487
An Act Concerning the Reporting of Truancy Data**

Respectfully Submitted to the Education Committee

February 23, 2009

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony to the Education Committee in support of House Bill 6487, An Act Concerning the Reporting of Truancy Data. I do so on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Appleseed Center for Law and Justice.

My name is Claire Howard. I am the Education Policy Associate of Connecticut Appleseed, which is a statewide, non-partisan 501(c)3 organization dedicated to building a more just society. Our mission is to develop solutions for the causes, rather than the symptoms, of our state's social problems. We deploy volunteer lawyers and other professionals to achieve systemic changes to injustices and disparities in health care, public education, immigration and child welfare. Rather than serving individual clients, we place our emphasis on developing practical and lasting solutions for injustices and disparities in health care, public education, immigration, and child welfare.

Among the injustices that concern our Board of Directors is the chasm in academic performance between children of Connecticut's wealthy and poor. We believe that informed parents can play a key role in mitigating our state's vast education achievement gap because engaged and informed parents who can advocate for their children and contribute to the schools and districts are the building blocks of school improvement.

Given the importance of informed parents, Connecticut Appleseed applauds House Bill 6487 and its efforts to increase the transparency and level of information that schools report to parents in strategic school profiles.