

Good afternoon. My name is Lyn Nevins. I work at Cooperative Educational Services in Trumbull, one of six Regional Educational Service Centers. I have been working with new teachers, mentors and administrators since 1987. It was in 1987 that Connecticut made a strong commitment to support new teachers as a result of the passage of the Education Enhancement Act. In fact, Connecticut has earned a national reputation for how well we support our new teachers.

I know this because I have spoken about how we support our new teachers in Connecticut at national conferences across the country. At each of these conferences, my sessions were full because participants wanted to know more about what we do in Connecticut. That leads me to why I am here today. I am thrilled to see that raised Bill 6866 – The Teacher Education and Mentoring Program - would allow us to continue to provide excellent and needed support for our new teachers. It would also allow us to continue to provide support for our mentor teachers. Mentors need support because being a good mentor is not necessarily the same as being a good teacher. They need help/training in understanding how to transfer their knowledge and how to understand what the new teacher needs.

Our new teachers are the future of our profession and k-12 education. We now have a unique opportunity to help them develop their skills and habits, to help them understand teaching standards, to help them do their best job in educating the children of Connecticut in the 21st century.

We have already taken a big step forward in convening a committee to create these “mentoring modules” for new teachers. The committee is composed of professionals from the State Department of Education, the six RESCs, higher education and the CEA and AFT of Connecticut. We already have a plan to get feedback on the proposed modules from current mentors, master mentors, and new teachers.

I have received numerous phone calls and emails from districts asking me when they can get training for their new mentors. We have trained thousands of mentors over the years, and they have spread the word on the effectiveness of the training. Others have asked how we will offer support for our new teachers next year. They don't even realize that there will be no more support unless this legislation is passed. I urge you to pass raised Bill 6866 for our new teachers, our experienced staff, and especially for the children of Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lyn Nevins
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