

Testimony
Submitted to the
Committee for Public Health

February 6, 2009

Proposed H.B.# 5599 An Act Concerning Licensure Exemption for Magnet Schools That Administer Day Care Services

In support of H.B. # 5599 An Act Concerning Licensure Exemption for Magnet Schools that Administer Day Care Services

Good Afternoon Senator Harris and Representative Ritter.

My Name is Bruce Douglas and I represent the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC). I am here to speak in support of H.B. # 5599 An Act Concerning Licensure Exemption for Magnet Schools that Administer Day Care Services.

Key Points:

1. CREC supports DPH license exemption for charter schools and would like to supplant the term "magnet" with "charter" for this act and will highlight key points for charter schools.
2. CREC provides early care and education to our young and often, most at risk population.
3. Charter schools have been able to provide unique educational experiences for a diverse population in a stimulating environment where students are engaged in theme-based education.
4. This year and in the future, many charter schools have and will continue to focus on early childhood education- providing quality, educational opportunities for our youngest school population.
5. High quality early childhood educational opportunities have not been universally available across the state of Connecticut. Charter schools have begun to meet the need for these services especially in urban settings. In Connecticut, most families bear the burden of finding and paying for preschool education.
6. As **public schools**, charters are required to abide by guidelines established by the State Department of Education (SDE). Those include health and safety measures. The Department of Public Health (DPH) insures that facilities like **daycare facilities and nursing homes** are providing safe and healthy environments. These are different programs than public schools such as charters.
7. The duplication of two very similar and very lengthy processes is a burden on the charter schools, and the public health license does not fit.

8. It is important to note that quality education for students is at the forefront for both departments (SDE and DPH) and early childhood public schools and that they are obviously invested in providing quality care and education to our youngest students. The duplication of oversight is what is in question.
9. That said DPH requirements for ratio and group size are important standards – with an adult to child ratio of 1:10 with no more than 20 children per preschool or kindergarten classroom. This ensures that a proper adult to child ratio is preserved in charter school classrooms.
10. Our goal is quality education for all Connecticut preschool children. It is not to avoid regulation, but as stated before, to avoid duplicative and burdensome regulation

Conclusion:

The language of H. B. # 5599 removes the redundancy of duplicative oversight.

We respectfully request that the language in H.B # 5599 be accepted with the term, “magnet” changed to “charter.”

Respectfully submitted,
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Capitol Region Education Council