

Testimony
Submitted to the
Education Committee

March 9, 2009

SENATE BILL NO. 830 AN ACT CONCERNING THE
GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EDUCATION

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleishmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Joy Wright and it is my honor to serve as the Associate Principal of CREC's Two Rivers Magnet Middle School in East Hartford. It is a privilege to join the Executive Director of CREC, Dr. Bruce Douglas, the Director of Magnet Schools, Denise Gallucci, and my administrative colleagues to testify before the Education Committee concerning proposed Senate Bill 830 – An Act Concerning the Governor's Recommendations Regarding Education-in support of funding for magnet schools.

I stand here as a witness to the impact that interdistrict magnet schools have made in the lives of Connecticut's children, specifically those in the Greater Hartford region. The vision for our school started almost 17 years ago when the five superintendents from East Hartford, Hartford, Glastonbury, Manchester and South Windsor convened to develop a school that would provide high quality science and technology education to its students while also addressing the racial and economic isolation of students in Greater Hartford. This vision has resulted in a school that currently serves students from a wide variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds with varying levels of achievements.

I am proud to be a part of a staff and faculty that actively work to close the academic achievement gap. As a result of our efforts, ConnCAN has recognized us for being number two in the state for Middle School African American Achievement. We are also recognized as a Connecticut State Department of Education "model site" for using Scientific Research-Based interventions to provide high level differentiated instruction and early intervention in reading and math. We are a NASA Explorer School with a variety of science and technology offerings that seeks to provide students with the curriculum and instructional support that will help them become better readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, artists and musicians than when they first entered our doors.

We are working diligently to fulfill the requirements of the stipulated agreement between the state and the plaintiffs of Sheff vs. O'Neil, to close the achievement gap, and to provide the type of education every child should have but we cannot do it without your help. To continue in this mission with the same vigor and resources, we need you to work with the General Assembly to enact legislation that will provide the full funding needed to support magnet schools.