

**Hayes, Katherine**

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**From:** llorant@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2009 10:39 AM  
**To:** Friis, John  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of my son, and my family, regarding proposed legislation which would impact special education in what I believe is a negative way. I have a nine year old son with severe disabilities who is in fourth grade in our town of Greenwich. I have been an active member of my son's educational team, and it is increasingly challenging as he gets older. I have two older typical children whose needs are continuously met in the school system with educational challenges, social interactions, athletic adventures, and opportunities that seem to increase as they get older. The opposite is true for my youngest son with special needs. His experience in the school system is one of constant challenges, that unfortunately can lead to a disintegration of his IEP. There is a tremendous need for educators to take responsibility as they appear to do with typical children's programs, and as I am not an educator, I rely on teachers/administrators to be able to create and implement an appropriate program for my child with my input for an IEP that is created annually and agreed upon mutually. I also feel that it is a civil right for my child to receive a free and appropriate education which for my other kids is set by the State Board of Ed, and the same should be set for my special needs son. To take the burden of proof from a school district in a due process case, would leave many children without the foundation they need in order to move forward into adulthood. The schools would be "set free" and that is a no win situation. Teachers would not get the support from administration to implement a program appropriately and creatively, which I'm afraid would mean losing good teachers who are hard enough to find, and students would be losing valuable educational opportunities resulting in a loss of skills for graduation, and peers would not gain the benefit of having an inclusive program thus creating a situation where if you're smart enough and you get enough support outside of school, perhaps you will be okay, however, if you have severe issues, there will be no recourse for the time lost. Accountability is an absolute necessity in special education as well as many other areas. Please don't add to the tremendous load I already have dealing with a child with severe special needs and medical needs. School has always been a "given" in the world of a child with disabilities. Please don't take that away by adding more for a parent to take on, or not, which ultimately results in more challenges for the child and family.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Trump

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3/23/2009