

Friis, John

From: Magali Hannegan [mhannegan@willingtonct.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 08, 2009 11:40 PM
To: Friis, John
Subject: SDE's Connecticut Plan Bill #944

Dear Legislator,

Is with immense disappointment that I am writing this letter. It came to my attention that the SDE's Connecticut Plan Bill #944 for reform which includes the graduation requirements as proposed by AD-Hoc committee will be presented tomorrow, March 9. I need to express my disappointment in the omission of a world language requirement in this bill ,and I cannot support the bill without the reinstatement of the two year world language requirement.

I would like to make you aware that our students in Connecticut will not be prepared to compete on local and global levels without this critical skill. With globalization our children will be obligated to conduct their lives in a global society where knowledge of more than one language will be necessary.

Ensuring that each student leaves Connecticut schools with some knowledge of a language other than English will make a difference in the lives of these students as they will be better equipped to live and work in the 21st Century.

Not as a teacher, but as a mother, I am here writing this letter to advocate what I believe is best for my children. I have experienced three cultures and learned three languages in my lifetime and, as a language learner, I assure you that in order for students to face the 21st century challenges to our economy and national security, language skills and culture awareness are the keys that we need to keep this country "NUMBER 1" in the world.

When we think about purchasing a car it is common to consider that we want a car that offers good mileage, may be we would like to have "extras" as leather seats or GPS, etc. NO ONE, thinks that is necessary to address four tires as one of the purchases requirements because we all assume that any car comes already with four tires. The four tires of a student are the Core subjects; Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. Every school focuses on these 4 "tires". But what makes a student special are the "extras" that they have to offer. Schools need to focus on providing our students with the "extras" abilities, awareness, in which includes to learn a language and cultures. The " extras" will be crucial on a competitive economy in the future.

There is time to prepare our future leaders for the 21st Century. I would hope that there is still time to reinstate a high School Graduation Requirement of 2.0 credits for World Language study as originally proposed in a superior education for Connecticut's 21st Century learners- Five-Year comprehensive plan for education 2006-2011. And I urge reconsideration of the omission of a world Language Graduation Requirement.

Sincerely,

Magali Hannegan
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