

March 9, 2009  
Education Committee  
Testimony  
SB 944

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Patricia Lignelli and I am the Director of Music for the Glastonbury Public School System. I am before you today to urge your support of SB 944, and to urge the committee to adopt language that would articulate 1 full credit in the Arts as it is stated in the Connecticut Plan, which was adopted by the State Board of Education in October.

The current proposal for Bill #944 is worded such that there is no definition to the high school graduation credits. The committee which put together this proposal (adopted by the State Board of Education on Oct, 2, 2008) worked diligently to address the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce with the distribution of 25 graduation credits plus the capstone experience. Please support this work by including the distribution of credits!

**Purpose of the High School Reform is Student Success:**

- Adequate preparation to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce
- Increase graduation rates to 100%
- Close the achievement gap in Connecticut

**We need to provide a rigorous educational experience for all students that includes 1 full credit in the Arts**

Every student in every school district deserves a high-quality education that **includes the arts**. The arts play an essential role in the expression of human experience, and an understanding and appreciation of the arts is essential to developing an active and productive adult in our workforce. Students who elect arts courses are more successful because the arts develop skills in creativity, problem solving, making decisions, self esteem, integrity, responsibility, listening, speaking and self-management.

**The strength of the Connecticut Plan is the distribution of credits –**  
**Please reinstate the graduation credit distribution to include 1 full**  
**credit in the Arts!**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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