

Dear CT Education Committee,

As veteran teachers and parents of a 19-year-old with autism we are devastated by the lack of an appropriate transition program for our son. We live in an expensive community and have limited resources. To have the burden of proof fall on us in a due- process hearing on behalf of our son is unconscionable.

In a wealthy state like CT, vulnerable young adults with disabilities should be able to have their rights protected. Young adults with disabilities have talents, potential and dreams that need to be fulfilled. If our public school system will not provide students like my son with a free and appropriate education, we should not be thwarted in our efforts to advocate for our child's rights. Most parents have economic constraints and cannot hire experts to observe public school programs that are ill-equipped to meet their child's needs. Families suffer enough when loved ones are stricken with profound disabilities. If our towns allow money to rule their conscience in regards to providing special needs youngsters a suitable education, then the state government needs to provide the moral leadership. Please do not add yet another "burden" to beleaguered special needs families by changing the current law to make parents show the burden of proof in a due-process hearing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lynn and David Arezzini

March 7, 2010