

Testimony of David Edgeworth
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Testimony submitted to the Appropriations Committee
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Honorable Chairs, Members of the Appropriation Committee:

Hello my name is David Edgeworth, I've been a Science teacher at Common Ground High School for 8 years. I'd like to briefly describe what underfunding looks like on a daily basis in my classroom.

In science we need some basic equipment, sinks, refrigerators, Microscopes, Storage space, Incubators, Sterilization hood, tools and Test tubes, and Biotechnology Lab equipment, such as electrophoresis set-ups, pipetting equipment, and enough plastic wear and chemicals to run labs for 40-50 students. That's in a decent lab, no frills, if you want to follow Connecticut State Science Standards.

At Common Ground I have 1 sink, and it's a small kitchen sink, nothing like the kind or numbers needed in a school science room that serves 2 dozen students at a time. This really makes clean-up prolonged and difficult. If you've ever seen lab set-ups for 8 to 10 groups, then you know how much equipment is used and how much space is needed to properly clean in a timely manner.

Microscopes are essential to do interesting and relevant work with cells, which are a major section in the Life Sciences Standards. We have 8 microscopes and 2 don't have the ability to work under high power. Viewing cells under good microscopes is difficult, trying to view them and get students to understand the concept being taught is very difficult when you have used microscopes, that don't function completely.

The lack of storage space in my room and in the school is another problem. Science uses a lot of equipment and materials, and they need to be stored in a safe and secure way. We have very little storage area in our school and I have only one locking cabinet in my room. Because of the lack of storage I have to bring almost all of the materials I need back and forth from home. Imagine in your job if you had to store the things you need in your home? It is a giant inconvenience and unprofessional.

And when it comes to doing high tech genetics, I have none of the equipment needed to perform experiments and labs that would bring genetics alive for our students. The high price tag for this

equipment is beyond our budget abilities. This equipment is essential if Connecticut wants to produce the highly skilled citizens needed to grow our economy.

This isn't fair to me as a teacher and it certainly isn't fair to the students, who are the future workforce of Connecticut. Connecticut has always been a leader when it comes to the skill levels of its citizens; this gives us a competitive edge. We are losing that edge, and it is a reflection on the value we put on our children and their career opportunities.

Despite the lack of funding for our Charter school, we are making steady gains with our students in their scores on Science, Reading, Writing and Math. We deserve to be funded equitably. Connecticut is one of the leaders in education, and I am appealing to you to continue to keep Connecticut a leader and innovator in education, by supporting the Student-Based funding to help fund Charter school fairly and continue the ground breaking work that is happening right here in Connecticut.