



## Northwest Catholic High School

**Margaret Williamson, Principal/Chief Administrator, Northwest Catholic High School,  
West Hartford**

**H.B. 6434 – An Act Concerning Educators and Administrators  
Education Committee  
February 28, 2011**

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Margaret Williamson and I am the Principal/Chief Administrator of Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford.

I am submitting testimony in support of H.B. 5421 - An Act Concerning Educators and Administrators.

I support the repeal of the language that eliminated experience teaching in nonpublic schools as a means of obtaining Professional Educator Certification and permit college students to obtain state certification by student teaching in a private or religious school.

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As a principal, I can attest to the training received by our teachers. Currently many of our teachers have or are seeking their professional teacher certificate. In addition, to obtain a long term contract they must continue their studies. The Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford offers several opportunities for teachers to earn CEUs, professional development and offers grants to assist teachers to increase their knowledge in their field and become better teachers. Our school also has professional development days and last year alone received over \$12,000 in Title II-A funds to conduct teacher training.

Our teachers and I believe it is unreasonable to disqualify a group of teachers to obtain this level of certification, especially since this exemption was originally contained in a bill that was supposed to make it easier for people to become certified teachers. The provision also discriminates against non-public school teachers, since it exempts them on where they teach, not on any continuing education requirements.

As a principal, I strongly believe the state of Connecticut should allow college students to student teach at a private or religious school. This should be voluntary as it is in most states for the University and student. I also support following all of the current state statutes, including having certified mentors and principals or a staff person certified with a 092.

I consider both of these provisions important for the entire teaching profession in Connecticut. As a principal, I want to assure parents that we have the ability to retain and recruit highly qualified teachers and that we can provide a quality education for their children.

