

Patrick Campbell

Testimony to the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee

February 8, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski, members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee, and guests. It is my pleasure to appear before you today as Governor Rell's nomination for Student Representative to the State Board of Education. I appear before this esteemed committee today having already served eight months on the Board, and I am eternally appreciative for the opportunity to represent all the students across the state on the various issues presented to the State Board.

It was through scouting that I had my first taste of leadership, and it was through scouting that I grew and developed my leadership skills. I began my service as a patrol leader in seventh grade, and this experience set in motion a passion that has continued for the rest of my life.

As a freshman in high school, I pursued a position in my school's Student Council. I enjoyed improving my school through student government, and I continued my service for all four years of my high school career. Since then I have continued to expand my leadership and service in my school, serving as Co-President of my Student Council and President of our NHS chapter. But when I applied and was appointed to the local Board of Education as a student representative, I saw that my talents as a leader could be extended even further, reaching to the educational system beyond my individual school. I served on the local Board of Ed for a full year, representing my fellow students faithfully. When I saw the application for the State Board position, I saw yet another opportunity to serve my fellow students, albeit on a larger scale than I could have ever dreamed of.

Valley Regional High School, from where I herald, is a relatively small school of around six-hundred students. I believe that this is a huge advantage to me in promoting my involvement and ability as a State Board of Education representative. Though I am not exposed to the number or the variety of students that some larger schools may have, I am afforded another rare opportunity. Being a part of a small school allows me to be intimately connected with and aware of the many workings and processes of my school, experiencing them from a student's perspective. Additionally, my heavy involvement in extracurriculars ensures that I am connected with a large number of students in my school, allowing me to see their point of views on many issues presented to both the Local and State Boards of Education.

Serving on the State Board of Education thus far has been one of the most enriching and helpful experiences of my young life. It has given me the opportunity to not only voice the opinions of students across the state, but also has personally given me insight into the workings of the state government. Serving on the State Board of Education has also given me the opportunity to observe and participate in a committee, which will be a part of any job I take in the future, whether in government or private business. I have also been given the opportunity to

work with professionals from a range of fields, from law to business to education, all with the common goal of improving the lives of Connecticut's children. While on the State Board, I have participated in discussions ranging from the expansion of the technical school programs' green job programs to the complete overhaul of the American Education system as presented by Dr. Marc Tucker. I have participated in a national webinar with other student representatives from across the country and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. As a State Board member, I know I have been afforded a unique opportunity.

For me, service to others is a way of life, and when I saw the opportunity to apply for a student position on the State Board, I immediately recognized an opportunity to serve others on a scale larger than one I was ever able to pursue before. After an arduous series of interviews, I was given the opportunity, the privilege, and the responsibility, to voice the opinions of thousands of students from across the state. I proudly call this position the pinnacle of my service to others. I began my leadership career as a tenderfoot and a patrol leader in my scout troop, and today I proudly stand before you an Eagle Scout and a ready student representative on the State Board of Education. It has truly been an honor to serve on the State Board thus far, and I hope to continue to serve the students of Connecticut for the remainder of my term.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today, and I am happy to field any questions you may have.