

*Remarks of Diane Drugge
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**For the Education Committee
On Senate Bill 24
An Act Concerning Educational Competitiveness**

February 21, 2012

Perhaps a scant knowledge of history or perhaps a reckless regard for the future of all our children, but whatever it is, members of the Education Committee, please listen to those of us whose knowledge must at this time weigh more than the citizens' clamor for more for their money. If this is the real source of concern, remember the adage, "You get what you pay for." Our entire country, at this moment, is faced with a disparate population requiring a new paradigm of solutions for implementing the National Educational Standards. We, in Connecticut, with some of the poorest cities in the country, suffer the most.

However, the solution is not to demoralize the one institution that touches all of the children. If there is any hope for EDUCATING the masses, it is the EDUCATORS. Does it make sense to encroach on earnings for teachers' academic efforts in their own domain and training in psychological and emotional needs? It is unconscionable.

Shame on the governor and his team! Shame on a government that wishes to give the teaching profession less respect by utilizing the evaluation of one principal (one individual who earned administrative degrees to lord over the philosophy degrees, the English degrees, the psychology degrees, Special Education degrees, etc.)! Shame on a government who respects less education for our teachers who are searching; searching for solutions, more than a legislator will ever know, through CEUs, Professional Development and advanced degrees! Shame on a government that does not respect teachers to design their own Professional Development for specific learning outcomes! Shame on a government that doesn't rely on the tangibles (CILA) to measure growth! Shame on a government that supposes remote state control exceeds the knowledge of well-meaning local advocates! Shame on the educators that have not read the national standards for each teaching domain, which teachers nationwide have designed and voted upon, chosen to be the process leading to student achievement!

Those of you that really want solutions: do everything in your power to thank the teachers for tirelessly working in the most crucial profession for society's future; who return home in the afternoon and through the night with pictures of students still in their heads. Students for whom they would give the world to help, to whom they can't find enough time to really make a difference because of the unrealistic numbers of students (many times 30 students for 43 minutes) placed in a class devoted to remedial reading or writing or mathematics. Do something innovative: require a legislator to shadow a teacher for a week in one of these schools "in trouble". Then require him/her to write an argumentative paper stating why he/she should or should not vote for Governor Malloy's proposal before voting. (I can't help it! It's the teacher in me).