

Dear Mr. Fleischmann:

I am writing to you to express my grave concerns regarding Governor Malloy's recent proposal for education reform put forth in Senate Bill #24. This proposal will have an adverse effect on teachers, students, and school communities in Connecticut. I encourage you to stand up to the Governor on behalf of Connecticut's residents.

The Governor's proposal displays a clear disregard for the high standards that Connecticut teachers currently meet to maintain their professional status. It would, in fact, *lower* standards by bringing about an end to the current certification system, eliminating the master's degree requirement, and allowing greater numbers of inexperienced individuals to teach our children.

This proposal introduces a new system of teacher certification that ties subjective local evaluations by principals to both teachers' certification and renewable tenure. Districts would have to base salary schedules on the governor's new certification levels, not education and experience as is done now. There would be an apparent incentive for Boards of Education to set lower salaries for teachers. Moving from one level of certification to the next would be based solely on a principal's evaluation, not taking into account experience or advanced degrees. Also, the proposal would change tenure by weakening due process and minimizing the scope of collective bargaining.

This proposal calls for the concentration of enormous authority in the hands of the State Commissioner of Education and the local superintendent of schools. This theme is found throughout the proposed legislation. The Commissioner of Education would have the authority to terminate an existing local or regional board of education and appoint new board members. The state commissioner of education would have the power to waive "any rule" that inhibits or hinders the ability of the department, essentially taking the power away from local school districts and putting it in the hands of the State.

In addition, local superintendents would no longer be required to be certified. The commissioner would have the sole authority to appoint whomever he deems to be "exceptionally qualified" with no established criteria and regardless of his or her background or qualifications. We have seen how this "business model" has worked elsewhere; and the results have not been positive.

On behalf of teachers, students, and school communities throughout Connecticut, I ask you to take a strong stand against the Governor's proposal.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Mark C. Carroll  
Cromwell, CT