



CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

4 Market Street, Suite 100
Canton, Connecticut 06019

Phone: 860-693-7704 • Fax: 860-693-7706

Opening Minds ~ Transforming Lives

Jordan E. Grossman, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent of Schools
jgrossman@cantonschools.org

March 22, 2013

Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Dr. Jordan Grossman. I am the Assistant Superintendent of Canton Public Schools. I oppose Section 90 of HB 6354, *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning General Government*. This section calls for implementation of the Governor's suggested consolidation of the Commission on Children with four other legislative commissions and the elimination of the Commission on Aging.

As an educator and an education administrator, I am 100% opposed to this consolidation. The Commission on Children needs to remain a free-standing entity to continue its vital work. Just yesterday the Commission hosted a forum on reading excellence and the achievement gap, in coordination with the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and the Achievement Gap Task Force. The Forum highlighted the work staffed and continually pushed along by the Commission on addressing teacher training vis-à-vis reading, reading assessment in the classroom, coaching teachers and parents on teaching children to read, and the outcome data that support the impact of these efforts.

Such identification of key issues affecting children in our state, along with ferreting out best practices to address those issues and finding resources to support those practices, is typical of the work done by the Commission on Children.

Other examples abound. For example, the Commission on Children researched, worked with national scholars and drafted comprehensive literacy language for and with the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus that became the center of the Governor's reading policy in the Education Reform of 2012.

This included a new assessment instrument, teacher training, coaches, and state requirements for a professional development plan, particular reading intervention requirements to disallow disproportionate referrals of children of color to special education, and intensive intervention with individualized reading plans for every student k-3, who was not reading at proficiency so that he or she would succeed in school.

The Commission on Children brings the voice of government to the public, and the voice of the public to government. One current example is the Youth Forum the Commission is organizing in conjunction with the State Department of Education and the Connecticut Forum this spring. Youth from around the state will come together to share their voice on violence – in Newtown, in urban areas, and wherever they experience or perceive it. The Commission worked to invite youth from around the state to submit essays, photos, drawings, videos and other media expressing their response to the Newtown tragedy. The submissions will be part of the youth forum later this spring.

Our Mission

*The Canton Public Schools unite with families and the community to provide challenging educational experiences and opportunities that develop the intellectual, physical, social and emotional potential of our students.
Our mission is to prepare productive, tolerant and responsible citizens with the character and independence to embrace and contribute to the world.*

This tiny agency produces enormous results. It is nimble, entrepreneurial, and a great value for our state – for every \$1 the state spends on Commission on Children budget, the Commission on Children brings in \$1.47. It would be incredibly short-sighted to dilute this invaluable resource for our state by consolidating them with other agencies.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jordan E. Grossman". The signature is somewhat stylized and slightly blurred.

Jordan E. Grossman, Ed.D.
Canton Public Schools