



**Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.**

---

81 Wolcott Hill Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109-1242 - (860) 571-7446 - Fax (860) 571-7452 - Email [admin@cabe.org](mailto:admin@cabe.org)

**Testimony  
Submitted to the  
Education Committee  
March 4, 2013**

**HB 6504 AN ACT CONCERNING ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS  
HB 6505 AN ACT CONCERNING PARAMETERS FOR FEES FOR EXTRACURRICULAR  
ACTIVITIES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HB 6507 AN ACT CONCERNING A SLIDING TUITION SCALE FOR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS  
OFFERED AT INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOL PROGRAMS  
SB 997 AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EDUCATOR PREPARATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
SB 1002 AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education appreciates the opportunity to address several bills before you today.

CABE is opposed to HB 6504, An Act Concerning Alternative School Programs, as currently drafted. The bill requires that the “alternative school programs” meet the 180 days, 900 hours and prescribed course of study (the arts, health, nutrition, PE, reading, writing, math, foreign language) in Section 10-16 and 10-16b of the General Statutes – meaning they are no longer an alternative program, but a replication of the general educational program. This is overly restrictive, will impose a significant burden on school districts, and most likely will be a disservice to the students served in such programs.

CABE is also opposed to the provision in HB 6505, An Act Concerning Parameters for Fees for Extracurricular Activities at Public Schools, which would restrict the fees to a minimum level. Boards of education struggle with the challenge of providing extracurricular activities in a broad range of areas, while facing serious budget constraints. In an effort to preserve existing programs, or to expand opportunities available to students, some districts after careful consideration have chosen to impose participation fees. In all cases the districts have provided for a waiver of the fee based on student financial need. The decision on the level of fee, if it is to be assessed, should be made on the local level. Considerations include the cost to the district providing the sport or activity. Districts that have implemented fees for interscholastic or intramural sports have found increased availability for student participation.

CABE strongly supports Section 2 of HB 6507, An Act Concerning Sliding Tuition Scale for Preschool Programs Offered at Interdistrict Magnet School Programs. This section would remove the unfair burden placed on those districts in which parents choose to enroll their preschool students in a magnet school program. While many districts would like to offer preschool to all their students, financial constraints make that impossible. Requiring boards of education to pay for preschool tuition for those students choosing to attend a magnet school creates significant inequity and we urge you to support this bill.

CABE also supports SB 997, An Act Establishing an Educator Preparation Advisory Council. This bill provides for broad based input into the critical issue of educator preparation.

CABE opposes SB 1002, An Act Concerning Community Schools. Requiring boards of education in Alliance

Districts to identify two elementary schools and one high school that will establish full service community schools places a significant additional burden on these districts which are already working in close consultation with the State Department of Education in meeting requirements outlined in their district improvement plans. The bill proposes to require appointment of a full time community school coordinator, a school operations audit, a community operations audit and a community resource assessment. We urge you to reject this bill and allow Alliance Districts to focus on the priorities already established in cooperation with the State Department of Education.

We appreciate your attention to these issues.