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Members of the appropriations committee, Chairs Bye and Walker:

By way of background, I would like to read the letter that I wrote to the Hartford Courant on Thursday, February 13th and that this publication put on their website the same day:

Catcher In The Rye For Students?

February 13, 2014|Letter to the editor

Teachers are mad as heck about the common core; a principal has gone rogue; Governor Malloy is throwing \$134M at the state college system. These are some things I read about education in Connecticut.

I don't read about out of state for-profit colleges taking over in-state institutions, then leaving behind scorched earth when the business climate turns south. Or one state college system gobbling another like Pac Man eating ghosts, leaving disadvantaged students on the outs.

When students get lost in the shuffle, who will safeguard their interests? It's not the job of the media to monitor everything that impacts students. When students are pushed toward the cliff, losing hope, losing money and running out of options, who's keeping watch full time to make sure they don't fall off the radar? The Department of Education? The Department of Consumer Protection? Many will come under the care of the Department of Corrections, and that gets expensive. Perhaps this state needs a full time Student Advocate, a catcher in the rye to make sure Connecticut's students don't go over the cliff while the rest of us are arguing.

For reasons stated above, I request of the committee an appropriation of \$75,000 to be disbursed at the discretion of the Chief of Operations of the Department of Consumer Protection to contract an independent agent delegated to the investigation of the "state of the student" in Connecticut for an 18 month period, and the drafting of a full report, executive summary, and further recommendations.

Yours truly,
Wayne Jebian