



Testimony by Jeffrey Villar, Ph.D. to the Appropriations Committee on
S.B. No. 340, "AN ACT CONCERNING A TWO-GENERATIONAL SCHOOL READINESS
PLAN"

As the Executive Director of the Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER), I have strong reservations about S.B. 340, "An Act Concerning a Two-Generational School Readiness Plan." If passed, this bill would hamper the efforts of the newly created Office of Early Childhood to reorganize and expand early childhood programs.

The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) does not have the resources to develop a comprehensive two-generational school readiness plan by December 1, 2014. Rather than a new plan, CCER suggests that two existing state adult education programs might already provide the parents of low-income children the family literacy and workforce assistance program opportunities required of the bill's two-generational school readiness plan.

Even start is a family literacy program recommended for funding at \$475,000 in the Governor's proposed FY 2014-15 OEC budget. Adult education is a state mandate recommended for funding at \$21 million in the State Department of Education budget. Adult education programs must provide workforce preparation services such as English language learning and high school or elementary school completion assistance.

In summary, the Office of Early Childhood's goals to create an early childhood system and to expand quality preschool programs for low-income children are too important to dilute with the bill's requirements for a two-generational school readiness plan.