

The New Britain Educational Administration Center  
Office of the Assistant Superintendent  
for Business and Operations  
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## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 5357: AN ACT CONCERNING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM.**

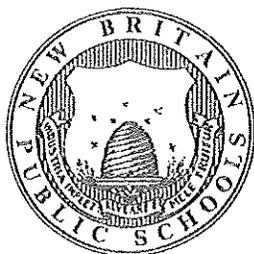
March 3, 2014 –

This testimony is submitted in favor of Bill 5357. This act will enforce school districts to be more accountable in addressing chronic absenteeism: The collection of this data can and will be a major tool in aiding the improvements of our students who do not receive early intervention and are more likely to fail classes, drop out of school and become involved in the juvenile and ultimately The Adult Judicial System.

My name is Joseph Vaverchak, District Supervisor of Attendance/Residency and the McKinney Vento Homeless Liaison for the Consolidated School District of New Britain, Connecticut. I am writing this testimony in support of Bill 5357 / An Act Concerning Chronic Absenteeism. I have worked with Chronic Absenteeism since 1996. I have been a member of numerous attendance committees / task force since 1998 beginning with the State of Connecticut Task Force followed by co-chairing the Governor's Prevention Program on Truancy. At this time I am grateful to be co-chairing The Connecticut Kids Report Card Strategic Action Group on Chronic Absenteeism with Charlene Russel-Tucker of The State Department of Education.

Average Daily Attendance is clearly a mask for the real problem of Chronic Absenteeism. An example of this is a school that has 97% average daily attendance but a second grade in that school that has a Chronic Absenteeism percentage of 25%. By addressing the Chronic Absenteeism piece you can now isolate on those particular students and take the initiative needed to meet the needs of these students.

School Attendance Review Teams need to be a part of all school districts. To be successful, these teams need to meet on a weekly / bi-weekly basis. This group needs to be consistent to be able to sustain success.



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School Attendance Review Teams involve people from all different parts of education. Principal, social worker, guidance counselor, teacher, nurse and school secretaries who work collaboratively with the ultimate goal of guiding our students to educational success. This group also needs to be very involved with the parents of the Chronic Absenteeism issues of their children.

In conclusion, I am in strong support of Bill 5357 An Act Concerning Chronic Absenteeism with the initiation of School Attendance Review Teams and the importance of collecting Chronic Absenteeism Data making it a priority to address the needs of our students.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Vaverchak".

Joseph Vaverchak  
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