

## State Education Resource Center (SERC) TESTIMONY

In 1979 I moved to Hartford, CT to work as a Bilingual Special Education teacher in the Hartford Public Schools. Soon thereafter, I learned that the State Education Resource Center (SERC), formally known as the Special Education Resource Center, was an excellent resource for research information to support students with disabilities. Equally important, I had access to testing and supplemental materials to evaluate their skills and to enhance their academic program.

When I was appointed Principal of Barnard Brown Elementary School in Hartford, SERC was instrumental in the design and implementation of professional development that met the needs of the faculty and staff. During this time SERC also conducted structured needs assessment that provided us with the necessary information in the following areas: student academic achievement, student behavior and emotional needs, available school resources and staff professional development needs. This assessment was instrumental in the design of an action plan that met the needs of the students and strengthened the professional experiences of the staff.

The action plan was implemented by working closely with teachers in their classrooms and demonstrating effective strategies in reading, math and language arts. Data collection and analysis were also another area in which SERC provided professional learning to my staff. They utilize an effective collaborative approach to professional development.

By working very closely with teachers in their classroom, the staff at SERC earned their admiration and respect. Teachers scheduled meetings with the SERC staff, including during their lunch time. It was evident that they valued the advice of these professionals.

The results were impressive; our special education referrals declined, student achievement and behavior improved dramatically.

SERC provides expertise in systems change and in working with underrepresented students and families. Their staff has a vast understanding of the challenges that educators working in urban areas face as they look for opportunities to enhance the academic experiences of their students and families. During my tenure as an Assistant Superintendent for Learning Support Services in Hartford Public Schools I worked with SERC designing Parents' Forum to provide information to families about current issues in education. The success of these events was due in part to the expertise in organizing events of this magnitude and the quality and expertise of the presenters.

I support SERC governance structure as a quasi-public agency, working in partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Respectfully,



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Director of Student Services

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