



Testimony by Jeffrey Villar, Ph.D. to the Education Committee

March 17, 2014

As the Executive Director of the Connecticut Council for Education Reform, I endorse the provisions of S.B. 476, "An Act Concerning the Academic Achievement Gap."

This bill would add full-day kindergarten to the allowable expenditures for Alliance District funding. CCER has long championed full-day kindergarten because research shows that children in full-day kindergarten programs achieve greater progress as both learners and independent thinkers than their peers who attend part-day programs.ⁱ Currently, most of the Alliance Districts have full-day kindergarten programs for some or all of their students.ⁱⁱ Some of them plan to use Alliance District funding to expand full-day kindergarten programs.ⁱⁱⁱ

CCER recommends the bill's language because it will encourage remaining Alliance Districts to implement full-day kindergarten programs which could play a critical part in reducing the state's considerable achievement gap.

Endnotes

ⁱ "Every Child Should Have Chance to Be Exceptional. Without Exception," The Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement, p.13, 2010.

ⁱⁱ According to the Department of Education's "Kindergarten Enrollment by School Districts, School Year 2012-13," of the Alliance District communities, all but Ansonia, Bristol, Killingly, and West Haven offered full-day K to all or a portion of their kindergarten population. Retrieved from: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Early/KindergartenProgs.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ As part of their Alliance District plans, Danbury and Norwich planned to expand their full-day K slots. Retrieved from: Alliance District Second Year Amendments:

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/alliance_districts/alliance_year2_amendment_Danbury_final.pdf

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/alliance_districts/alliance_year2_amendment_Norwich_final.pdf