



February 26, 2015

Dear Norwalk Legislator:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Norwalk's children and families and the more than 40 agencies and individuals who are members of the Norwalk Early Childhood Council (NECC). This is in response to proposed cuts to the 2015-16 state budget.

Community Plans for Early Education (The Norwalk Early Childhood Council) —\$20,000 in annual state funding coming to Norwalk has been leveraged to bring in **more than \$100,000** in private foundation funding to support home visitation programs for at-risk families, preschool teacher training, a pilot program to assess preschool literacy to establish a community baseline, literacy programs for parents and caregivers to support their children's early literacy development and outreach to families about the supports and services that are available to them. *Please co-sponsor HB6004, An Act Concerning Early Childhood Collaboratives to demonstrate your support for this important work.* This bill strengthens the link between the OEC and local collaboratives. Local collaborative groups are crucial as we connect with children and families in our own communities.

In Norwalk, our strong early childhood structure has helped to support a collective impact initiative using the Strive model—in Norwalk that is Norwalk ACTS—the city's cradle to career initiative. The NECC is the convener of the Norwalk ACTS Kindergarten Readiness Community Action Network (KCAN). Several Council members are also on the 3rd Grade Reading CAN and the Implementation Team, providing continuity and connection throughout the organization.

The Community Plans represent a relatively small investment of state dollars which are **matched by private foundation dollars and/or leveraged to bring in major grant funding**. Every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood education produces a 7 to 10% per annum return on investment.¹

I hope that we can count on you to help us give Norwalk's children the support they need beginning at birth. We urge you to advocate for restored funding for early childhood community plans.

Yours truly,



Harry W. Rilling
Mayor

¹ Heckman, James J. & Moon, Seong Hyeok & Pinto, Rodrigo & Savelyev, Peter A. & Yavitz, Adam, 2010. "[The Rate of Return to the HighScope Perry Preschool Program](#)," *Journal of Public Economics, Elsevier*, vol. 94(1-2), pages 114-128, February.