

Connecticut General Assembly
Appropriations Subcommittee on Elementary & Secondary Education
Public Hearing
March 3rd, 2015
Testimony Submitted by Mairéad Dowling, New London, CT

Thank you for the chance to speak tonight.

My name is Mairéad Dowling and I am an alumna of The Regional Multicultural Magnet School in New London, CT; I graduated in 1991. I spent 6 years at RMMS and I continue to go back and visit; sometimes even working with my mother's second and third graders. That is one thing I learned there -- to give back. There are so many reasons to love RMMS.

First of all, the people. The staff and students are amazing, and the teachers are so passionate about what they do. I was never afraid to ask questions from fear of being judged. The teachers were caring and kind. The whole school was incredibly accepting. The students didn't engage in drama about who looked a certain way or had certain things. There was so much diversity, both racially and socio-economically, that no one stood apart. There were no cliques. There wasn't an idea in anyone's mind about excluding someone who wanted to join.

Secondly, RMMS provided a great educational foundation that prepared me well for middle school. I got good grades there and feel I am prepared for high school. My teachers were also extremely patient with the people in my class who had a bit more trouble learning.

I am here tonight to ask that the school I care so much for be funded fairly. I could stand up here and talk for a long time about why RMMS means so much to me, but I'm excited to hear what others have to say as well. Most of my childhood happened within the walls of RMMS and I don't regret a minute of it. I am passionate about the school and what it stands for: acceptance and respect. I hope with all my heart that my words have made a difference. Thank you!