

**“TESTIMONY for March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5P.M. for the  
Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-Committee”**

**Submitted By: Bloomfield Youth Adult Council**

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and Members of the Secondary Education Sub-Committee:

**As members of the Bloomfield Youth Adult Council, we are writing to express our opposition to the proposed 1.3 million dollar budget cut to Youth Service Bureaus which includes the entire Enhancement Grant Line Item currently in the budget at \$620,000 and an approximately \$700,000 cut in the Cost Sharing grant that YSBs receive for being a YSB. We oppose the proposed move of the YSB system from SDE to the Department of Children and Families. The move would compromise if not dismantle the data system that uses school outcomes as a measure of success for the youth served by YSBs. The system has been in place for years and significant financial resources and people hours have been invested in the Results Based Accountability Framework.**

As members of the council, we work closely with the Town of Bloomfield's Youth Services Coordinator to establish and support positive programming for the youth in our town. In our roles we have witnessed first hand, the dedication and hard work of the employees of Bloomfield's Social and Youth Services meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and families. .

This funding is crucial to the town and a reduction in funding will impact its ability to provide opportunities for our children to participate in programs that:

- foster cross -generational relationships through senior citizen mentorship with younger children;
- empower children to work together through activity clubs, inter-cultural programs, and youth leadership groups;
- perform thousands of hours of volunteer/community service;
- promote positive interactions between the town's police and youth;
- promote positive family engagement through programming, cultural events/trips, foster care support programs, counseling, crisis intervention; and lastly
- divert children from the criminal justice system through is volunteer based Juvenile Review Board.

These programs and activities provide children with a sense of belonging and value in the community. Bloomfield Social and Youth Services plays a significant coordinating role in collaborative projects with other town departments, schools, faith based communities, public and private agencies, businesses, and other local, regional and statewide youth and family serving agencies and groups. We are youth and family driven.

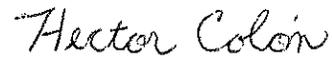
As council members, we are opposed to the elimination of the Enhancement Grant and the reduction to the Cost Sharing Grant line item for the Youth Services Bureaus. Our children are our future and Bloomfield takes great pride in listening and responding to the needs of its children and their families. The Department of Youth Services in Bloomfield has provided services since the 1970's and the proposed cuts threaten to dismantle community based services that have been present for the past four decades in the State of Connecticut.

(Appropriations Secondary Education Sub-Committee – Bloomfield Youth Adult Council)

We are urging you to reinstate the Enhancement Grant as well as the current reduction to the Cost Sharing Grant line item in the CT Department of Education budget for the Youth Services Bureaus.



Joyce Betts (Co-Chair) on behalf of the Council  
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**Bloomfield Youth Adult Council Members**

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<b>Yolanda Jenkins</b>	<b>330 Park Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Program Coordinator, Social &amp; Youth Services</b>
<b>E. Leon Rivers</b>	<b>24 Stuart Drive</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Town Council</b>
<b>Officer Tiesha Thomas</b>	<b>785 Park Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Bloomfield Police Department</b>
<b>Officer Angel Valentin</b>	<b>785 Park Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Bloomfield Police Department</b>
<b>Bethany Silver, PHD</b>	<b>1133 Blue Hills Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Director of Assessment, Evaluation &amp; Research</b>
<b>Stacey McCann</b>	<b>1133 Blue Hills Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Director of School Improvement and Intervention</b>
<b>Jesse White</b>	<b>5 Huckleberry Lane</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Assistant Principal, Bloomfield High School</b>
<b>Patterson Crocker</b>	<b>26 Briar Lane</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Parent</b>
<b>Shander George</b>	<b>1 Filley Street</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Parent Educator, Family Resource Center</b>
<b>Eric Martin</b>	<b>17 Briar Lane</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Parent</b>
<b>Valentina Parchin, PhD</b>	<b>32 Cliffmount Drive</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Citizen</b>
<b>Caryn Wallace</b>	<b>319 Tunxis Avenue</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Parent</b>
<b>Breonna Sykes</b>	<b>4 Timber Lane</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Youth</b>
<b>Shasona Cassells</b>	<b>22 Cadwell Road</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Citizen</b>
<b>Donna Ward</b>	<b>3 Richard Lane</b>	<b>Bloomfield, CT</b>	<b>Parent</b>