



ESTABLISHED 1659

CITY OF NORWICH
CONNECTICUT

NORWICH HUMAN SERVICES

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**Testimony for Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly
March 3rd, 2015**

By Lee-Ann Gomes, Director, Norwich Human Services

Re: Education and Office of Early Childhood

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee

Please restore all proposed funding cuts for the Education and Office of Early Childhood. These funds are vital to communities in that they support local efforts to leverage other funding to ensure children have the very best start in education. The Norwich community currently receives a total of \$80,000 for our Discovery work and our Parent Leadership programming. This grant funding leverages an additional \$83,880 dollars to provide services to Norwich families and continue the community work of Discovery.

These cuts will effectively mean the elimination of the Parent Trust Funds for the Leadership Programs across the state and the Community Plans for Early Education dollars which funds Discovery work (or at least the State of Connecticut's proportional obligation).

These funds represent a very small amount of state money and are matched dollar for dollar. They help us to leverage more local money, including Graustein Memorial funding. In Norwich we have been working toward ensuring that all children as safe, healthy and ready to learn and these efforts would come to an end should these proposed cuts be implemented.

Please revisit this important issue and do not impede the progress communities have made by stopping funding to these vital programs.

Respectfully,

L-A Gomes

Lee-Ann Gomes