



**TESTIMONY of the CT ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
Before the Education Committee**

IN SUPPORT OF: HB 6978

**An Act Requiring the Commissioner of Education to Develop and Submit a Comprehensive
State-Wide Interdistrict Magnet School Plan**

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) supports legislation that would result in the development of a systematic state-wide inter-district magnet school plan.

Over a number of years, many magnet schools have been established across CT. Some of these schools have been put in place as part of the settlement to which the State agreed in the Scheff vs. O'Neill litigation. Other schools have been established for various reasons in just about every region of the state.

The development of these schools, however, should have been part of a well thought out state wide strategy for improving schooling in CT, a strategy that would align magnet schools with all of the other efforts being made especially by local school districts. Absent such a plan, the following has occurred.

- The funding system for magnet schools varies from one region of the state to the other.
- The financial burden for magnet school tuition for some districts in the state is onerous.
- The sustainability of effective magnet schools is not being sufficiently addressed
- The potential for magnet schools to personalize learning for students and thus to be a component of the statewide effort in this regard to improve schooling state wide is not being realized.
- The responsibility for paying the tuition for children who are enrolled in pre-school magnet schools has been a matter of controversy.

Because of this, a considerable amount of state funds has been expended for magnet schools and maximum benefit has not been realized from this expenditure.

Accordingly, the establishment of magnet schools absent a well thought out strategy for employing magnet schools, as one of the components for improving schooling in general cannot be defended.

CAPSS, therefore, proposes:

- **That the Legislature require the CSDE to develop with meaningful participation by all relevant parties a state wide plan for magnet schools and that this plan include at least the following.**
 - **A strategy for making magnet schools one of the means for improving student achievement in CT.**
 - **A uniform and equitable system statewide for funding magnet schools, a system that does not impose any financial obligation on local school districts.**
 - **A strategy for insuring the long range sustainability of effective magnet schools.**

- **That any new magnet school application with enrollment from multiple districts be required to include in the application to the CSDE an accompanying ten-year financial plan that projects costs, revenue streams and anticipated financial impact on sending districts.**