

I am writing you to oppose the Governor's plan to eliminate funding for the Family School Connection (FSC) Program from the Office of Early Childhood. Family School Connection is an intensive, research based, bilingual home visiting program for families with school aged children at selected sites in Middletown, Norwich, and New Haven. Children with families involved in the FSC program have demonstrated higher academic success in both reading and math; have experienced fewer referrals, tardiness and absenteeism.

Families access FSC when they are struggling with supporting their children's school success in one or more of the following areas: truancy or chronic absenteeism; communicating with the school; a child's behavior or mental health issue at home or school; a child's physical, learning or developmental disability; a child's academics; unstable housing or homelessness; domestic violence; and unmet basic needs.

Through weekly visits within the family's home, Family School Connection Home Visitors can help parents with: family routines; increasing communication with school; setting goals for the family; using positive parenting tools; establishing homework routines; connecting to community resources; scheduling and budgeting; and helping children become more successful in school.

FSC also supports the school communities with: family centered events at school and in local neighborhoods; coordinating holiday gift and food drives, the Foodbank Backpack program, and the "Three for Me" volunteer program.

Middletown's catchment population for FSC shows 56% of our children on Free and Reduced lunch, 31% of children in need of behavior and academic interventions, 20% of children screened showed school adjustment needs, and we have a significant increase in Spanish speaking families. Middletown's FSC currently serves 52 families which include 176 individuals.

Family School Connection helps to ensure that all of our children grow up in a supportive and healthy household, have equal access to academic success, and therefore arrive at school each day ready to learn. Please continue to fund this important program.

Thank you.

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