



Testimony of the CT Association of Public School Superintendents Before the Education Committee

IN SUPPORT OF: S.B. 1056

An Act Concerning the Excess Cost Threshold and the Collection of Data Relating to Per Pupil Costs for Special Education

Children with special educational needs need to have those needs accommodated in an effective manner in public schools. School districts across CT make a major effort in this regard all the time. However, for many years now as a result of underfunding of the Excess Cost provision which has resulted in a cap being placed on reimbursements to school system it has become difficult to plan effectively.

Inadequate financial support for special education programs from both the federal and state levels have contributed to a growing gap in the demands on local school systems and the resources to meet those demands. The federal government, which mandates provision of effective programs for children with special needs, has never met its own goal to cover 40% of the cost of meeting this mandate countrywide. The state government eliminated a number of years ago a general special education grant to local districts and underfunds the only remaining special education grant that is designed to provide financial relief to districts that incur excessively expensive program placements for some children with special needs. Even in the past four years when additional state funds have been allocated to educational efforts, the funding for meeting the mandate of providing for children with special needs has not increased.

Which the timeline proposed in S.B. 1056 is far out into the future and CAPSS would have liked a more rapid redefinition of excess cost to be two times a district's per pupil expenditure, this bill if signed into law will at least provide some stability and assurance to our school systems that things will change.

CAPSS, therefore, proposes:

- **That the funding cap on the Special Education Excess Cost Grant be removed.**
- **That the State redefines excess cost to be two times a district's per pupil expenditure as rapidly as possible.**