

The Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington
“developing the learner in every child”



March 17, 2015

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing to you to ask you to support **H.B. No. 6891 to allow public school superintendents to have access to birth records**. By allowing superintendents access to birth records, their offices would be able to initiate and maintain contact with families with young children and reinforce to them the importance of exposing their young children to high quality preschool experiences, therefore preparing them to enter kindergarten ready to learn. The work that our Collaborative does in Southington is critical, as we are the advocates for our youngest community members and the central early childhood resource in the community for their families. We are proud to maintain a strong partnership with the public schools in support of school readiness.

In April 2014, we created *The Community Plan for Southington's Young Children*. This comprehensive Plan showcases what Southington is doing right and what needs to be improved with regard to the support and development of young children in our community. One area that we identified as needing improvement was communication with families who are preparing their children to enter kindergarten. We identified a significant gap in the numbers of families whose children had entered kindergarten with a preschool experience as well as those who were unprepared for the kindergarten registration programs being conducted in the district. Allowing access to birth records by the Office of the Superintendent would allow their offices to reach out to these families to support them in their school readiness efforts with any information that they deem beneficial or necessary.

I sincerely hope that you will support H.B. No. 6891 and allow superintendents to have access to birth records so that contact may be made with families who are preparing their children to enter kindergarten. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Paula Gorham

Kindergarten Teacher

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