



EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

A Liberal Education. Practically Applied.

Office of the President

March 2, 2016

Dear Senator Slossberg and Representative Fleischmann:

As President of Eastern Connecticut State University, I am writing to provide the utmost support for the establishment of a dual-language magnet school in Windham, CT. Currently, the Windham district offers dual-language instruction in the pre-school program at the Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy, for K-5th graders in the Compañeros program at North Windham Elementary School and through to eighth graders at the Windham Middle School. Eastern's students have contributed to mentoring these students at the three schools, while developing their dual language skills as future teachers. Our Center for Early Childhood Education has provided educational outreach to Windham area families in dialogic reading skills that engage pre-school children and their families in developing the native language (Spanish) skills while they learn the second language (English). We have developed training videos for teachers and are looking forward to engaging further in a more centralized program for dual-language literacy proposed by state Rep. Susan Johnson in a dual-language magnet school in Windham.

Eastern has had many discussions with Windham school officials about the possible partnership with the Windham schools to centralize the dual-language education, and we are excited to get the opportunity to provide technical assistance to do it. The current educational model in the three Windham schools is excellent for developing the students language skills and providing Eastern's future teachers with the diverse student population to put theory to practice. Eastern's "liberal education – practically applied" is all about this type of experiential learning opportunity to make a positive impact in our local community.

We look forward to facilitating the comprehensive organization of dual-language education and engaging our students, Education professors and Center for Early Childhood Education experts in the process of developing dual-language instruction through high school. As Eastern fosters a bilingual certification process the local schools will continue to serve as the learning lab for improving literacy skills in our diverse Windham population.

Sincerely,



Elsa M. Núñez, President

Eastern Connecticut State University