

**Testimony submitted to the Education Committee
In Support of HB 5465, An Act Authorizing The Establishment Of A Dual Language
Magnet School And A Stem Magnet School. March 2, 2016**

Senator Gayle S. Slossberg, Representative Andrew M. Fleischmann and Member of the Education Committee.

My name is Paul Kalajian, I'm a member of the Windham Board of Education. I'm also the chair of the School planning and design subcommittee of the board.

I would like to encourage the Education committee to support HR5465.

This bill will level the playing field as we consider how we will go about renovating our 40+year old high school building. This facility will be at the leading edge of a comprehensive redesign and retasking of our curriculum and really of our district. Magnet status will allow us the ability to think in a more regional way, thereby requiring more flexibility in our programming, with an eye to what will be required of our students as they leave us and move on in life.

Be it further education or directly into the job market.

We are at a disadvantaged, urban districts in the quite corner of Connecticut.

Windham County has many of the poorest Towns in the state, a renovated building with an invigorated curriculum, which is a magnet, would be a great boon for the children of Windham and the surrounding towns. At present we have a dual language program in district which is scattered by grade among a number of elementary schools.

A dual language magnet in one location, offers the entire same inclusive regional flavor, as does a magnet high school in the same district.

The STEM/STEAM Model at the high school level gives our STEM grade school students, a place to go for the completion of their public school education within their district.

A magnet dual language school, creates the possibility of the dual language model at the Middle school level, with a magnet high school in the district.

The two fit together very smoothly. The move to regionalize, the needs to share resources, makes support of HR5465, so important for a poor, underserved area of Connecticut.

Thank you

Paul Kalajian
Windham BOE
Chair
School planning and design committee