

## Proposed Bill 457, An Act Concerning the Size of School Districts

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The Act Concerning the Size of School Districts imposes arbitrary obligations on smaller school districts and creates increased bureaucracy, less individualized attention and no real efficiency benefits. There is no evidence that larger districts produce better students or a higher quality education which should be the most important factor when considering changes to an educational system. Financial restraints should not be a main guiding point when discussing education. Larger districts will result in fewer opportunities for children to participate in activities, sports and events. Larger districts create a longer chain of bureaucracy to get change within the district implemented. This creates issues on an individual student level and systemwide. The current structure allows teachers or departments of different districts to try new different and creative ideas and build off other districts' brilliant ideas. Fewer districts means fewer opportunities to develop. Opportunities for growth and advancement of teachers will be restricted. Individually, if a parent has a question, issue or concern, that has to be escalated, leadership will be detached and separate.

Individual districts will lose their identity. Currently, in my smaller district, I know that I am going to see leadership at individual school events, like middle school sports, holiday events and in school assemblies. In a larger district, with multiple schools, leadership will not be able to meaningfully attend these types of activities. They will lose touch with the individual families that make up their districts. As an example, my town, took an aggressive approach to school safety in response to Sandy Hook and as I have four children in the town's school system, I am thankful and grateful. If we are tied to another less aggressive district, we could lose that security.

The size is entirely arbitrary. The overall size of a district is not as critical as the student to teacher ratio or the student to staff ratio. If the requirement is designed to eliminate the leadership of smaller districts, its financial benefits are overstated and the detrimental effects to education, individualization, creativity and growth overwhelmingly outweigh any minor reduction in costs from firing a few superintendents. I am opposed to the implementation of this Act.

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