

February 27, 2019

Education Committee:

As a parent in the New Canaan public schools, I strongly oppose the following bills, SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools. We moved to New Canaan for the schools and the existing school quality is what keeps us here.

I understand that Governor Lamont has created a Group of "Study Leaders" to research more on regionalization, but my understanding is that he is creating this group of leaders from the "failing districts" in our state. Why wouldn't he include leaders from our top districts, like New Canaan or Wilton? The other districts can learn from the top districts to see what works best at our local level.

Our New Canaan Board of Education states it best:

*"The New Canaan Public Schools, and schools across Connecticut, have experienced first-hand the importance and value of local control of our schools. Quite simply, it is a foundational value of Connecticut's educational system, and one that has resulted in world-class educational outcomes for our children. Forcing districts to regionalize would necessarily result in a diminution of parents' and community members' voices in the educational decisions of their children, which would invariably lead to diminished outcomes for our children.*

*In addition, superintendents across Connecticut are working to optimize their districts for effectiveness and efficiency. To propose sweeping bills mandating wholesale regionalization, and to claim that such regionalization would advance efficiency, appears to discredit and undermine this important, ongoing work. As educational and community leaders, superintendents strive to balance efficiency with effectiveness, guided by the belief that education is an investment in our children, in our communities, and in our future.*

*Applying a "one-size-fits-all" approach by mandating forced regionalization would be detrimental to our children, our schools, and our state."*

I hope you oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Sincerely,

Laurel Carlson

New Canaan