

February 26, 2019

Dear Committee Members,

As a parent of a public school student, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB874. These bills will erode the quality and character of our local school, which could also affect the quality of our town. Research shows that in rural communities, closing a town's school can cause the social fabric of a community to unravel. We are very happy with the fact that our daughter's teachers have the opportunity to get to know their students on a very personal level due to the fact that we have smaller class sizes.

In a report prepared for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, researchers have found that "regionalization may lead to diseconomies of scale resulting from: higher transportation expenses because of longer bus routes, overall increases (leveling up) in staff salaries because of seniority and/or contract negotiations, and increases in the number of mid-level administrators and administrative support staff." My daughter does not need to spend more time on a bus, also, how would that affect after-school activities? Have any of these questions been answered?

As for dramatic cost savings, the same report reviewed regionalization programs in Vermont, Maine, and New York and found, "there's some cases where they've achieved some cost savings, but really those states have gone into it with the mind that it would achieve sort of high levels of consolidations and substantial cost savings. And it doesn't appear that that's materialized."

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

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Colantonio

North Branford, CT

