

February 28, 2019

Members of the Education Committee,

As a parent of public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to directly or indirectly forcing regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

It is inappropriate for the state to dictate regionalization of any school system. Withholding state funding if schools refuse to regionalize is tantamount to theft of our tax dollars.

Our children, our schools, our choice.

Regarding regionalization as a means of saving money:

If we save money but decrease the quality of education, we are ultimately hurting the economy through loss of intellectual capital and community stability.

We cannot choose to save money by taking a quality education from our children.

Some of my specific concerns pertaining to regionalization include:

- Overall decrease in the quality of education due to:
 - Larger student/teacher ratios
 - Decreased interaction between students and school administrators
 - Decreased access to special needs resources
 - Decreased community involvement and investment in the schools
 - Decreased accountability of school administrators to parents/communities
- Increased transportation time
- Increased transportation costs
- Decreased access to after-school events/clubs/athletics due to increased travel requirements
- Decreased access of parents to school administrators
- Use (or lack thereof) of abandoned school facilities
- Loss of local control over our schools

Speaking from personal experience of choosing a place of employment based on the available school systems for our children, the loss of high-quality public education systems would make it more difficult for employers to attract and retain employees.

Again, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to directly or indirectly forcing regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

Thank you for your consideration,

Cynthia Reynolds

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