



February 16, 2019

Members of the Education Committee,

The Council of Darien School Parents (CDSP) is the umbrella organization for the Parent-Teacher Organizations of all Darien Public Schools. The purpose of the CDSP is to promote understanding and communication between the Darien Public Schools, the home, administrators, the Board of Education and the community with the goal of uniting to provide an academically robust and socially supportive school system that enables our children to achieve to their individual potential. **We, the Executive Board of CDSP, write to you today in opposition to the idea of forced regionalization proposed in SB 457 and SB 738.**

We are in very close contact with the parents in Darien and have found no support for *forced* regionalization, for Darien or the state. As drafted, SB-457 and SB-738 show very little thought and offer no research to support the proposals. There is no assurance of cost savings to our town. Of most significant concern, there is no mention whatsoever of any benefit to children. As parents, our children are clearly our first priority. These bills do not make children the first priority, and because of that, we strongly oppose both bills.

In speaking with a variety of local and state officials, we understand that these bills are meant to start a broader conversation about regionalization. This conversation may indeed have merit, however, we respectfully ask that you include local PTOs, school officials, Boards of Education and town officials in that conversation before drafting any legislation. An effective conversation at the state level **MUST** include input from those with "boots on the ground." Moving immediately to forcing regionalization onto school districts without meaningful conversation and research is dangerous and misinformed. To our knowledge, Senator Bob Duff, the author of SB 457 and a representative of Darien, had no discussion with any education experts or parents in Darien before proposing his bill.

The majority of families move to Darien for our outstanding schools. We are proud of the hard work done by Darien's Board of Education, the District Administration and our outstanding teachers and staff. We are also proud of the fiscal responsibility of Darien and know that our town is in excellent financial shape. We do not want the residents of Darien to be penalized for the mismanagement of other towns. We urge you to take these bills off the table until the idea of regionalization has been fully researched and the intent of the bills is a better educational experience for all students in Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

The Council of Darien School Parents Executive Board
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