

Dear Connecticut Legislators,

I am writing with regard to any proposed bills requiring regionalization of schools.

My family thoroughly OPPOSES any legislation regarding regionalization of schools. Our opposition also includes any other legislation that would withhold funding or any other services or support as a way to move schools toward regionalization.

Regionalization does NOT save money.

In other states, regionalization has NOT saved money (Vermont, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, New York). A 2011 study by the National Education Policy Center found the 'savings' from school consolidation to be 'vastly overestimated.'

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id+ED515900>

UConn found in 2010 that there is NO link between efficiency and academic performance. Heffley, Dennis, and Can Bekaroglu. "Getting More From Less, Measuring Efficiency in Connecticut High School Districts." The Connecticut Economy, Winter (2010)

Larger school districts hire more administrators, not fewer. (See link above.)

Regionalization harms school quality

Regionalization instead creates organizational leviathans, adding layers and bureaucracy between students/parents and policy makers, none of which create a better learning environment.

We moved to Wilton for its schools and the inherent sense of community. If there were regional schools instead of local district schools, we would not have moved to Connecticut at all.

I grew up in an area of regional schools (Montgomery County Maryland) and one of its Superintendents lived in our neighborhood. His experience was that there were far too many, different needs in the various communities that could not be appropriately dealt with in a regionalized school system. Who lost? The students and families.

This is supposed to be about the students and their families. What works in one district will not work in another. Students will lose out and we can not let that happen.

Large does NOT equal better.

When student and parent engagement decline as schools and their organizational structures are expanded, these proposals actually move to undermine the quality and commitment to education in Connecticut schools.

Zimmer, Timothy, Larry DeBoer, and Marilyn Hirth. "Examining economies of scale in school consolidation: Assessment of Indiana School districts." Journal of Education Finance 35.2 (2009): 103-127

School Regionalization Proposals have already assaulted the allure of Connecticut as a destination or continuing location for families and its other residents.

Please oppose all of these bills (SB 874, HB 7150, SB 457, and SB 738) .

Marianne Gustafson,
Wilton, CT