

To whom it may concern:

February 25, 2019

Re: No to forced school consolidation: SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

Please, just no. The locally controlled small school district in Darien works. It's the reason we moved to Darien 19 years ago and it's the reason most people move here or to the other small towns in Connecticut. Our four kids went through the small school district here and came out great—very well prepared for college. Don't dilute it. It's working. The increasing taxes and tolls and scary union debt are nudging us out of the state as it is. You've already gerrymandered our vote and silenced our voices. Weakening the public schools would be the last straw. Please don't do it.

It feels like some people are jealous and want to decrease the quality of the best school districts since raising the quality of the other school districts is proving hard. I will never believe that the best schools are the ones with money and technology. I believe that they are the ones with parents who value education and make their children do homework appropriately. They are the ones with parents who demand accountability from the school system as well as from their children. This is much harder to do across town lines and neighborhoods.

If you really want to improve the big town schools, divide the districts there, make them *smaller*, and make it easier for parents to participate. And work on elevating the respect for education in the homes of the lesser-performing districts. Good luck on that last part.

Leave our small school districts alone. They are working.

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