Wednesday, March 6th, 2019

Education Committee
Public Hearing Testimony

Dear Senator McCrory, Senator Abrams, Representative Sanchez, Representative Barry, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and other members of the Education Committee.

My name is Tim Ackert and I Represent the 8th District, which includes Columbia, Coventry, Tolland, and Vernon. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to speak on the following bills on today’s public hearing agenda:

SB 956 AN ACT CONCERNING A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELOR PROGRAM

HB 7258 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM GRADUATION DATE AND THE DATE FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL SESSIONS

As currently drafted, Raised SB 956 asks the State Board of Education to adopt “guidelines” working with the CSCA. I do recognize the importance of students having access to school counseling programs. These programs help students resolve emotional, social, or behavioral problems and help them develop a clearer focus or sense of direction. Effective counseling programs are important to the school climate and a crucial element in improving student achievement. I respectfully ask that the Committee amend the bill language to require the “guidelines” that SDE prepares to be submitted to the Education Committee as well as the legislature for further review and approval if the legislature agrees with its findings.

Raised HB 7258 simply asks that when a school calendar has been set for a senior in high school that the graduation date is firm. Many school districts have graduating events like project graduation that requires extensive planning and expense. When there are reasons for lost school days through the year and the required days are not needed to be met.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments with respect to both SB 956 and HB 7258.