

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Rosanna Chapleau I'm a resident of Danbury and I'm writing to you today to express my support for Senate Bill 948.

Connecticut may be among the top 5 states in the country for K-12 education, but we are doing a huge disservice to so many of our students. The past year has made it clearer than ever that our schools and our children need to be funded fully, equitably, and immediately.

As I have tried to learn more about Connecticut's school funding system, I have discovered that it is, by design, complicated. We don't fund all of our students in the same way and instead have more than 10 funding formulas. The additional funding weights for English Learners, students who are economically disadvantaged, and students who are living in concentrated poverty only apply in this one funding formula, and students with additional needs who attend other types of schools don't have their needs factored into funding.

Our students deserve to be funded based on what they need in order to be successful in and outside of the classroom. Our students who attend magnet schools, charter schools, and other public schools of choice deserve to be funded through a formula that takes their learning needs into account. Our English Learners, students who are economically disadvantaged, and students navigating through their education in communities that experience concentrated poverty, all deserve additional funding at a rate that makes a real, tangible difference.

Our students, our schools, and our communities need real change, and we need it now.

The racial funding gap in Connecticut is a pervasive and systemic problem. Our school districts that have student populations that are majority BIPOC spend \$2,300 less per student compared to districts that have a majority white student population. By passing S.B. 948, you can help address these disparities, reduce the state's racial funding gap by 68%, and make sure students are at the center of the conversation about education funding.

Over the past year, many have talked about the need for equity in our state. Equity starts with education and opportunities for all of our students. I'm counting on all of you to take every single student into account when you're making decisions about how to fund their education, and to give all of our students a fighting chance to not only succeed, but excel.

Thank you for your time, and I urge you to support S.B. 948.

Sincerely, Rosanna Chapleau