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Sent: Wed 7/11/2012 5:04 PM

Cc:

Subject: Comments for ECS meeting

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To Whom It May Concern on the ECS Task Force,

For the past 12 years, my family and I have lived in Norwalk. At first we didn't know if we were going to stay (first time living in the suburbs) but as time has gone on, we realize how much we love this area and specifically Norwalk. It's location, it's down-to-earth people and more importantly, it's diversity, which is a rarity in Fairfield County. We love that our children attend public schools with students of other races and nationalities. They also have the opportunity to see that there are students who come from families that have more than we do and some that have much less that we do. In short, they have a real vision of the world and it's people.

It seems from recent reports that some in Hartford do not know the real Norwalk or have an accurate vision of it. Yes, we are located in the middle of the Gold Coast, but all is not golden here and we need and deserve appropriate funding for our students.

Did you know that in my daughter's elementary school, we do a food drive every Thanksgiving (I have headed this program for the past 6 years) and that the food collected goes to a handful of our VERY OWN families? These are families who do not have the funds to assemble a holiday dinner.

Did you know that my daughter came home last year and told me that a boy in her class sleeps in his clothes because he doesn't have a pair of pajamas?

Did you know that we have a giving tree in our school lobby at holiday time so that gifts can be provided to kids in our school who might otherwise not be receiving any? And I can tell you, not all the construction paper trees mention toys...some are for the basics such as socks or a new winter jacket that fits.

Did you know that there are some parents of students in our schools who do not attend Parent-Teacher Conferences because they do not have a car and transportation to the school?

I don't know about you, but that doesn't seem to fit the profile of a community that doesn't need more funding.

I think it would be prudent and educational, if you will, to come to Norwalk and step inside each and every school we have. You will see students from all walks of life, each with a different story to tell. I'm sure it would shed new light on how Norwalk is currently being defined.

Thank you for your ears. I implore you to help Norwalk reach it's fullest potential.

April Guilbault  
Mom, resident, former PTO President, blogger