



Testimony
Education Cost Sharing Task Force Public Hearing
July 12, 2012

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My name is Dee Brassell and I am Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition (BCAC) and co-chair of its Education and Early Care Task Force I am a resident of the City of Bridgeport and the mother of a daughter who went through the Bridgeport Public School System. Thank you for the opportunity to comment before you tonight.

The ECS formula is broken and must be totally revamped, using the most current data available. Bridgeport has long suffered from chronic underfunding of the ECS grant. With inadequate funding, Bridgeport schools have had to cut an average of \$11 million from the proposed budgets each year since the 2007-08 school year, to meet critical education needs.

This means fewer teachers, fewer social workers, fewer guidance counselors and – fewer opportunities for our young people.

My child has completed her passage through the Bridgeport school system and is currently doing well in her chosen profession. I wish I could have the confidence that future Bridgeport children who fill her shoes will have that same opportunity to succeed.

Bridgeport is surrounded by not only some of the wealthiest towns in the State, but some of the wealthiest towns in the nation! While some districts worry about how many of their graduates will enter the Ivy League, the Bridgeport school districts worry about how many will graduate period. Only 65 percent of our students leave high school with a diploma!

So let's give Bridgeport's children an equal chance at success. Reworking the ECS formula would be a terrific start.

Thank you.

7/12/2012