

# Legal Assistance Resource Center

## □ of Connecticut, Inc. □

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To: Miguel A. Cardona, Ed. D.  
Co-Chair, CT Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force  
From: Jane McNichol, Executive Director  
Date: April 16, 2014

### **Re: Master Plan to Eliminate the Achievement Gap in Connecticut**

Thank you for sharing the Master Plan with me and for all the work of the Achievement Gap Task Force. The Legal Assistance Resource Center of Connecticut is the education and policy advocacy branch of the Legal Services programs in Connecticut. We, and the other Legal Services programs in the state, work to address the needs of very low-income residents of the state.

I particularly commend the Master Plan for addressing the issues of poverty and lack of affordable housing as causes of the achievement gap. As you note, family stability, achieved through encouraging economic security and stable housing, are key to achieving success for all Connecticut's children.

Many of the Plan's proposals are ones that we are already actively pursuing. I would suggest that the recommendation to expand rental assistance be modified to delete references to structuring a program that increases incentives to work. Low-income families with stable housing are much more likely to be able to get and keep a job. Developing a work-incentive component to the RAP program will unnecessarily complicate the program and could lead to family destabilization if losing a job results in losing housing.

We look forward to working with you to achieve the aims of the Master Plan and expect to be particularly active in helping to move the policy recommendations relating to poverty forward.