

TO: MEMBERS OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

EDUCATION TESTIMONY ON SB 24

I currently sit as Chairman for the Norwalk Board of Education. This year will mark the 5th budget I have worked on. I have yet to have a budget where I can add programs, particularly technological programs, that would help our students in the world they will enter for employment once they graduate from our school system. Every year, I fight just to keep what we had the year before. You can imagine how my frustration turns to sheer angst once I look at our ECS system.

Norwalk is one of nine districts that make up DRG H. We are put into DRG H because we share many similarities with the other 8 districts in this group. This is done so that when we compare these 9 schools, we are comparing “apples to apples”. What is actually happening is two districts within this group (Norwalk & Stamford) are treated more like rotten apples.

This is not a letter of “sour grapes” as you will see when take a good look at the gross inequity within our DRG H. Mind you that these inequities are not limited to only DRG H, but throughout the whole ECS program covering 169 districts. Lets look at the numbers:

DRG H

TOWN # OF STUDENTS ECS FUNDING 2012-13

ANSONIA 2,791 \$15,571,383

DANBURY 10,505 \$24,554,515

DERBY 1,590 \$7,146,221

E. HARTFORD 8,027 \$43,425,561

MERIDAN 9,187 \$55,561,122

NORWALK 11,165 \$10,672,607

NORWICH 5,371 \$33,341,525

STAMFORD 15,127 \$8,899,110

W. HAVEN 7,390 \$42,781,151

TOTAL # OF STUDENTS TOTAL FUNDING FOR DRG H

71,153 \$241,953,595

Norwalk & Stamford have the top two highest population of students, yet receive the LEAST per student. Danbury, the third highest receives over 2 ½ times more funding than Norwalk! Why???? Their median income is slightly higher than Norwalk. We are so similar in so many socio-economic aspects to each other. No wonder we are in the same DRG H. Just look at the other towns in DRG H. SOME RECEIVE 5 TIMES THE AMOUNT Norwalk gets and they have ½ the students!!!! THIS IS EQUITY????

Since all schools in DRG H are said to be similar, then the current ECS formula is severely flawed and needs to be scrapped. Again, since all districts in DRG H are similar, then they should be treated EQUALLY. Since there are 71,153 students in DRG H, and DRG H will be receiving \$241,953,595 in funding, why not divide the funding by the number of students and get a “per pupil \$ amount”. Then take that number and multiply it by the number of students that town has. THAT’S AS FAIR AS YOU CAN MAKE IT. This is what it what it would look like:

Total funding, \$241,953,59 DIVIDED BY TOTAL # OF STUDENTS, 71,153

EQUALS APPROX \$3,414 PER PUPIL

NOW MULITPLY \$3,414 BY THE # OF STUDENTS IN EACH TOWN

TOWN # of ECS FUNDING FAIR ECS

STUDENTS 2012-13 FUNDING

ANSONIA 2,291 \$15,571,383 \$9,529,925

DANBURY 10,505 \$24,554,515 \$35,869,532

DERBY 1,590 \$7,146,221 \$5,429,087

E. HARTFORD 8,027 \$43,425,561 \$27,408,352

MERIDAN 9,187 \$55,561,122 \$31, 369,195

NORWALK 11,165 \$10,672,607 \$38,123,118

NORWICH 5,371 \$33,341,525 \$18,339,386

STAMFORD 15,127 \$8,899,110 \$51,651,444

W. HAVEN 7,390 \$42,781,151 \$25,233,302

This is the FAIREST method to equally divide the funding to DRG H and among the other DRG's. After all, we are in the same DRG because we are similar.

You can see just how bad Norwalk & Stamford have been under funded and short changed. There is no reason for it. The current ECS Formula is flawed. Our students are not any different than those students in all the other districts in our DRG. It's the reason we NOT put into the DRG's with our neighbors in Darien, Westport, New Canaan & Greenwich. Therefore we should NOT be punished as if we are one of these affluent towns - WE ARE NOT!!

I am tired of decimating our Central office with cuts year after year because of this ridiculous ECS formula that is being used. The time has come for it re-evaluated and towns that have been grossly under funded to be given their fair share.

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