

Appropriations Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education  
Public Hearing  
Written Testimony  
February 13, 2020

**Written Testimony of Tim Sullivan, Superintendent of CREC Schools**

Dear Senator Abrams, Representative Rosario, and members of the Appropriations Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee:

My name is Tim Sullivan, and I am the superintendent of CREC Magnet Schools. You may remember that last year we requested a 5% increase in the statutory amount of the per-pupil grant for magnet schools across the state. With your support, we were able to secure a 2% increase, the first since 2010-11. This increase provided some relief, but did not deliver the funding necessary to prevent short-term or long-term tuition increases. As a result, magnet schools across the state will need to increase tuition to sending districts to cover increased costs associated with contracts and operations. Unfortunately, host magnet members will not be able to increase tuition and will have to find cuts in their programming to balance their budgets.

I am submitting testimony to remind you of a promise that I made last year. I was asked if the increase we requested was a short term solution. I agreed that it was a band-aid that would help get us through a few more years, but did not address the long term sustainability problem for schools of choice. We agreed to work on a more comprehensive plan that would do several things, including:

- Create a long term solution to cover rising costs
- Simplify the choice funding mechanisms to allow for more transparency
- Relieve the burden on sending districts, so that their budgets are not crippled by tuition bills

In addition, we are seeking to resolve issues around special education billing and residency verification.

CREC is developing a plan to address these items. We are committed to finding a long-term solution that will assure sustainability for choice programming in Connecticut, which has allowed tens of thousands of students to have a voice in their education. At CREC, we think that now more than ever, we need to learn with each other, so can learn how to live with each other. A state that is dramatically divided by race and wealth serves no one. We must find ways to integrate. Doing that voluntarily starts with schools.

We will continue to work with various stakeholders to vet ideas and try to build consensus around common-sense logical solutions that can work as easily in New Haven and Bridgeport as they do in Hartford. We must do this if we are going to build a better Connecticut.

In closing, I want to remind you that we are still here, and we continue to have funding issues. We are working on a long term solution that will keep us from having to plead with you every

year. We are not asking for changes to the magnet line in the existing budget, but we will be back next year asking for significant changes.

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we develop such a plan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Timothy Sullivan  
Superintendent  
CREC Magnet Schools