

Appropriations Hearing  
March 9, 2021  
Rhonda Willigan  
94 Clover Lane  
Manchester, CT 06040

My name is Rhonda Willigan. I'm the proud mom of two children at Odyssey - a 5<sup>th</sup> grader and a 6<sup>th</sup> grader, both of whom started at Odyssey in kindergarten.

I am writing today because it's past time that all students are funded based on need regardless of where they go to school and now is the time to act.

The reason my children are at Odyssey is not by luck, although luck did play a role. The reason my children are at Odyssey is that I am an involved parent who places a lot of value on education. I myself possess several degrees - a doctorate in science, and a master's in both engineering, and business. So, when my children were approaching school age, I researched all options – traditional, private, magnet and charter schools - and through that research, discovered Odyssey. At the time, it seemed very much a “word of mouth” school, meaning that you heard about it ONLY if you were looking around, like me, to find the very best option for educating your child. Talking to similar families who placed a value on education was enough to give me peace of mind that Odyssey was the right school for my children.

We are all a part of a large community that is supposed to nurture and love children, and that means giving them everything they need to grow, learn, and reach their potential. We are effectively telling some kids that they are not a part of the larger community when we snatch resources and funding from them.

So I urge this committee to do rihPlease be the voice for our children. Please help to change the hearts and minds of those who may not fully understand the impact that these cuts have on our schools, our students, and our communities. Please restore the funding and let our kids soar.

Best,

Rhonda Willigan  
94 Clover Lane  
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