

Derell Q. Wilson

March 9, 2021

Testimony for Appropriations Committee

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee. I want to give a special shout out to my state representatives Emmett Riley and Kevin Ryan and State Senator Cathy Osten. I want to thank each and everyone of you for the opportunity to speak to you today on such an important issue that is at the forefront of everything going on right now. What the covid-19 in pandemic riddling homes, business, communities, and most importantly families and schools. There is an obligation that each and every educator administrator parent has to their child as we move forward. There's a sense of urgency and preparing our students today for the educational challenges they face in the future. I'm a proud paraprofessional of the Integrated Day Charter School family. I have worked at the charter school for 4 years, however as a lifelong resident of Norwich, Connecticut I have been able to witness the impact of this great school community since its inception. IDCS has a successful fabric that leads each student to becoming successful beyond the school building. I come before you today, in support of increasing the per pupil amount to charter school to \$11,525. Anybody that knows me knows that I am blunt, honest, and direct about the things that I say or advocate for. We sit up here and everyone talks about racial equity in education and in order to achieve this we must put our money where your mouth is. Providing Charter Schools like IDCS with such funding increase is and must be a priority. Providing these additional funding resources allows for Charters Schools to provide more opportunities for each and

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every student to excel at levels beyond just the everyday educational standard. This would allow for possible honors level courses that will make our students even more competitive and ready for the challenges that a rigorous High School curriculum brings. Norwich is a unique community as we have a designated host high school and not our own, so our students at Integrated Day Charter School, have a wide variety of options to consider for high school. Providing additional funding resources allows us to put each and every student and their needs first and more importantly provide opportunities to set each and every student up for success outside of the IDCS community. For far too long Charter Schools like the Integrated Day Charter School have had to deal with a lower tuition rate. We do more with less, however at some time we must invest and start making sure that we are providing the best possible opportunity for each one of our students here. Unlike public schools, charter schools do not have a tax base to generate its funds from so it makes it difficult to plan for capital projects or any emergency things that may happen during a given school year as we saw during this past year with covid-19. I urge you to take a vow and make a commitment to allowing equity to shine for each and every student in Connecticut including those in public schools and charter schools by increasing the funding for charter schools in Connecticut to \$11,525 thank you and have a wonderful evening.