

Sustain the Promise



Dear Coalition Partners:

As a long budget session draws to a close, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your advocacy; for communicating your passion for magnet schools through emails, letters, public testimony, in person meetings, and phone calls with legislators. Only through your support has the important work of the Connecticut Coalition for Magnet Schools been accomplished.

It is important for you to know that while many other programs, social services, and nonprofits faced significant cuts, we were able to avoid most rescissions. Only through your support and continued advocacy did magnet schools across Connecticut retain level funding.

We will continue our outreach and advocacy in the upcoming year. Keep your eyes open for emails from the Coalition about back-to-school events, planning sessions and celebrations. Thank you again for your hard work and support!

Martha & Julia

We have seen many successes this session, and we are well positioned to continue conversations with legislators so that we can meet each of our legislative priorities in the coming year. Below please find a summary of the Coalition's activities this year.

- **3** parents submitted testimony to, and **10** parents attended, the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus public hearing on January 21st.
- Our kick-off press conference was attended by NBC News, CTN, The CT Mirror, and four legislators, and it resulted in coverage of the Coalition in the Hartford Courant.
- **250** advocates attended, **60** parents submitted testimony, and **35** parents and **15** students testified in person for the Appropriations Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education public hearing on March 3rd.
- Storytelling workshops for parents were held at five locations across the state and were attended approximately **50** participants.
- **125** parents, students, teachers, and other advocates convened at the Coalition Advocacy Day to meet individually with their legislators on April 14th.
- **2,210** magnet school supporters signed a petition to the General Assembly demanding sustainable funding and immediate funding relief for magnet schools, delivered to legislators on May 28th.
- The Parent Advisory Committee held **9** meetings to steer the work of the Coalition.
- **318** parents wrote **661** emails to legislators in **100** Connecticut districts in support of magnet schools.
- The Coalition's Facebook posts have reached up to **3,000** unique users, and the Coalition website had up to **200** hits in a single day.
- Parents also submitted Op-Eds, met individually with legislators, and placed lawn signs across Connecticut.



How did our priorities fair?

Sustainable Funding: It was made apparent throughout the session that legislators were often unclear as to how different types of schools are funded. We worked to ensure that legislators were educated as to the complexities of school funding in Connecticut. We feel that legislators understand that the school funding system needs to be addressed as a whole. We need you to keep the pressure on and demand solutions for sustainable funding in the coming year.

Access to Magnet Schools: Although many parents testified as to the need for increased access to reliable transportation to their school, we still need more parents across the state to speak about this issue. We avoided any cuts to magnet school per-pupil transportation reimbursement (outside the Sheff region), but did not see the increases we were asking for.

Integrated Pre-Kindergarten programs: Originally there were \$3M cuts suggested in the Appropriations budget associated with pre-K tuition to be charged to parents. In the final budget, \$1.2M of this was replaced, due directly to the Coalition's advocacy efforts. However, in the last day of the special session, legislation was passed that states that RESC-operated magnet schools **shall** charge pre-K tuition to parents who make over 75% of the Connecticut median income. We are still investigating the implications of this language and we will continue to fight for equal access to integrated pre-K programs in the coming year. Please contact your legislators to let them know that you oppose this change and are unhappy about the General Assembly **requiring** RESCs to charge tuition of parents.