



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Avon Public Schools

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Gary S. Mala
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

September 21, 2016

Dear Parents, Staff and Concerned Citizens:

Good Afternoon. Last week, the district received information regarding a significant reduction of the funds we were slated to receive under the Open Choice Academic Grant. More specifically, for fiscal year 2015-2016, Avon received \$217,125.00 and for fiscal year 2016-2017, the district will receive \$101,225.00.

The funds received via this grant are used to provide academic support to all Avon students including but not limited to non-resident students. The funds are also used to support after school programs, transportation, hosting specific school-based programs and staff professional development.

At the same time of this notification, we were also made aware that there is a possibility Magnet School tuition would be increased as a result of the unanticipated reduction to the grant received by CREC. This would place an additional financial burden on the district given that an increase would exceed the amount budgeted for Avon students attending CREC magnet schools.

Frankly, the reduction of \$115,900.00 is draconian and the possible increase in the tuition amount for students electing to attend a CREC magnet school will have an adverse impact on all our Avon Public School students.

This most recently announced reduction comes on the heels of another reduction to state aid announced last spring of approximately 33% to the Education Cost Sharing grant funds received by the Town of Avon for offering public education.

Included with this message is a draft letter and other information to help you voice your concern about the reduction to the Open Choice Academic Grant if you so choose to do so.

Please contact our local legislators and the Education Commissioner and strongly urge others with whom you associate to do the same.

Please also let me know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

Gary S. Mala
Superintendent of Schools
Avon Public Schools
gmala@avon.k12.ct.us

<p>Office of Governor Dan Malloy 210 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: 860-566-4840 Toll-Free: 800-406-1527 TDD: 860-524-7397 Fax: 860-524-7395 Email: governor.malloy@ct.gov http://portal.ct.gov/Share_Your_Opinion.aspx</p>	<p>Office of the Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman State Capitol, Room 304 210 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (860) 524-7384 TDD: (860) 524-7397 Email: ltgovernor.wyman@ct.gov http://portal.ct.gov/ltgovernor/submit-a-comment/</p>
<p>Office of the State Comptroller Kevin Lembo 55 Elm Street Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (860) 702-3300 Email: comptroller.lembo@ct.gov</p>	<p>State Senator Kevin Witkos Legislative Office Building 300 Capitol Avenue, Room 3403 Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (800) 842-1421 (CT only) Email: Kevin.Witkos@cga.ct.gov http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/contact-witkos/</p>
<p>State Representative Tim LeGeyt Connecticut House Republican Office L.O.B. Room 4200 Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (860) 240-8700, (800) 842-1423 Email: Tim.LeGeyt@housegop.ct.gov http://cthousegop.com/contact-tim-legeyt/</p>	<p>State Representative Brian Becker Legislative Office Building, Room 4009 Hartford, CT 06106-1591 Phone: (860) 240-8585, (800) 842-8267 Email: Brian.Becker@cga.ct.gov http://www.housedems.ct.gov/Becker/Contact</p>
<p>Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty 114 West Main Street, Suite 206 New Britain, CT 06051 Phone: (860) 223-8412 Fax: (860) 225-7289 https://forms.house.gov/esty/webforms/email-me.shtml</p>	<p>State Senator Beth Bye Legislative Office Building Room 2700 Hartford, CT 06106-1591 Phone: (860) 240-0428, (800) 842-1420 Email: Bye@senatedems.ct.gov http://www.senatedems.ct.gov/Bye-mailform.php</p>

September 21, 2016

Dianna Wentzell, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education
State of Connecticut
165 Capital Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Wentzell:

I am writing this letter to voice my serious objection to the recently announced reduction to the Open Choice Academic Grant funding impacting the Avon Public Schools and other districts in our state. This last minute, unanticipated reduction comes after the district has implemented the annual operating budget approved at referendum last May. The grant funds are earmarked to assist all Avon students, including but not limited to non-resident Avon students, enrolled from Hartford.

For fiscal year 2015-2016, Avon received \$217,125.00 and for fiscal year 2016-2017, the district will receive \$101,225.00. Frankly, the reduction of \$115,900.00 is draconian and will have an adverse impact on all our Avon Public School students.

I, along with the rest of the Avon community of residents, request that you restore full funding to the Open Choice Academic Grant to avoid potential early, school year layoffs, reduction of services to all students and significant loss in professional development opportunities.

Further, the district has been informed that it may see an increase in magnet school tuition (not Hartford, but CREC, etc.) as they may try to recoup what they have lost in their funding through increasing the tuition. This is unacceptable, unfair and shifts the burden to recoup such reduced funds to the local cities and towns. I urge you to be sure that the burden of the loss of funds by CREC is not borne by the districts that make up this Regional Education Service Center (CREC).

Thank you very much for considering what I have included in this communication. I look forward to a more productive solution to the challenges that caused this unanticipated shift of the financial burden without any advanced notice.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (860) XXX-XXXX.

Very truly yours,

September 21, 2016

Legislator's Name
Address
City, State Zip

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I am writing this letter to voice my serious objection to the recently announced reduction to the Open Choice Academic Grant funding impacting the Avon Public Schools and other districts in our state. This last minute, unanticipated reduction comes after the district has implemented the annual operating budget approved at referendum last May. The grant funds are earmarked to assist all Avon students, including but not limited to non-resident Avon students, enrolled from Hartford.

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