



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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*Superintendent of Schools*

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December 1, 2023

Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker  
CT Department of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103-1841

Dear Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to provide an update to the proposed racial imbalance plan submitted by the Fairfield Public Schools and approved by the Connecticut State Board of Education on November 2, 2022. The district has worked tirelessly over the past 12 months to decide on a course of action to address the racial imbalance issue identified at McKinley Elementary School. The Board has considered all options put forth in the plan with a heavy emphasis on creating a redistricting plan for our school district in consultation with the SLAM group. While I understand the spirit of the law, I believe that this redistricting plan is deeply flawed and will have several detrimental effects on our students and their education.

First and foremost, the proposed redistricting would disrupt large numbers of students and their families. This disruption can have a negative impact on their academic performance and overall well-being. Changing schools can be a stressful experience for children, and it can hinder their ability to establish a stable and supportive learning environment.

Our schools are facing utilization issues due to enrollment, specialized program needs and expansion of pre-school offerings. The proposed plan does not offer a clear solution to this problem. Redistributing students without adequate facilities to accommodate them will result in suboptimal learning conditions especially for the student being displaced from McKinley School.

The plan also places further strain on transportation. Students may be required to travel longer distances, leading to extended commutes that can be exhausting and time-consuming. Fairfield, like many districts across Connecticut, is facing challenges with their transportation provider in hiring enough drivers to fulfill the needs of the district. All our redistricting scenarios will cause a net increase in the number of students requiring transportation to and from school.

Lastly, the primary goal of redistricting is to reduce racial imbalance in schools. However, the proposed plan does not significantly address this issue. It is crucial that any redistricting plan achieves meaningful racial balance and diversity in our schools. None of the possibilities brought forth by the SLAM consultants accomplishes this goal.

I urge the State Department of Education to reconsider this redistricting plan and seek alternative solutions that better serve the educational needs of our students. I appreciate your attention to this matter and your commitment to providing the best possible education for our students. I hope that we can work together to find a more effective and equitable solution that considers the well-being and future of our children.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Testani  
Superintendent of Schools

*c: Laura Anastasio, CSDE Legal and Government Affairs  
Michael McKeon, CSDE Legal and Government Affairs  
Fairfield Board of Education*

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