

Town Council/Board Of Education  
50 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107-2431

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lived in the town of West Hartford for \_\_\_\_\_ years. Part of what attracted me to this town was undoubtedly the strength of the school system. Not only do I value the quality of educators that the town offers, but also the personalized and diverse experiences. I was disappointed to hear that World Languages grades K-5 are being eliminated in the budget proposal for next year and I would implore you to reconsider that decision.

For \$33 per household per year (assuming 24,500 households and \$820,000 to save the 12 threatened positions) this vital program would not need to be cut. Some statistical benefits of early language study are:

- Studies have shown that early second language learning improves math scores, English scores and leads to significant gains in measures of performance I.Q.
- Time Magazine issue 149/5 says, “The window for acquiring syntax may close as early as 5 or 6 years of age...the ability to learn a second language is highest between birth and the age of 6.
- The Wall Street Journal July 1997 reported on a study by Memorial Sloane-Kettering in NY. This study revealed that children who learn a second language store that capacity with their native language in one sector of the brain. Adult language learners store each new language learned in a separate area. This finding helps to explain why children who learn two languages develop the ability to speak both with native proficiency.
- In a four-year study at McGill University less advantaged students did just as well in foreign language as more advantaged students – showing evidence that foreign language study can help to close the achievement gap.

In West Hartford, where 66 different languages are spoken, we face a 21st century in which being monolingual will disadvantage our children and ultimately reduce property values.

**(Insert sentiment here in personal paragraph)**

Sincerely,

