

DODD, LIEBERMAN AND LARSON ANNOUNCE \$2.8 MILLION "SAFE SCHOOLS/HEALTHY STUDENTS" GRANT FOR HARTFORD

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WASHINGTON, D.C.- The Hartford Public School District will receive federal funding over the next three years aimed at reducing the city's dropout rate and helping students to avoid becoming involved in substance abuse, violence and other criminal activity, Senators Chris Dodd, Joseph I. Lieberman and Congressman John B. Larson announced today. The "Safe Schools/Healthy Students" grant, which was awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, will allot \$2.8 million in the first year for the city's schools, with additional funding being determined during each of the two remaining years of the grant.

"We must give children as many tools as possible to help them succeed in school," said Dodd. "And these tools are not just pens, pencils and textbooks, but programs that promote healthy behavior, engage students in activities that strengthen their minds and encourage them to stay in school. This grant will help ensure that Hartford students are empowered to lead healthier, happier lives."

"Too many of Connecticut's next generation are faced with the perils of substance abuse and violence and too many are not completing their educations," Lieberman said. "It is our local communities who are best equipped to instill in our children the values of education and of a drug-free and crime-free life, and this grant will help the innovative leaders in the Hartford Public School District do just that."

"This grant will provide significant assistance to Hartford's schools and students as the city works to reduce the dropout rate and continues efforts to keep kids safe from violence and illegal activity," said Larson. "It will help enhance programs that serve as essential tools in meeting the needs of students, parents and the entire school system."

"Hartford Public Schools is pleased to be recognized for its prevention programs and school-based health clinics," said Robert Henry, Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools. "This grant will allow the district to enhance health and safety programs during a period when we are under enormous financial constraints. This couldn't have come at a better time. On behalf of Hartford's children and families, we thank our legislative delegation for their support of this initiative."

The grants are part of a combined effort by the Departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services to provide students, schools, and communities with enhanced comprehensive education, mental health, social service, law enforcement and juvenile justice services to promote healthy childhood development and prevent violence and substance abuse.

The City of Hartford sought the funding to:

- Ø Establish a coordinated service delivery system among state, municipal and community-based organizations.
- Ø Fully implement the "Full Service Community Schools" concept, using all city schools for year-round educational youth and family support.
- Ø Ensure long-term financial support of mental health services through schools.

The lawmakers wrote a letter in April to the Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, urging that the grant be awarded to the Hartford Public School District.

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