



## State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE CAPITOL

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

June 23, 2014

Commissioner Stefan Pryor  
Department of Education  
165 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner,

Teaching critical thinking is one of the most important components of providing a quality education. To develop their critical thinking ability, students need to have access to different points of view on particular issues, practice evaluating them, and then define their own viewpoints accordingly.

Last week, a student who was preparing for a debate in one of our state's public high schools found when using his school's internet system to do his research that he could have access only to sites that presented one side of the issue. The others appeared to have been deliberately blocked.

The administration of the school district where this happened is dealing with the situation locally. But the fact that something like this could happen in Connecticut's public school system is disquieting and raises the question of whether it is happening in any other districts. Objectivity and impartiality is essential in the availability of information for our students and vital for learning critical thinking.

This is a bipartisan issue of statewide importance, and as the Republican members of the General Assembly's Education Committee, we are calling for full statewide review of Internet use policies in public schools.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our office. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Republican Education Committee Members