

July 14, 2009

Board of Education
TOWN OF WINDHAM
322 Prospect St.
Windham, CT 06280

Re: Statement on Outsourcing Food Services "Privatizing Schools'
Food Services is the Wrong Way to Save Taxpayer Money"

Chairman Folan & Board of Education Members;

I am Debbie Dubord and I work as an assistant manager of food services at Windham Middle School. You also know that I am the President of the CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Chapter that represents your employees in the school district's cafeterias.

This is the fourth time we have submitted a statement opposing the proposal to outsource Windham Public Schools' food services since March. Once again, I am joined by members of our Union, community advocates, parents, elected officials and concerned citizens who urge you to VOTE NO on privatizing the services in our schools' cafeterias.

As I have said before, privatization means bringing in a "middleman" to do the same work but take profits out of our community. Does anyone on this Board really believe that adding a middleman cuts costs?

By the way, I have documentation from the past four years that shows the district's food services department is running a surplus, which is being made available to the Board.

And why did Mr. Folan refuse to acknowledge how much money he believed outsourcing would save until last week? Shouldn't he have told our members -- who have been in contract negotiations since March -- so we could have proposed other ways to help save the district money?

Instead, by contracting-out, local Windham tax dollars will go to a middleman. Sodexo is one of the privateers that bid on the Windham schools' cafeteria contract. Apparently they thought you had already awarded it to them because they advertised to hire a manager to run the department while we were in negotiations with the Board -- and before you held any public vote on outsourcing.

Sodexo is a Fortune 500 corporation, and there are several, including Aramark, ABC, Maximus, Chartwells, and Wackenhutt, that have very wealthy CEOs and have earned millions in profits. Many of

these profits have come from contracts for privatized public schools' services.

Privatization has helped contribute to the disparity in wealth that is threatening the economic well-being of our community and our country. Windham's cafeteria workers spend their earnings here on Main Street. They don't put them in hedge funds or off-shore accounts. They don't send them to France where Sodexo's global corporate headquarters are located.

The Board of Ed should lead the way in modeling good behavior and common sense, and not join the race to destroy good American jobs. Right now, we are able to provide our families with quality healthcare and support local businesses. Privatization will destroy our families' opportunities and hurt the local economy.

Privatization is a destructive force. Again, we urge you to engage our members in finding constructive solutions that won't make our economy worse and VOTE NO on outsourcing the district's food services.

Thank you for hearing our voice on this critical matter.

Deborah Dubord

Food Services Assistant Manager, Windham Public Schools
President, Windham Board of Education Cafeteria Workers Chapter, CSEA SEIU Local 2001

Enclosures.

CC: First Selectman Jean de Smet
CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Executive Council Members
CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Legislative Action Committee Members
Municipal Division Council Officers & Chapter Presidents

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