

Michele Lindsay
Appropriations Committee Public Hearing
February 13, 2020

Good afternoon members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Michele Lindsay, I am a grandmother of three public charter school students. They attend Achievement First Schools in Bridgeport and New Haven. I live in Bridgeport.

I am here today to ask this committee to put back the money meant for Connecticut's public charter school students. Right now my grandchildren and their classmates do not receive funding based off of what they need as students. Instead they are shortchanged because of the type of public school they choose to attend. Our students deserve to be treated equitably. We should not cast them aside in order to balance the state budget.

These students are more than deserving of equitable funding. They are overcoming stereotypes every day as they continue to excel in their charter school classrooms.

Growing up in Bridgeport, I had a difficult life one that I do not wish to see my grandchildren live anew that I won't talk about today because today is about our kids. I am a praying Grandmother, and woman of faith and for that reason I believe that those in state leadership will do right by our children. I guess I need to pray harder, because recently I wrote to the State Board of Education upon the renewal of my grandkids schools, asking them for a full five year renewal but the school was only given a 2 year renewal with probation. With decisions like this, or not to fund our children based off what they need, what message are we sending to our kids? Is the message that their hard work and efforts don't matter? That the very schools that are closing the educational gap should continue to be treated like the stepchild of school in CT?!

Our kids need to feel that they are being supported as they continue to grow and exceed academic expectations! But the message they are getting is that it really doesn't matter how well they do. They and their schools will continue to be treated as less than, that their hard work and achievements are just not enough!

This generation is watching us all very carefully... What legacy do we want to leave for them? Mine will be that I left it all on the line to fight for those who are underserved. What will yours be?

Stand with us, support what is working for our kids. Our families and children thank you in advance for being bold and supporting our kids.

Respectfully,
Michele Lindsay