

Khadijah Muhammad
New Haven Public School Parent
Testimony Submitted to Appropriations Hearing
February 24, 2013

Good evening and thank you for joining us today. My name is Khadijah Muhammad and my children attend Achievement First schools in New Haven.

I am here today with other public charter parents to remind you, that as a parent, there is nothing more important than ensuring our children have access to a quality education that provides for their individual needs.

I am very proud of my children, who have been successful because of your previous support and allocations.

Amirah graduated from Amistad Academy in 2005 and now is a Certified Nurse Assistant, Department of Children and Family Respite Worker, Health Care Provider CPR and will be attending a four college to become a Register Nurse. She recently received an award for **Outstanding Positive Women in the Community** in Bridgeport, CT.

Shehu, my only son, is a freshman in college at Central Connecticut University studying science and engineering. He was also accepted at UCONN..

Aminah, my middle child, is in the 12th grade. She has been accepted early decision to Susquehanna University on a full ride. Last summer she participated in an ecology program in Vermont and attended the Eastern Connecticut State University to focus on ways to influence **female leadership in Government and Equality**.

Azizah, my youngest, is in the 7th grade, received 3 of the REACH Awards, reads at the 7th grade level, plays the cello and loves to play soccer and lacrosse. She reminds me constantly that she is the **college graduating class of 2023**.

2023 seemed so far away years ago, but to know that in 5 years, my baby will be in college. I thank you so much and you should be very proud of them because they are all of our future. Although I only had 4 children, we know that there are many stories like mine in this room today and the children and the parents are doing a great job. This could not have been possible without your support of increases in funding for public charter school students, it was crucial then and is even more crucial today.

All kids deserve the opportunity to attend a high-quality school, no matter where they live or what they look like. But today, it's not happening; nearly half of Connecticut 3rd graders cannot read at grade level. And in cities like Bridgeport, nearly one third of students never graduate high school. That's unacceptable, and why the 2012 landmark education reform law is so important, especially it's support of funding increases for charter schools. Thank you for your commitment to Connecticut's kids.