



Brass City Charter School, 212 Chestnut Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06710

TESTIMONY BY NANCY LANDONA, BRASS CITY CHARTER SCHOOL
IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET
TO
THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 24, 2014

Good Morning Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations committee. My name is Nancy Landona, and I am a co-Founder and the Business Manager at Brass City Charter School, the first charter to open since 2008. I am here today to thank you and Governor Malloy for the support shown to charter schools both in the 2013 budget and in the Governor's proposed modifications for 2014.

Brass City Charter School (BCCS) opened its doors this fall, welcoming 114 children in PreKindergarten through grade 1. BCCS is Waterbury's very first charter school, and also is the first charter school to have opened after five years of no new chartering. It is our mission to provide rigorous academics and a holistic social-emotional learning program, serving all learners in an effort to help eliminate the achievement gap. BCCS is modeled on a highly successful private school in Waterbury, and we are thrilled to offer a similar option to students at absolutely no cost to families.

The BCCS community would like to wholeheartedly thank Governor Malloy and the General Assembly for providing new funding for charters schools last year. Our doors would not be open without it – which means more than 100 students would still be in the struggling district. When we grow to PK-8 we will welcome 340 students through our front doors every morning for years to come. The impact our school will leave on the Waterbury community is tremendous.

Senator Hartley, Representative Cuevas and Mayor O'Leary have been incredibly supportive of BCCS, and for that we extend an additional heartfelt thanks. Last Friday, we celebrated our 100th day of school, an accomplishment that makes us very proud and is a milestone in our inaugural year. It would not have been possible without you.

Looking ahead, we are grateful for the General Assembly's continued support on new charter school funding. We are able to do great work for children each day because of the resources you provided. Every time a new charter school opens we give hope and opportunity to our most precious citizens – our children. On behalf of other yet-to-be chartered groups, we respectfully request continued support for new schools.

Finally, with gratitude and appreciation, I'd like to remind the Committee that there is still a great need for more per-pupil funding. Any increases that can be allocated to charter schools will be used to educate children in communities who most need high-quality, free schools of choice. Our work will never be finished. We strive to provide a world class education and future to our children each day, and we count on you to provide the resources we need so no children are let down.

Thank you for your time today. Please know you are all welcome to visit us at BCCS and see first-hand the good things that are happening in Waterbury. I am happy to answer questions or offer more insight upon request.