

Aisha Gutierrez  
Appropriations Testimony  
March 3, 2015

My name is Aisha Gutierrez. I am a Bridgeport parent.

I have four children and they all currently attend four different schools. Once Longfellow Elementary was demolished there was no option of where my child would attend. So right now my children attend Bassick High School, Curiale Elementary, Columbus Elementary and Park City Magnet.

I am here today because our school system is in crisis: in my community one in three schools is not performing.

Every child deserves a great school. But there are far too many forgotten schools in Bridgeport, where year after year, our children are unable to get the education they deserve. In many of those schools, nearly all of the students enrolled do not learn math, or to read and write.

As I stated before that I am here because our public education system is in crisis. But I am also here because we have the power to change this. My children and their classmates cannot wait any longer for great schools.

Every day I worry about whether my children are getting the attention they require to order to achieve their goals.

I feel fortunate for the schools my children go to and have gone to some great schools. I feel fortunate because my oldest son has learned to be more involved. And I feel fortunate that my 13-year-old daughter has learned self-control with the extra activities and groups. My 9-year-old son is still having a hard time at Columbus Elementary. I don't feel his school has things under control. My 5-year-old daughter has learned at a fast pace and amazes me every day.

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Connecticut needs to unite and work together to put success within reach for every child. We should be expanding access to great charter schools, for example.

Without great schools in Connecticut our children will not have a fighting chance of becoming all of what they want to be.

As parents and advocates we say to the powers that be: Please expand access to great schools for every child. We must do more.