

Connecticut Legislative Black & Puerto Rican Caucus
Public Forum
Legislative Office Building
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Testimony of
Tiffany Ladson-Lang

Good evening. My name is Tiffany Ladson-Lang and it is my pleasure to speak before such a distinguished group of leaders. I am a 22-year veteran educator currently living and working in Bridgeport. I am also a proud parent of a Bridgeport Public School student.

My daughter attends a not-so-sick school during the regular school year. However, one summer she attended camp held at a different Bridgeport school to spend time with her friends. On a sweltering day, my daughter had to leave camp early because the extreme indoor temperatures resulted in an asthma attack. She cried and cried and I consoled her explaining she would return when better. But she compassionately explained why she was upset. "Nia goes to that school, Mommy and she has asthma too? She will get sick if she stays there! Can she come to school with me?" And there went my light bulb. Our summer experience was another child's year long experience in a sick school.

Bridgeport is constantly advocating for funds and deservingly so. But in regards to sick schools, it cannot keep up with the demands of maintaining 30+ schools efficiently and effectively. It just doesn't have the funds to adequately prioritize towards this. And without guidelines and procedures, who's impacted? Students like Nia, those who look like you and me.

In order to protect and support a healthy and safe environment conducive to teaching and optimal for student learning, we need your help establishing guidelines, procedures, and funding to address issues negatively impacting our students like mold, extreme temperatures, lead exposure, and poor water and air quality with clear and effective timelines for remediation. Without your help, our schools will continue to be sick and in turn our students. Don't you agree that all students deserve safe and healthy school?

Thank you for your time.