

**Testimony before the District of Columbia Council  
Committee on Education  
June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**Hearing on B20-723 “Special Education Student Rights Act of 2014”, B20-724 “Enhanced  
Special Education Services Act of 2014”, and B20-725 “Special Education Quality  
Improvement Act of 2014”**

**Shana Watson**  
202-710-3438  
2726 Langston Place SE Apt 102.  
Washington, DC 20020  
shanawatson84@yahoo.com

My name is Shana Watson and I am a mother of 4 children in DC Public Schools and a resident of ward 8. I'm here today to talk about the problems I have experienced while trying to get my children the special education services they need.

At the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, in October, I talked to my daughter's teacher at Stanton Elementary and asked that my daughter be evaluated for special education. It has been 7 months and the evaluation is just now beginning to happen. It is now the summertime. The school takes too long to get back to me and my daughter is not getting the help she needs. I am very frustrated because I do not want my daughter to be held back, but she needs more help with reading and math.

My daughter is about to be 7 years old and she is not reading where she is supposed to be. The other kids can read full books, but she can't. When she does her homework she can't read the directions and doesn't understand what she is supposed to do. She needs help with math too, but reading is where she has the most problems. She is behind in reading and math.

My daughter is still not receiving the help she needs even though I asked for her to be evaluated over seven months ago. Without evaluations I do not know exactly what she needs to help her read and catch up in school. The longer I have to wait for the evaluation the more time my daughter spends struggling to read and learn. If she had been evaluated within 60 days of when I asked then I might not have to worry about her being held back in school, but the school took too long. I want the best for my daughter and her education, and I want her to receive the help she needs right away so that she does not fall further behind. Requiring schools to evaluate students within 60 days is important so that they get the services they need and are able to learn in school.

