

Dear Reinstate Dr. Siebens Listserv Subscriber,

This is our first update since Dr. Siebens got the news that he would not be in his classroom for the 8/25 start of school.

1. Michelle Rhee Provides The File

On August 1st, after obtaining Dr. Siebens' authorization to provide them with any documents relating to his employment, DC Council Chairman Vincent Gray and Councilmember Mary Cheh wrote Michelle Rhee requesting all information pertaining to Dr. Siebens' employment and subsequent separation from his position at Wilson.

On August 8, Michelle Rhee provided the file to the Councilmembers.

On August 15th, after personally reviewing every page in the file, Chairman Gray met with Dr. Siebens and his wife and released the contents of the file to them with the transmittal letter from Chancellor Rhee which stated: "We are providing to Chairman Gray, pursuant to the Consent for Release...copies of the documents in Dr. Siebens' Personnel file that are covered by his Consent and that we have been able to locate." The file was considerably thicker than the documents contained in Dr. Siebens' official DCPS personnel folder.

In an email to Dr. Siebens' lead attorney, Chairman Gray wrote, ***"I know firsthand there is nothing in that file which even remotely approaches justification for a decision not to reappoint him. He is a first-class teacher, a real gift to our children."***

A parent wrote me last week, echoing many other comments I have received, ***"This whole episode really dampens my enthusiasm for the efforts of Rhee and others to reform DCPS. Their support for a bad decision and not having the courage to overrule it is, to say the least, not very admirable."***

2. Preparations for Phase 2: Media Plan and Legal Defense Fund

And so it's time to prepare for the next phase of our effort to reinstate DCPS' top-performing biology teacher to Wilson for the sake of its students. As you know, at Dr. Siebens' request, we have thus far refused press inquiries, with just a few articles bubbling up in the local press, the latest being Harry Jaffe's August 8th column in the *Examiner*, copy attached. But with the decision not to reinstate Dr. Siebens, it is time to move forward with the next phase of our initiatives.

Media

We are now building our media plan through the help of some very savvy parents and supporters. This plan is being built around using obvious points of media

interest over the weeks and months ahead. In order to make certain that we have the broadest and most strategic possible plan, we need your help. **Please email me if you are a reporter or have good contacts with print/television/radio/internet/etc. reporters/producers/publishers/news directors/etc. who might be interested in this story of how exceptional teachers — the ones we want in the classroom — are being sacrificed in the name of flawed No Child Left Behind restructurings, and how the administration is failing its constituents who have entrusted it not to undermine the quality of our teachers.**

In addition, if you are involved in public relations or communications, please let me know if you would like to help us design and implement our media plan.

If you have been out of town and are just reading this long after I sent it, please still respond with your contacts and suggestions since our media planning will benefit from your contacts and ideas.

Art Siebens Legal Defense Fund

The Washington Teachers' Union has filed a grievance on behalf of Dr. Siebens to restore him to his position as a biology teacher at Wilson. It is awaiting DCPS' response.

While we are unable to discuss legal strategy and developments in this forum, I have it on very good authority that Dr. Siebens is exploring all of his legal options and has incurred legal fees to date. Numerous people have asked me over the past months how they can contribute to assist Dr. Siebens and his wife pay their legal bills. To this end, we have established the Art Siebens Legal Defense Fund. (Although I am a lawyer, I am an unpaid volunteer to this effort — rest assured that real lawyers are involved!)

We would be grateful for your contributions to offset Dr. Siebens' legal fees, which can be sent as follows:

**Art Siebens Legal Defense Fund
c/o Paul Mahon
1735 Connecticut Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20009**

It is one thing for Dr. Siebens to be wrongfully removed from his classroom for no valid reason, it is quite another for him to suffer the financial costs on a teacher's salary of trying to get back into his classroom. The people who put Dr. Siebens on the removal list and who chose not to protect him do not expect a teacher to be able to defend himself. Help us prove them wrong!

While Dr. Siebens has already retained both lead counsel and litigation counsel, if you are a lawyer, please let me know if you would like to volunteer to help the legal defense team. We are interested in hearing from lawyers who specialize in labor law, education law/the No Child Left Behind Act, the DC Whistleblower Protection Act, constitutional law, or who otherwise feel they can contribute to the team.

Onward!

Best,

Paul

Paul Mahon

Wilson Parent of Maddie ('07) and Hanna ('09)

Maddie had Anatomy & Physiology with Dr. Siebens

Hanna had AP Biology with Dr. Siebens

Please visit our website <http://www.reinstatedrart.com> to learn more about our cause and to access resources in support of the students' petition which can be seen at: <http://gopetition.com/petitions/reinststate-dr-art-siebens.html>