

Dear Reinstate Dr. Siebens Listserv Subscriber,

Today is the first day of school for DCPS and Dr. Siebens is back in the classroom. Unfortunately, it's not his classroom at Wilson.

1. **From Wilson to Woodson.**

Last week Dr. Siebens was told by DCPS to report to Woodson High School at Ron Brown in Northeast DC. As Woodson is being renovated, Dr. Siebens' classroom will be at Ronald H. Brown Middle School, which is being used as a swing space.

Dr. Siebens will be teaching Environmental Sciences to 9th graders. While Dr. Siebens has never taught Environmental Sciences before, he will teach what he is directed to teach (just like he taught Botany for the first time last year at the request of the Wilson administration).

So whatever the reason is why Dr. Siebens was dismissed from Wilson — which was not explained in the documents Michelle Rhee provided to DC Council Chairman Vince Gray — it obviously is not enough of a reason to keep Dr. Siebens from teaching students at a different high school.

***Which means that the losers in this senseless situation are Wilson students who no longer will be taught by the top-performing biology teacher in DCPS after more than 18 years of making a difference in their lives.***

***If Mayor Fenty can personally intervene to change the timing of a traffic light at Connecticut and Morrison as he did last week, why wouldn't he intervene to correct a mistake and keep a top-performing teacher at our school?***

***Why are the Powers That Be so afraid of letting Dr. Siebens teach at Wilson? What is the message his removal sends about the administration's plans for quality teaching at our school? Who is the next top-performing teacher to go?***

Many questions, no answers.

2. **Meet the Legal Team (so far).**

Last week, I told you that we had launched the Art Siebens Legal Defense Fund. We want to thank everyone for the generous outpouring of support to help Dr. Siebens and his wife pay their legal bills on a teacher's salary. The response has been remarkable: the very first day's mail after my announcement brought in \$1,100.

The Washington Teachers' Union has been tremendously supportive of the grievance it filed on behalf of reinstating Dr. Siebens to Wilson, right up to its President, George Parker, who has a lot on his plate. Following the required initial hearing before a DCPS official, the WTU has indicated its commitment to proceed with arbitration under the collective bargaining agreement. ***The lawyers tell me that there is a very strong probability that Dr. Siebens will win the arbitration and be reinstated at Wilson. It is sad to think that the Mayor and Michelle Rhee lack the courage to do the right thing for Wilson students and parents without an arbitrator making them do it.***

I wanted to tell you a little bit about the lawyers whom Dr. Siebens has engaged to advise him on his reinstatement. In addition to the attorneys below, over a dozen lawyers have generously volunteered their time and expertise to the legal team.

Dr. Siebens' lead counsel is **Beth Slavet**. Beth served eight years on the federal Merit Systems Protection Board, and was appointed by President Clinton as its Chairman. The MSPB adjudicates almost all federal employment cases — over 1,500 cases a year at the Board level — involving issues such as employment retaliation, whistleblowing, constructive suspension, hostile environment, etc.

Beth also supervised the adjudication of over 40 Administrative Judges nationwide. Prior to the MSPB, Beth worked as Labor Counsel to Senator Kennedy's Labor and Resources Committee (now the HELP Committee, Health Education, Labor and Pensions), the Senate Committee responsible for No Child Left Behind, where she handled various labor and employment issues, including public employment concerns. In her private practice, Beth represents public employees and unions in DC, including actions against DCPS. In 2003, Beth received the Connie Morella Whistleblower Award from The Fund for Constitutional Government's Government Accountability Project "honoring leadership beyond the call of duty in defense of federal employees' freedom to defend the public".

Assisting Beth is **Ben DiMuro** of **DiMuro Ginsberg**, a boutique litigation firm located in Alexandria, Virginia. President of the Virginia State Bar in 2002, Ben has tried over 150 cases and has been recognized for his civil litigation and employment law work. He is the recipient of a 1995 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award from the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice and was named a finalist for the 2006 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award. You can learn more about Ben and his firm at: <http://www.dimuro.com>

More to come. Watch this space.

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/reinstate-dr-art-siebens.html>