

All,

447 Strong and Growing

The students working for the return of their teacher launched their petition to support the reinstatement of Dr. Siebens last Thursday. Now, only 5 days later over summer vacation, **there are 447 signatures of current and former Wilson students and their parents joining to urge the rehiring of Dr. Siebens**, many of them posting passionate comments about the remarkable impact he has had on their lives. He has told me he weeps when he reads the comments and is saddened that his students have had to resort to this effort to return him to the classroom, as grateful as he for everything that everyone is doing on his behalf.

For those of you have signed the petition but have not yet sent emails to the decision makers, please consider doing so, amplifying on the comments made in the petition and your own experiences to the following:

adrian.fenty@dc.gov
mayor@dc.gov
amfenty@hotmail.com
Michelle.Rhee@dc.gov
petecahall@hotmail.com
Pete.Cahall@dc.gov
VGray@DCCOUNCIL.US
MCheh@DCCOUNCIL.US
yalexander@DCCOUNCIL.US
jrauch@DCCOUNCIL.US
victor.reinoso@dc.gov

Please send a copy to me so that we can add your letter to the record we are building.

Support from Former LSRT Chair Marlene Berlin

Marlene Berlin knows a lot about Wilson, having served both as LSRT Chair at Wilson over the remarkable span of 2001-2007 and as a founding member of the Wilson Management Corp. (She was previously LSRT Co-Chair at Alice Deal for several years.) She knows a lot about teachers and what schools and students need to be successful. She also knows what Dr. Siebens does in the classroom since he taught her two daughters. Here's what she wrote to all of the decision makers above:

----- Forwarded Message

From: Marlene Berlin <berlin.marlene@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, 21 Jul 2008 13:32:00 -0400

To: <michelle.rhee@dc.gov>, <petecahall@hotmail.com>, <pete.cahall@dc.gov>

Cc: <adrien.fenty@dc.gov>, <mayor@dc.gov>, <amfenty@hotmail.com>, <vgray@dcccouncil.us>, <mcheh@dcccouncil.us>, <yalexander@dcccouncil.us>, <jrauch@dcccouncil.us>, <victor.reinoso@dc.gov>

Subject: Art Siebens

As I sat around a dinner table last night with a group of parents whose children all have had Dr. Siebens, and a question was posed, "If you heard about Dr. Siebens being fired and you were a parent at Deal, would you consider sending your children to Wilson? For most of us around the table the answer was no. Many high performing students end up at Wilson because it has the strongest AP program in the city. We, as parents recognize the value Wilson affords us and the city, and many of us contribute time and energy through the PTSA and LSRT to make this school a better place for all students. It is teachers such as Dr. Siebens that make the AP program what it is, and keep us in the DCPS system. And let's not be cavalier, it is difficult to find teachers of such caliber as Dr. Siebens, especially science teachers. I know this because I have sat as Chair and Co-Chair of LSRT's at both Deal and Wilson for many years.

So when Dr. Siebens is told "he does not fit in," the message is quite clear to high achieving students is that they do not fit in either, their educational needs do not count. Is it that the focus of NCLB has so tipped the balance of our educational system in DC that teachers who are successful with high performing students no longer count? Is this what you intend? Because I will tell you, there will be many parents out there questioning whether Wilson can continue to be a school for high performing students when teachers such as Dr. Siebens are told "They do not fit in."

A gross mistake was made when Dr. Siebens was fired. Before this situation spirals out of control and has the potential to impact, not only the future of Wilson as a school valuing and able to serve high performing students, but also brings into question how NCLB is being implemented, I strongly urge you to acknowledge that this was a mistake, and Dr. Siebens be rehired.

Marlene Berlin
Co-Chair of Deal 1998-2000
Chair/Co-chair Wilson 2001-2007
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Washington, DC 20008
mberlin@baller.com

Marlene Berlin cares for Dr. Siebens and the future of Wilson. Please send your own support letter now, so that our Mayor, Chancellor Rhee and Principal Cahall can hear from you. And spread the word.

Best,

Paul