

All,

First, happy Bastille Day, a day we celebrate overcoming tyranny. Today's motto for the Parents Listserve is: liberté, égalité, fraternité and Siebensé.

I wanted to share with you a letter of support that Kevin Twillman just sent on behalf of Art, copied below.

Shortly I will also circulate the transcript of the DC Council's questions and comments with the students from Saturday's hearing, as well as an update from the students group on their efforts.

So far, so good.

Best,

Paul

----- Forwarded Message

**From:** Kevin Twillman <[ktwillman@msn.com](mailto:ktwillman@msn.com)>

**Date:** Mon, 14 Jul 2008 22:17:18 -0400

**To:** <[pete.cahall@dc.gov](mailto:pete.cahall@dc.gov)>

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**Subject:** Dr. Siebens

Dear Mr. Cahall,

My wife, Shirley and I, are the proud parents of two students attending Wilson High School. Our daughter, Meredith, is a rising senior and our son, Michael, is a rising sophomore. We would like to welcome you to the Wilson community and imagine that your first few weeks have not been without a great many challenges. We wish you all the best.

I am writing to you today to ask you to reconsider the status of one of the finest teachers I have met in the DCPS system, Dr. Art Siebens. My daughter, Meredith, had Dr. Siebens last year for AP Biology and while finding the course material difficult, she successfully completed the course due to the efforts of Dr. Siebens. He challenged his students, and they became better students as a result. Dr. Siebens' commitment to his students was demonstrated by the extra effort he put in and the support he extended to them. He regularly held special sessions during lunch hours which were available to all. The two CDs of songs about biology that he wrote and recorded reflect his creativity in delivering subject matter in a way that is intriguing and entertaining. He is a fantastic biology teacher as evidenced by the scores his students get on the advanced placement tests.

Our two children started out in the DCPS system at Janney Elementary and from there Meredith went to Hardy Middle School in the 6th grade and then to Wilson in the 9th. Michael proceeded to Deal Junior High School and was in the 9th grade group that transitioned to Wilson last year. Not a day goes by that my wife and I do not second guess our decision about staying in DC and sending our children to DCPS. What has kept us going are those rare outstanding teachers that we have had the good fortune to meet. Dr. Siebens is one such teacher. He is a special talent that Wilson must have if it is going to succeed as a place where quality education happens every day.

I find it impossible to understand why such a teacher would be restructured out of Wilson. The challenge of teaching students AP Biology is certainly not going away and there is no better teacher for that than Dr. Siebens.

I am asking you to please reconsider the decision regarding Dr. Siebens and to return him to the faculty of Wilson High School. The students at Wilson deserve to have great teachers like Dr. Siebens.

Again, Shirley and I wish you every success in your quest to make Wilson a superior school. To do that will require having superior teachers on the faculty and superior teachers, as you know, are hard to find. Dr. Siebens is just such a teacher. I strongly believe he needs to be on our team.

Sincerely,

Kevin Twillman