

## **National Radical Women**

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March 11, 2010

Superintendent Frances Gallo  
Central Falls School District  
21 Hedley Avenue  
Central Falls, RI 02863

Dear Superintendent Gallo,

Radical Women is appalled by the recent firing of teachers and support staff at Central Falls High School. How in the world can schools improve if teachers are summarily fired or if the schools with the lowest test scores are suddenly deprived of their administrators?

The firings are shortsighted, to say the least. Whose idea was it to destroy education in order to save it? Nobody works harder than teachers, and their achievements are remarkable given inadequate funding, overcrowded classes and a host of social ills that play themselves out in the classroom.

Rather than punitive action, it would be more productive to ask teachers what they think will improve schools. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation recently funded a survey of what teachers think will actually improve schools. How unique, to ask the people who work with students week in and week out what will help enhance their knowledge and understanding. The Central Falls School Board could have taken this route and work with the teachers, students and families in your district. Did anyone ask those effected – students, teachers or parents – what would best serve the school or the district?

Teachers don't need so-called merit pay, preemptory firings and more standardized tests – all strategies aimed at destroying cooperative work, a sense of stability and creative thinking. What does help education flourish is well-educated teachers who are not overburdened by overflowing classrooms, caring educators who have the time and the desire to listen to children and challenge them to learn, teachers who can count on administration and public to support them when they do a good job.

Teachers must receive the respect they deserve for their work, because without it, they are ill equipped to give students the support and respect they need in order to learn.

Radical Women is an international community-based socialist feminist organization dedicated to the freedom and equality of all. We support public

education, teachers and students. Firing professionals who are doing their best against incredible odds is no way to run a school or a school district. Reinstate the teachers and staff of Central Falls High School!

Sincerely,

Janet Sutherland  
Radical Women  
Retired school teacher

Cc: Anna Cano-Morales, Chair, Board of Trustees  
Mayor Charles Moreau, Central Falls  
Denise DeBarros, Council Manager, Advisory Council  
Jane Sessums, President, Central Falls Teachers' Union