

Standing in Solidarity with Sarah Chambers

May 9, 2017

Sarah Chambers is an award winning special education teacher in Chicago's Saucedo Academy. Sarah is a local leader a national figure in the fight to defend and transform public education against the corporate education reform attack. She is a relentless advocate for special education students and LGBTQ students. Sarah is a published author, organizer, and speaker on issues of education reform and social justice.



Now Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has accused her of encouraging student to opt out of the PARCC Test, a wholly unsubstantiated charge. While Sarah has long been a proponent of promoting critical thinking over drill-and-kill standardized testing, her advocacy has always been directed at consciousness raising among her colleagues to help change policy, not telling kids what to do about the tests. It is clear that CPS has suspended her and is moving to fire her for her courageous advocacy on behalf of her students.

Moreover, this attack on Sarah Chambers is an attack on the entire movement for education justice, the movement for authentic assessment over standardized testing, and an attack on union organizers generally.

We the undersigned demand that the Chicago Public Schools drop their erroneous charges against Sarah Chambers and instead use their resources to better support the social, emotional, and academic development of Chicago students.

Celebrate national teacher appreciation day today by supporting one of the true champions of social justice education in the country! Help Sarah today by sharing this statement on social media and by signing the online petition.

Wayne Au

Professor, School of Educational Studies, University of Washington
Editor, Rethinking Schools

Bill Bigelow

Curriculum Editor, Rethinking Schools
Co-Director, Zinn Education Project

Nancy Carlsson-Paige

Professor Emerita Lesley University

Michelle Fine

Distinguished Professor of Critical Psychology, American Studies and Urban Education, The Graduate Center CUNY

Jesse Hagopian

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Julian Vasquez Heilig

Professor of Educational Leadership, Director of the Doctorate in Educational Leadership, California State University Sacramento. California NAACP Education Chair.

Brian Jones

Educator and activist, New York City

Doctoral candidate in Urban Education, City University of New York Graduate Center

Journey for Justice (J4J)

An alliance of grassroots community, youth, and parent-led organizations in 24 cities across the country

Kevin Kumashiro

Former Dean, University of San Francisco School of Education

Jia Lee

Elementary School teacher, Earth School, NYC

Organizer, Movement of Rank-and-File Educators

Jose Luis Vilson

Author, *This is Not a Test*

Executive Director of EduColor

Lois Weiner

Professor, New Jersey City University

Director, Urban Education and Teacher Unionism Police Project

(This statement also appears on the blog of teacher and education activist Jesse Hagopian.)