

National Black Church Initiative

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For immediate release

Media Advisory

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The National Black Church Initiative Supports Central Falls High School's Firing of Teachers

NBCI considers the firings the first shot in an education revolution for minority children

Washington, DC – [The National Black Church Initiative](http://www.naltblackchurch.com) (NBCI), a coalition of 34,000 African American and Latino churches, strongly supports the Board of Trustees of Central Falls School District in Rhode Island for their firing of all of its teachers and administrative staff. This is long overdue in education. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association are two unions that are far too powerful and have been the chief cause of the systematic failure of African American and Latino kids in this country. This is largely due to these unions protecting mediocre teachers; teachers who do not care about minority children and exhibit a sense of entitlement. It has been reported for years that African American and Latino children were subject to the worst teachers available. These teachers were neither qualified or committed to the standards of excellence in education. Setting standards and high expectations are two of the issues facing minority communities.

The reason why schools such as Central Falls do not set nor expect any expectations from their minority children is because they do not care about them and do not want to work hard to save the life of that child. This was clearly demonstrated when the superintendent of the Central Falls District asked teachers to have lunch with their students, spend one hour after school with failing students and speak with students for ninety minutes about achieving excellence in their education. The teachers balked at the idea of incorporating these educational methods without receiving additional pay even though they were paid an average of \$72,000 a year.

The Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the National Black Church Initiative states with conviction, "At one time in my life I would have never ever thought of blaming teachers for the failure of their students. I would have easily said that in light of the sociological and political racist structure of American society that teachers are merely pawns in this game and cannot be blamed for America's racist plan to systematically undermine the hopes and dreams of African American and Latino children. But now, because I am educated and clearly understand the difference between will and circumstances, I know for sure that anyone can overcome any barrier if there is a will to learn and to teach -- especially with the help of a \$72,000 salary.

The teachers failed themselves because they believed they were untouchable and they made the wrong calculation that they can do whatever they choose to do with those minority children. They calculated wrong because they thought they could completely ignore the aspirations and dreams of those children and created an environment of failure without any consequences. This is why the Black Church is standing up for our children and is saying to those teachers: 'No. You will not ignore them any longer and perpetuate a psychology of failure when we are paying you to bring to bear your skill set to break the barrier of failure and to create joy and hope for all of God's precious children who He calls "the Kingdom of God." We will not accept nor tolerate failure at any cause.'"

According to the NECAP results (New England Common Assessment Program), of the Central Falls High School students who participated in the assessments, 22% were identified with Limited English proficiency with English as their second language compared to 3 % for the state. Twenty-three percent had an IEP (individualized education plan designed for students with special needs) compared to the state average of 17% and 85% were classified as economically disadvantaged compared to the state average of 35%. In addition to this, 93% of the students at Central Falls failed their Math efficiency test this year. This was an improvement because in 2008 97% of the students failed.

The teachers want us to believe that the reason for the high failure rates is because 65% of the students were Latinos and were not proficient in English. They want us to accept the fact that it is alright to pay teachers three times as much as the medium income in Central Falls, Rhode Island, but not have any acceptable outcome from that pay. The firings are completely justified because they simply failed to do what they were paid to do, and that is to teach the kids how to read, write, reason and dream. They did not fail the children they failed themselves.

About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 34,000 African-American and Latino churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI's mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches and the public. The National Black Church Initiative's methodology is utilizing faith and sound health science. The National Black Church Initiative's purpose is to partner with major organizations and officials whose main mission is to reduce racial disparities in the variety of areas cited above. NBCI offers faith-based, out-of-the-box and cutting-edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. NBCI's programs are governed by credible statistical analysis, science-based strategies and techniques, and methods that work.