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I Sure Hope Rita Wilson Isn't A Math Teacher

Posted by [Erick Erickson](#) ([Profile](#))

Wednesday, May 26th at 3:55PM EDT

31 Comments

[RealClearPolitics](#) has a [video circulating](#) of an exchange between Governor Chris Christie and Rita Wilson, a school teacher in the Rutherford School District.

The teacher demands more salary, telling Christie, "if she were paid \$3 an hour for the 30 children in her class, she'd be earning \$83,000, and she makes nothing near that."

Christie told her that teachers go into teaching knowing the salary. The teacher tries to claim she does it as a calling, but clearly thinks she should be doing it to earn a cushy living.

There's just one problem. [There is one Rita Wilson working for the Rutherford School District.](#) Assuming the teacher confronting Governor Christie is the same lady, she has no freaking clue what she makes.

Public records from the school district show her making \$86,000+.

So yes Governor, you should support this lady being paid \$3.00 per child and save some money.

Category: [Chris Christie](#), [New Jersey](#), [Rita Wilson](#)

31 Comments

What gets me..

[jamesrileyjr](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 4:27PM EDT ([link](#))

...is that that's just BASE pay. AND she gets a STIPEND on top of that of \$652, just for being a co-curricular teacher, which I'll be honest I have no clue what that means, but it sounds like just being available for other curriculums makes her worth another \$652? And read through all of that - they have a teacher being paid another \$15 per hour just to keep an eye on the computer room! On top of their already high 55k salary and benefits! Really? It's not enough to gouge the taxpayers of Bergen County, you've got to really stick it to them just so you can run their computer room for them? That's absolutely ridiculous.

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I don't know what Bergen County is like

[cookcountyconservative](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 6:18PM EDT ([link](#))

but when I went to school (way back when) someone to monitor the computer room or the library or whatever, was called a “room mother” volunteering her time for nothing. \$15 bucks an hour - geeez.

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If you want to know what it's like,

[jamesrileyjr](#) Thursday, May 27th at 12:37PM EDT ([link](#))

...watch Real Housewives of NJ. The whole thing takes place in Bergen County. Literally that's exactly what it's like. I'd love to lie and say, nah it's really a nice, down to earth place, but no it's exactly like that. In every way.

And for those wondering, those Jersey Shore kids? The ones on the show are actually from NY and other places... but Seaside Heights and other shore towns are FULL of people like that from Hudson, Bergen, Passaic, Essex and Union counties.

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What it boils down to

[conservativecrusade](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 5:32PM EDT ([link](#))

is that she is a sheep of the union. They tell her how evil the republicans are and how underpaid she is, she rolls her head back and forth, then repeats the rhetoric. Teachers should get paid high for the tough job they do, but their jobs should be contingent on results.

Kids test poorly, lose part of your pay in order to pay for tutors. Let it happen too often, fired and barred from working as a teacher in the state. Bet students would start to get better grades real fast.

By the way her math is even worse than explained on here.

My math for 3 dollars a student times 6 teaching hours a day times 180 days teaching days in a year, equals \$97, 200 for a year. She just needs to be fired! This is all assuming each class always has 30 students, she teaches for a total of 6 hours a day, and the school keeps with the average of 180 day school year.

Getting rid of socialist, lying, un-American, scumbag, arrogant, criminal democrats is the Viagra of conservative men. There is nothing that gets a bigger and better rise out of us conservative men than to see the pained disappointment of Democrats who have just found out they lost at their attempt at being elected so they could Fu*K our country over that much more!

Is minic a gheibhean beal oscailt diog dunta!
An open mouth often catches a closed fist!

Coimhead fearg fhear na foighde

Beware the anger of a patient man

Is minic a bhris beal duine a shron.
Many a time a man's mouth broke his nose

Go hifreann leat, Obama, go dtachta an diabhal tu!
To hell with you, Obama, may the devil choke you!

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Union Sheep

[msggrant](#) Thursday, May 27th at 10:37AM EDT ([link](#))

Love the union sheep description, complete with the head-rolling back and forth imagery. (A "bleating-heart" liberal, maybe?)

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Let's give her the \$3 an hour.

[NeoKong](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 5:38PM EDT ([link](#))

But we get to subtract it back for every student who doesn't graduate.

Remember in November.

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Hmmm. You may be onto something here...

[acat](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 6:06PM EDT ([link](#))

In just about any sane industry, "merit increases" would be tied to, well, "merit", i.e. someone who does a superior job.

So, suppose we start a new teacher out at, I dunno, 60% of average teacher salary. We do away with the COLA and instead, every year, their raise is figured based on how their class does on standardized tests.

Wasn't this the big beef about NCLB? That it was somehow all about "teaching to the test instead of real teaching"? Maybe if the pay scale was re-adjusted to reward ability to teach, as measured by the test, then we'd have some better teachers ...

Mew

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Would not work like you think...

[manfred](#) Thursday, May 27th at 3:51PM EDT ([link](#))

My wife is a school teacher as well as many in my family. Be glad there are some good conservative teachers out there...

The problem with merit based pay off of standardized tests is that teachers can't control the students they get. In the case of my wifes school they tend to put as many of the troubled kids into the same class as possible so as not to hurt the learning of the other classes. You also have parents who think it is important for their mentally handicapped child to be in the same classroom as all the other students and the kids who can not even speak English. These students would kill the teachers chance at getting merit raises.

I believe at a local level things can be done to encourage excellence such as giving school principles a set amount of funds for them to award teachers as a bonus for merit.

[img]http://photos-b.ak.fbcdn.net/hphotos-ak-snc1/hs023.snc1/3087_67179958349_510843349_1545529_4111206_s.jpg[img]

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This story is just chock full of good quotes.

[mikerazar](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 5:41PM EDT ([link](#))

Christie is really going to save NJ.

As an ex-math prof and lifetime geek, allow me to chastise the reporter for throwing dollar amounts around with saying the amount of time they cover. A common trick. Also where does the three dollar figure come from? If you value teachers shouldn't you pay at least \$10 for whatever time or effort we are talking about?

And one more thing...I spend a couple of hours a day swingin' in a hammock. I only do it because I love it. Given my education, the govt. should pay me fifty bucks an hour...where do I send the bill?

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Your last point was exactly the one that got me when I read this.

[earlgrey](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 5:46PM EDT ([link](#))

It reminds me of the people that would complain that they have to keep a job they hate because of the benefits (another reason we need universal healthcare). Hello! It's called life!

I guess that is why we are in decline, life has been too easy. That's going to change.

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I started a war with the National Extortion Association

[Achance](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 6:27PM EDT ([link](#))

a few years ago, one that led to my only actual run for public office.

The Juneau Education Association was whining and threatening to strike, i.e., take away everybody's babysitters, as they sought a new contract. Their biggest bitch was that they were underpaid, the average salary being only \$54K and starting salary around \$40K. And while the bitching was very public, the actual negotiations were behind closed doors. Well, I know how teacher bargaining works; the Board that the NEA bought, and the Superintendent vetted by the NEA, go through a charade of bargaining that ends in a threat to take away the babysitters. Since I negotiate labor agreements for a living and was working for a Democrat so I didn't have much to do, I decided to mess with the EA.

So, I write an Op-Ed in which I take their \$54K for nine months of 7.5 hour days and extrapolated it out to what notoriously overpaid and underworked State employees make. Turns out, the three best things about teaching really are June, July, and August. When you extrapolated their REQUIRED hours of work out to a State employee's required hours of work in a year, only people like the highest level directors, commissioners, SC Justices, etc. made as much as the AVERAGE teacher. They went NUTS! 'Course, they couldn't refute it, and they couldn't do ad hominem better than I could. Finally, one of the real union guys that I dealt with called them and said, "you know, he likes doing this, so every time you write something, you make him happy." They kinda got that so went into silent mode, but it wouldn't go away. The School Board got nervous and made the negotiations open to the public - which they were legally required to be anyway. So, now that it was public they basically had to negotiate their agreement with me in the paper. Finally, the paper got tired of it and gave both sides one last Op-Ed and called it done. I wasn't prepared to just let them off the hook, so I ran for the Board. I had \$2500 I was prepared to spend and wasn't prepared to either ask anybody for money or actually go to a bunch of meetings held after cocktail hour every Tuesday, so I just used it to keep the war going. I don't even remember how the negotiations turned out; they're still overpaid and underworked, but for once, just once, they actually had to face somebody who knew what he was doing. They really, really didn't like it.

In Vino Veritas

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There is one basic flaw in your calculations.

[*davesinsanantonio*](#) Thursday, May 27th at 7:57AM EDT ([link](#))

Teachers are on the job more time than just facing the students in the classroom. There is lesson preparation, grading papers, making grade reports, calling parents, meeting parents, hall duty, cafeteria duty, bus duty, etc. Then there is that required "in-service" summer learning, back-to-school meetings before students return, classroom prep time, faculty meetings, etc.

When I was still teaching I required my students to take essay tests, and to do research papers; both skills they needed for college at the time (not sure if that is still true) and to be able to think and speak clearly in the work world. It took a lot of non-classroom time to grade all of that. Should I stop doing that because I am not getting paid for it? How would that help the student?

If you want good test results, you have to teach the students to understand what happened, why it happened, and what resulted. Then, when they face an objective test question of the type that are on good standardized tests (the kind that are usually used to judge "merit"), they can think through the question and usually come up with the correct answer. If you teach just names, dates and places, they often cannot.

So, if you are only going to pay teachers for the time they are in the classroom, you are really paying them to be babysitters. Check out the going rate for babysitting, and you will see that most teachers are, indeed, underpaid.

If you want good teachers, that will teach students to think, not just parrot back information (or propaganda), then you have to pay them enough to draw in the best and the brightest. Also, you have to stop using them as a convenient whipping boy all the time. You expect teachers to take today's kids, who are raised largely without much discipline, and with too much given to them without any effort on their part, and with parents who insist that their child be given grades and honors that the student does not "merit". and make them think that what you are presenting in the classroom is important and more worthwhile than talking or texting with friends, or video games, or being "cool". But you trash teachers and public schools and then wonder why teachers want more money???

If you want quality public schools, you have to pay enough to get quality employees, and honor them when they do what you ask. You also have to have the guts to get rid of the bad ones. To many people who bash public schools have not voted in school board elections, or campaigned for school board candidates, or met and talked with teachers about what teaching is really like today. Public schools are largely ignored until something derogatory is printed in the local paper, or hits the TV news, and then they just repeat what bashing they have heard before.

And, when you talk about such things as merit pay based on graduation, or some other such measure, how do you know which teacher talked the student out of dropping out? How do you measure which teacher inspired the student to stretch him or her self? How do you measure talking with a student most mornings when the parent has dropped off their kid two hours before school starts, and ignores the kid when the day is done, and the only adult who will take the time to listen is the teacher? Where does that fit into your "merit pay" scheme. How about basing a large part of the tenth grade World History test on eighth grade American History, so that I am being measured by what someone else was supposed to teach my student two years ago, and I have no control over how my students were taught? Do I take time out of teaching all of world history to re-teach American History? Does that help them learn world history? How is that fair to me or to the student?

Too many people spout "solutions" for things they do not even begin to understand. Remember, for every complex problem there is a simple solution that is completely wrong. Today's public schools is one such very complex problem. Please take the time to really learn what the real problems are before spouting simplistic solutions.

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We don't want a public school monopoly.

[mdd1956](#) Thursday, May 27th at 8:51AM EDT ([link](#))

Our objection is that there is a huge union block of votes trapping our children in a public system that cannot work as advertised or promised. We are forced to pay and have no choice in the education of our kids.

Our kids are in school, we are very involved, let me assure you, the more you know the more you understand how bad and untenable public delivery of education is.

This is a crime against our children, our country and future.

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Retort to "Basic Flaw"

[celderkin](#) Thursday, May 27th at 8:58AM EDT ([link](#))

Dave,

The writers were responding to the statement made by Rita Wilson so their remarks are entirely consistent. She set up the scenario, not them.

You note a large number of extra-classroom activities, but most occur during the school day and one hour afterwards. In our schools, Wednesdays are set aside for early arrival/dismissal for group meetings and planning. Teachers are only required to attend several institute (in-service) days per year, most of which are during the regular school year. Your laundry list actually accounts for only a handful of days, which are within the 180 days noted by several writers when you account for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring breaks.

As for assessment, I am sympathetic. However, these judgments are made by private sector managers all the time. With training and supervision, managers can make pretty good assessments of an individual's performance in a team environment with legacy effects (similar to dealing with the effects of a teacher's performance with a student two years earlier). As a parent, I can certainly evaluate a teacher's relative contribution to my child's learning. But I agree it is not simple.

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And fundamentally, none of the "stuff" you insist

[mbecker908](#) Thursday, May 27th at 9:03AM EDT ([link](#))

that we consider is getting done. Thanks to the fact that the "education establishment" is bought and paid for by the NEA, teachers don't teach. And don't trot out individuals. The damn system is broken. We have states that "graduate" students who can't read the direction on a can of soup. We have drop out rates that are astronomical. We have a system that is designed to serve "educators" - not necessarily "teachers" - and does everything it can to exclude the parents and members of the local community.

The only "simplistic" solutions being offered here are paying these worthless slugs more money. The idea that they should keep their jobs is frightening. Public schools are not complex, they are a cartel and they do significantly more damage to the country than any Colombian or Mexican drug cartel.

You can start to fix the problem with several simple steps.

1. Shut down the US Department of Education. Eliminate every function it currently does and eliminate the money given to it at every level.
2. Shut off subsidizing student loans and kill Pell Grants.
3. Require teachers to have a degree in a real subject: math, history, etc. Disallow a degree (MS or BS) in "Education".
4. Move the purchase of text books from a state level to the local level.
5. Make it illegal for a school employee to sit on a school board.
6. At the state level promote the growth of non-union charter schools.

7. At the university level, eliminate all state/federal funding for departments of “education”.
8. Shut down the “public school” system in Washington DC in it’s entirety. Turn the whole system over to a consortium of private/charter schools.
9. Eliminate defined benefit retirement systems for all employees that are funded with or underwritten by state/federal funds.

That’s a good start.



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No flaw, defensive dave; I do this for a living

[Achance](#) Thursday, May 27th at 9:27AM EDT ([link](#))

and chewing up union goons is just good sport. Note my use of the word required; I even put it in all caps. Now every teacher or teachers’ union goon I’ve ever talked to talked about the long hard hours of uncompensated additional duties, but, you know, those parking lots are empty within minutes of the kiddies being sent home and nobody much comes to work early either or shows up all weighed down with the work they took home.

My experience is that teachers want the “professional” standing but they want the work rules and premium pays that the custodians have. You can’t have it both ways; you’re either a salaried professional or you’re an hourly, OT eligible employee.

And you, defensive Dave, sound just like all the rest of them; it’s all the parents fault. That is utter BS! Public schools took on millions of immigrants whose families spoke a foreign language at home and educated them to be Americans in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. They took on former slaves and the children of former slaves who had been willfully kept in ignorance for centuries and taught them effectively for a hundred years before the complete breakdown of education in the late ’60s and ’70s. Public schools in The South took the kids who lived in penury in the post-Civil War South and who lived with if not illiterate parents certainly illiterate grandparents and gave them a fine education.

No, defensive Dave, it isn’t the parents, it is the garbage being taught by the Ed Schools and spouted by the vast majority of teachers. It is NEA bought and paid for Board and NEA vetted Educrats who refuse to hold teachers accountable, don’t even supervise them once tenured, and who steadfastly refuse to set any standards for student behavior or academic performance. In reality, public school teachers are the least accountable of all public employees. As bad as the DMV or the Highway Maintenance Department might be, they at least have some supervision and there is some little accountability for their performance. Once a public school teacher is accepted and given tenure, actually more of a social and political evaluation than a performance evaluation, there is hardly a pretense of supervision and evaluation and exactly zero accountability for their work product. If they can keep from getting caught in the rack with a student, they can just enjoy a sure and steady progress to a very nice retirement - and along the way they can enjoy June, July, and August. Oh, and those underwater basket weaving classes they take in the summer usually are paid for by the employer, at least in the union states, and also result in more pay for the teacher. And don’t tell me how demanding those summer pedagogy classes are; I’ve had classes with teachers and educrats and I know how

smart they are.

In Vino Veritas

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DaveinSA--wish I could have given you some warning about not defending teachers

[louisiana](#) Thursday, May 27th at 11:05AM EDT ([link](#))

I taught for 20 years & the NEA had virtually no influence in our school system. I would like to offer this CHALLENGE to all the teacher bashers. I will pay for a round trip plane ticket , motel/ meal costs, car rental, etc. to the first person who wants to substitute teach in my town. If you don't want to stay in a motel, I will be glad to have you as a guest in my home. Of course, you will have to wait until school resumes next fall. Pick your month/week & let me know. If you all are so sure it's such an easy job, then I should have plenty of takers--back up your criticism with action.

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Perhaps you and Dave are among the 1% that the other 99%

[Achance](#) Thursday, May 27th at 12:45PM EDT ([link](#))

give a bad name.

In Vino Veritas

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Not sure if I qualify for the 1% , but I would like

[louisiana](#) Thursday, May 27th at 1:56PM EDT ([link](#))

to think that I was a good teacher. I was fortunate to have parents who instilled a strong work ethic in their children & I truly believe that is what made me want to succeed as a teacher. The best reward for me has been when my former students have told me *thank you*. The offer to substitute teach is still open, if you are interested. 😊

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No, one side of my family were teachers going all the way back

[Achance](#) Thursday, May 27th at 3:46PM EDT ([link](#))

to before the Civil War. My sister just retired from teaching. It used to be an honorable profession and remains so for some, a scant some, teachers. I dealt with Educrats, NEA reps, and teachers a lot in my former life of negotiating labor agreements. Frankly, now that all my kids are out of school and I'm retired, I don't want to be in the same building with any of them ever again.

In Vino Veritas

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Who said teaching was an easy job?

[BA Cyclone](#) Thursday, May 27th at 4:33PM EDT ([link](#))

Frankly it's the entitlement mentality of teachers I have a problem with.

If they are professionals, they should act like them. If they are public servants, why should they need to have a union?

Are they afraid of unsafe work rules?

I had great teachers myself, in public school. But that we are supposed to all accept that public schools are the best way to educate children - especially that teachers and unions go hand-in-hand is total fantasy.

Quite frankly, teachers should be paid based on professional performance in an open market system as is every other professional. Unions should be banned from the profession. Teachers go on...STRIKE??! If it's "all about the children" then our public policy should reflect that.

"If Congress can do whatever in their discretion can be done by money, and will promote the General Welfare, the Government is no longer a limited one, possessing enumerated powers, but an indefinite one, subject to particular exceptions." - James Madison

"Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but only those specifically enumerated." - Thomas Jefferson

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The best part of this story

[Scope](#) Wednesday, May 26th at 8:02PM EDT ([link](#))

is that they don't seem to think their records are out there for everyone/anyone to see. While we can still access this info, we can still prove the liars for who they are. She dang well knows how much money she makes.

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Absolutely.

[jamesrileyjr](#) Thursday, May 27th at 12:38PM EDT ([link](#))

Especially when it requires an act of the town council to do it.

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I hate it when...

[Kudzu](#) Thursday, May 27th at 5:54AM EDT ([link](#))

People who work for half a year complain about their salary. Especially when they are a government employee with all the usual non-money benefits (medical/dental...). I make about \$54,000 a year, slightly more if I'm overseas. But it boils down to about \$13/hour in the States with an 11 hour work day. Overseas, with a 24 hour work day and the potential to lose ones life...it comes out to little more or less minimum wage. For those who having figured it out...I'm a ten year active Army Soldier, my pay grade is E7.

So when a government employee gripes about their pay, hand them our pay scale. We don't really complain about it...because we know it sucks going into it. And we continue to do it time and time and time again.

It always did take two of you to take down one of me. - Jo Bob Priddy, North Dallas Forty.

Now on at <http://kudzu630.wordpress.com/>

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Chew 'em up Kud

[Warrior](#) Thursday, May 27th at 5:00PM EDT ([link](#))

When I was an E-5 in the Navy, we figured up our salary to be about two dollars an hour.

“The New Deal began, like the Salvation Army, by promising to save humanity. It ended, again like the Salvation Army, by running flop-houses and disturbing the peace.” Henry Louis Mencken (1880 - 1956)

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As long as we are doing the math here...

[livefreenh](#) Thursday, May 27th at 8:20AM EDT ([link](#))

Florida law states 900 net hours for grades 4-12, and 900 hours times \$3 times 30 kids equals \$81,000.00, which is even less than the full amount she is [over]paid. And this would overlook the notion that we are considering paying this person NINETY DOLLARS PER HOUR TO TEACH FOURTH GRADERS. Nice work, if you can get it.

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My simplistic answer

[winsomlosesome](#) Thursday, May 27th at 11:44AM EDT ([link](#))

is homeschooling. I had the pure pleasure of homeschooling my granddaughter for one school year and have never enjoyed anything more. She learned more, I learned a lot, and paid out of my own

pockets for the pleasure!

She went back into public school the following year and was so much further ahead of her school mates in every subject that she was actually bored with the lack of intellectual challenge there, but she loved getting back into the thick of things with her classmates.

If I had it to do all over again, I would homeschool my daughter and then help her homescool her's — beginning in first grade, while making sure there was plenty of interaction with other children. It's a tough job, but well worth it, and that's why I have so much respect for those who homeschool their own.

winsomlosesome

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They can interact

[greatbasinconservative](#) Thursday, May 27th at 2:39PM EDT ([link](#))

with other children at church, like most of the children at the church I attend who are home schooled. The contrast between the way these children behave and interact with each other and adults is striking compared to the children I see who are products of the public school system! The home schooled children have much more self confidence and relate easily to adults and their peers. Not to mention the fact that they are far better educated and more inclined to read books than play video games all day.

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A Message for Republicans

[starboard](#) Thursday, May 27th at 2:50PM EDT ([link](#))

Enough of this “me-too” talk about so-called merit pay for teachers from Republicans like Bill Bennett, Checker Finn and the rest of the Ed bureaucrat wannabes.

We pay our teachers to teach. Doing so, even at a superior level, is included in their wages, especially when you add the protection of tenure to the package.

Instead, how about if more Republicans started to stress “de-merit pay;” if you don’t educate our kids, we cut your pay. Fail to shape up and you’re fired.

Instead of trying to placate the teachers in order to separate them from their unions - which is never going to happen - let’s have Republicans go after them with penalties and threats of further penalties.

That is the only thing bullies understand.

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Should not call them "public schools".

[realskinny](#) Thursday, May 27th at 4:44PM EDT ([link](#))

The public schools which served the nation well until after WWII were run by local school boards consisting primarily of parents. They were destroyed by the School Consolidation Movement which achieved it's goals between 1955–65. The consolidated schools are socialist in nature being controlled by state education departments. Not coincidentally, the decline of the schools dates from 1965. They should universally be called Socialist Schools and socialism does not work.

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The problems w/publick ejukasion are many:

[Warrior](#) Thursday, May 27th at 6:10PM EDT ([link](#))

1. Teachers Unions' goals are not always/usually in the best interests of school children and/or quality education
2. Public teachers have tenure, rather than merit pay & termination of incompetence
3. Due process has been extended to school children, so discipline has gone out the window (see #4)
4. Schools get paid by numbers of butts in seats, not performance (see #7)
5. Parents do blame teachers, coddle their own children and make excuses for them
6. Schools have become top heavy w/support and admin personnel
7. Schools are no longer locally controlled
8. Teachers Unions have become bastions of PC nonsense and socialist drivel

“The New Deal began, like the Salvation Army, by promising to save humanity. It ended, again like the Salvation Army, by running flop-houses and disturbing the peace.” Henry Louis Mencken (1880 - 1956)

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