



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Monique LeNoir
Director of Communications
Phone: (202) 293-8620

PRESS RELEASE

THE WASHINGTON TEACHERS' UNION WINS ARBITRATION AGAINST DCPS IN THE CASE OF 75 TEACHERS TERMINATED WHILE ON PROBATIONARY STATUS IN 2008

WASHINGTON, DC—The Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) today announced that it has won the case of the 75 former DC public school (DCPS) teachers who were terminated while on probationary status in 2008. Yesterday, Arbitrator Charles Feigenbaum ruled that DCPS improperly terminated these 75 teachers by not providing an explanation for their termination. He further ruled that they be reinstated to an appropriate position within DCPS and also receive two years back pay and benefits from DCPS.

"The main issue here was that teachers were terminated without even being informed of their transgression," stated Mindy Holmes the lead attorney on this case. "We fought to protect the process that DCPS must use when it seeks to terminate teachers."

The WTU first attempted to reason and reverse the terminations without litigation. Subsequently, a grievance interrupted by a lawsuit – which we also won - to restore salaries, benefits and privileges was filed.

"This type of mass termination without explanation - the Michelle Rhee way of firing - was unheard of before Rhee and it is irresponsible and costly," stated WTU President Nathan Saunders. "The unfounded and unfair way of firing teachers under the Fenty/Rhee administration must change under the Gray administration to deliver high quality education and leverage limited financial resources. The WTU will legally pursue cases of our members who have been improperly terminated."

(MORE)

CASE CHRONOLOGY

July 2008 - Approximately 80 probationary teachers receive a letter from DCPS that their employment is terminated as of August

August 2008 - The WTU files for an injunction to stop the firings (our demand is denied by Superior Court). DCPS countersues the WTU to permanently stay the arbitration.

August 2009 - Superior Court denies DCPS's lawsuit seeking to stay the arbitration and the arbitration is ordered to go forward.

October 2009 - DCPS appeals the Superior Court order, but WTU gets the appeal dismissed because it was filed late.

2010 - Arbitration ensues.

February 7, 2011 - Arbitrator issues his award GRANTING the Union's grievance.

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