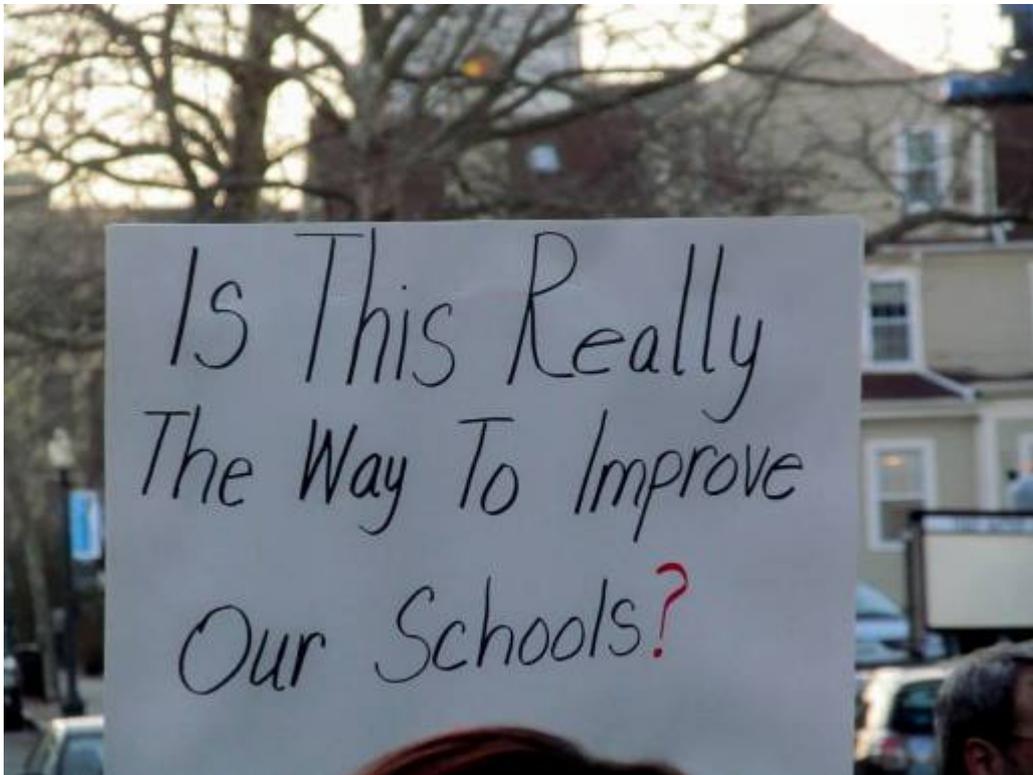


# You've Been Fired. I Don't Need To Do This.



*Here is a letter from a New Bedford High School teacher to Mayor Jon Mitchell in response to his letter 'Were I Permitted to Speak.'*

Mr. Mayor,

I'm confused. Your words and your actions are not matching up. You make statements that contradict what is being told to us.

You see I have attended all the meetings regarding this subject, required meetings, volunteer meetings, school committee meetings, etc. each and every time it has been the teachers that have been told that we must be replaced, that we aren't what the city needs to move forward. We are being kept in limbo.

We are being required to write a letter of intent to stay. We soon will be instructed as to how to reapply for our jobs.

It's my job! I have held it for some time. I have never had a bad evaluation. I do what is required of me and more. I have professional status and I'm tired of being treated in such a non-professional manner by the leadership of New Bedford Public Schools.

Sir, this means you! You are allowing your teachers to live this every day. You cannot respect me. Your actions say this! I choose to teach the children of my city. I give to my city everyday. I try to do what is required of me yet the rigor I attempt to provide falls on deaf ears. I am not respected by the students I try so hard to serve. They do not try to improve. They tell us, "you've been fired. I don't need to do this", and more.

You sir have approved the cuts that have been made to my school. 52 teachers are no longer with us – 52! Where did the number 30 come from? I could go on.

Retirement choices are being made by frightened people that are afraid of loosing everything. This is not the system I started with. Yes I am angry, at you, at EVERY member of the school committee, at member of this community that have no clue as to what it means to teach, as people with an axe to grind.... I demand that this terrorism stop. I will do that at a ballot box. I will not support anyone that doesn't support teachers. I do not need to be told that by my union or anyone. I am very capable of thinking independently.

I am not a lemming! As long as I have breath left I will continue to fight for my kids and my school. I AM NEW BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL!