

September 16, 2005

Letters to the editor  
*The Republican*  
P. O. Box 2350  
Springfield, MA 01102-2350

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the September 16 article entitled *Teachers plan vote of no-confidence*. I was disappointed that the article reporting on the events that took place at the previous night's School Committee meeting said nothing about the request I made during the public speak-out.

I asked the members of the School Committee to follow the law which requires both parties to honor the terms of an expired contract until a new contract has been settled. The Finance Control Board has not invoked state statute 656 to freeze wages. In fact, they have given raises to new teachers and selected veteran teachers. So, legally and morally, the School Committee should place all teachers on their appropriate steps and columns that have been frozen for three years.

The School Committee, with the exception of Antonette Pepe, did not respond. Antonette Pepe spoke of the injustice of this situation and said that she could not speak for the rest of them, but when the Superintendent spoke for the School Committee at the press conference about those raises, he was not speaking for her.

The *Republican* reported, "Burke said the control board sets wages now and made the decision to offer raises to some teachers and not others. He said his choice was to either resign which would have been counter-productive, or go along with it." Dr. Burke along with the members of the School Committee who have not spoken out publicly against this injustice have, by their silence, given their consent.

Dr Burke, you had another choice: to speak out against injustice and speak up for the students and teachers in the Springfield Public Schools. Your public silence is only one of the reasons for the vote of no-confidence. The five silent members of the School Committee will face their vote of confidence on November 8.

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Collins  
President