

April 28, 2004

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

Dear Editor:

Judge Botsford's recommendation to the Supreme Judicial Court after nine months of hearing testimony and reviewing thousands of documents is an affirmation to what those of us who advocate for the children in these districts have been saying all along--the state is not fulfilling its constitutional obligation to the children in our school districts.

Governor Romney's reaction, as reported in *The Republican*, was "Romney wants to strip job protections from teachers, which would give administrators the ability to fire them, creating potential savings."

Governor, if you want to prove your perspective that teachers are the problem, let's take the teaching staff of any of the Springfield Public Schools that your Board of Education has branded as failures and trade them with the teaching staff of the highest performing schools in our surrounding districts as determined by your Board of Education and let's see what changes happen in student test scores. My suggestion is as unrealistic as your Board of Education's accountability system. What teaching staff in their right mind would want to work a longer year with less pay, fewer supplies, fewer materials, an insufficient number of textbooks, inadequate access to technology, a higher percentage of students who live in poverty, a higher percentage of students with identified Special Education needs, students who are not native English speakers and students with significantly less parental involvement and community support?

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Collins
President