



Teachers Can Fight for Higher Pay without Attacking Charters and Canceling School

By Educator Barnes – November 20, 2019

Yesterday, schools across Indiana shut down for the [Red for Ed Action Day](#). Teachers decided to use personal time to attend the rally but some schools had so many teachers taking the day off that districts had no choice but to close. This closure meant students had an e-learning day so that students wouldn't have to make up the day. If a school did not have an e-learning option, students will have to make up the day later in the year.

Parents had to figure out how their children could get the e-learning work done and find a place for them to be for the day since they couldn't go to school. Some parents—like me—took their children to work with them. I appreciate that my principal allowed me to bring my boys to work, but I wish they were at school. My

other options were to pay out of pocket for a full day of childcare or take the day off from work.

I did not want to take the day off from work because I didn't want anyone to think I was at that rally. I now work at a charter school but for 11 years of my career, I worked in traditional public schools. This school year, I went back to public charter. I worked two years in another public charter earlier in my career, which makes this school year my third in the charter world. Some of my so-called professional friends called me a sell-out and said I was drinking the privatization Kool-Aid. Yes, I said so-called friends because, if they really knew me, they would know I am unapologetically pro-school choice. Parents should be in the driver's seat of their children's education. Apparently, my pro-school choice stance was okay or easy for them to tolerate as long as I wasn't working in one.

I can't support a rally where teachers are fighting for more pay on a platform that believes traditional public school teachers should get more pay by eliminating charter schools. The Red for Ed platform constantly attacks charter schools, the same schools that take the students their members couldn't reach. Let's get real. Most of these kids are children of color. They are kids who look like my sons. And that's the other reason I can't get behind this movement. I can't support any movement that wants to shut down options for parents of color.

I agree that teachers need to be paid more. I want all teachers, regardless of the type of school they teach in, to be paid more. That's the only movement I can get behind. Educators can fight for more teacher pay without canceling school.