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Letters to the Editor

HNLetters@Northjersey.com

To the Editor,

I read Mike Kelly's article today about the student protests that recently received so much attention in the *Herald* and am confused by his statements.

So, let me get this straight. Students should protest against all of the issues that Kelly listed in his column. That would be good, right? Except that Kelly has clearly bought into the Governor's claim that teachers pushed the students into "protest mode" without, by the way, any evidence whatsoever to back these statements up. Wouldn't teachers also be accused of pushing the students into protest mode by teaching these issues as well? How would kids learn about the issues Mr. Kelly speaks about if the teachers were not to teach about them as well? And how would the issues be presented in a "fair and unbiased" manner?

We all know that teachers would be blasted when speaking about the incompetence of most of the STATE ADMINISTRATIONS who have been placed in Paterson, with their predilection for program after unsuccessful program, failure to bring facilities up to date, failure to provide new facilities (Christie just shut down two construction sites for Paterson).

Remember that Paterson students tried to protest when a former STATE ADMINISTRATION created total chaos a couple of years ago at Kennedy High School; an issue that was clearly within the boundaries that Mr. Kelly speaks about. Those students were also blasted by the press, even though they were right to protest.

The fact of the matter is that information about the current slaughter of staffing patterns in the schools all over the state is easily seen online, on TV and radio and in the press. Students may not know the ins and outs of the issues, but they know that fewer teachers mean fewer course choices, larger class sizes, less individual attention.

Paterson's students are not stupid. Don't insult them for your politicized views trying to justify the chain saw cuts to education that Christie has imposed when the reductions need the skill of a surgeon. Paterson's kids were promised quality educational opportunities when the state took over. What they have received instead are fewer opportunities, growing classes and poorer facilities. They know that, and yet they continue to go to school, continue to work at their education, and continue to hope that the State will live up to its promises. They also know that these reductions are going to hurt their education for the remainder of the time they are in school, and most likely for most of the time that their younger sisters and brothers are as well.

Even Mr. Kelly should know that.