
Subject: This AAPI teacher got fired for teaching the truth

Teaching students about the wrongful conviction of five Black and Latino teens can get you fired.

New York City public school teacher Jeena Lee-Walker believed it was important to teach her predominantly Black students about the 1989 Central Park Five case, in which five Black and Latino teens were wrongfully convicted for the rape of a white woman. The teens -- now adults -- spent 6 to 13 years in prison until their exoneration in 2002.

Jeena wanted to discuss the disparities of the criminal justice system with her students, but school administrators demanded to keep the lessons “balanced” in fear that Black students would “riot.” When Jeena chose to not water down the facts, supervisors gave her a series of negative performance reviews, and fired her in May 2015.

Jeena is now pursuing a lawsuit against the NYC Department of Education and school administrators. **She expects to hear a response as early as April -- which means we have less than a month to come together to support her case.**

[Sign this petition: tell the NYC Department of Education that we support Jeena](#)

Lee-Walker's lawsuit and disagree with her termination.

Unfortunately, Jeena is not the only teacher who has been fired for teaching truth. Numerous teachers, specifically women of color, have been targeted. **Sireen Hashem**, a Muslim American teacher was fired after showing a video about **Malala Yousafzai**, a young

Pakistani activist for girls' education, **three teachers at Howard Middle School** were fired after teaching Black history lessons "beyond the curriculum," and **a Black teacher** was fired for teaching about the South African apartheid and Trayvon Martin's murder.

By rallying behind Jeena, we can help spark a larger conversation about the role of social justice in the classroom. After hearing about Jeena Lee-Walker's story, Yusef Salaam, one of the men wrongly incarcerated in the Central Park Five case, responded that **teaching Black students about his horrifying experience is essential to helping them understand "what their rights are...how to stay alive, and how to stay out of the grips of the criminal justice system."**

Raise your voice in support of teachers like Jeena Lee-Walker who **#TeachTruth**.

In solidarity,

Oanh-Nhi, Mark, Ashia, Dedunu, Jonathan, and LaToya

18MillionRising and the Educators of Color Group (NYCoRE)

PS - Don't forget to share the [petition](#) with your friends and family after you've signed!

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