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## Excerpted Remarks of Governor Chris Christie to the Foundation for Excellence in Education

November 30, 2010 • Tags: [Education](#)

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I know this...I would not be standing here today if it wasn't for the fact that my parents had the opportunity to send me to the public schools that gave me the best possible education I could have.

In each one of us, there is a certain God-given ability, but that God-given ability will only take us so far.

We need someone to nurture it and draw it out of us. We see this happening today in the best schools, in the best homes and with the best teachers and parents.

But it also has to happen each and every day in what are now the worst schools by nurturing children who do not come from the best homes. We have to draw out and empower parents. And we have to demand that the teachers, the principals and the administrators put these children first.

Not themselves.

If we do not do this...If we do not change what is happening in our mediocre and poor performing schools, then we are failing our children. And continuing to play the blame game and to make excuses only makes the adults feel better.

It does nothing for our children.

...

I'm going to fight as hard as I can against those who believe that what we're fighting for is the status quo.

Because it is not acceptable to let a teacher who can't teach stay in the classroom. It is not acceptable that a child who is neglected in one of our schools must just accept it because of their zip code. It is not acceptable that parents who can't afford to send their children to a private school, or aren't lucky enough to draw a good lottery number, have no choice but to be resigned to the fact that the difference between a successful future for their child and prison has already been predetermined.

No parent should ever have to stand up in that awful moment, with their child's future on the line, and be powerless to change the outcome. It is the terrible complacency of those who defend the status quo, those who accept these choices and circumstances for our children, that we must stand against.

This is the fight. It is not a Democratic fight. It is not a Republican fight.

This is a fight where Republicans and Democrats can stand united. One where President Obama, Mayor Booker, Bill Gates and I can all stand in agreement.

It is a fight for our children.

And yes, sometimes the fight will be angry. Sometimes the fight will be loud. Sometimes the fight will draw tears. And still, sometimes the fight will require embrace.

There is nothing more important to the future of our country than this fight, because this is the fight that will define all of the other fights. This is why we all must have the stomach and the strength to take it on.

...

We cannot let this moment pass us by. We cannot let the enthusiasm and the intensity with which our leaders have been discussing education reform diminish.

...

Failure is not an option. Which is why I would rather lose an election and lose my career, rather than look back and realize that I did not do enough, or that I put myself and my career ahead of the future lives of the children of New Jersey.

So now it's up to all of us. We can and we must stand up and fight for a better future for Newark, for New Jersey and for our entire country.

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