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Governor Christie: This Is Someone Who Understands Challenge

Wednesday, August 21, 2013 Tags: [Education](#)

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06qjIIFZst8>

Paymon Rouhanifard: We know our kids here in Camden are capable of greatness and we simply cannot allow these trends to continue to take hold of our children. I know firsthand it's not only possible to decrease the achievement gap, but we can even reverse it. As we all know, the importance of attaining an excellent education has profound life implications. Those without a high school diploma are 72% more likely to be unemployed. Those with a college degree earn two and half times those who drop out of high school. We can put our students on a pathway to college and career readiness and we can put Camden on track to be the thriving city we know it is. I believe in my bones that the American Dream can live strongly here in Camden. And one reason I believe that is because I've lived that dream.

Governor Christie: I want to thank Paymon again for his willingness to step forward and take on this challenge. It is a significant one. But I think you can tell from his personal story that this is someone who understands challenge. And I think you can tell from the eloquence of his remarks that his parents' commitment to him and his brother for a better education paid off. And he stands here today as a successful example of what can happen for someone who at one point in his life was homeless, penniless and didn't speak English. And today he stands up here as a leader of a school district who has articulated a vision for the future that is uplifting for all of us. There are children in the Camden school system today, I am confident, who face some of those very same challenges. And our job is to make sure that not just one of them, but multiples of them, stand on a stage like this someday in their future like the new Superintendent has and impress an audience like you in the same way that he has impressed this audience today and will impress you even further with his work and his commitment to the people of this city.

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