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We Can't Accept Anything Less Than The Best For Our Children

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Governor Christie: We Can't Accept Anything Less Than The Best For Our C...

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Transcript:

Question: I've been with this school from conception, from the very very beginning when we started in Father English's school and the state came in and said 'no, you can't have it in here, you need to find a building.' They got to Mill Street and I've been with them ever since. I've watched this school birth. I've watched it produce twins, and triplets, and any other number that goes beyond that. I've watched—we've expanded. When we came to the process of getting the expansion I was like 'oh my God, yes. We can get more kids. More kids.' My daughter, my first daughter, she was the first graduating class from Paterson Charter School and I must say, she is 25 years old right now. Doing good. My second daughter graduated from here. My third daughter graduated from here, and all three of them are in college, and my fourth is going into tenth grade, and believe me, he's going to graduate from here too and he's going straight to college. Piggybacking on these parents about preparation. Preparation. I can't even talk about preparation. They go way beyond the preparation. They have Saturdays, they have call-ins, they have teachers make the time to have the kids to come in and give them the work and when the teachers give the work, hey, we see the results. Because Dr. Bertelli will tell you, the score are like whoa, they go up. They go up, so I am ecstatic. I am waiting for the approval of this venture. I'm waiting because I know the 1300 kids. Some of my kids are in there that I've taught. I'm a preschool teacher and I've been sending them from the time I knew this school even existed, so I know this school is going to excel and Mr. Reisel, you're going to have your preschool. You're going to have all the pieces that's needed and we are going to make the difference here in Paterson. It's us, but only us to make it. We're going to do it with your help.

Governor Christie: I think one of the things you said about the K-12 too, and was implied in your answer is stability. Kids are challenged everywhere, every day, by instability by things changing, and it's social, it's familial, it's on TV, it's on the internet, but we're challenged every day, and when they come to a place where there is stability and kindness and accountability, kids respond to that. They just do. We don't like it all the time, right? You know, when we were in school, right, we didn't always like it. Now I remember having my fifth grade teacher, and all throughout kindergarten and fourth grade I got all A's. I went to fifth grade and I handed in my first essay to my teacher. It came back and it was a C+, so I went to see her. I was a wise-ass back then too, so I went to see her after school and I said, 'Mrs. Banisher, this can't be right. I got a C, I've never got that.' And she said, Mr. Christie, I've heard about you. She said, you're the guy who's supposed to get all the A's. She said, well, you won't get A's in my class. You better get working. And I mean, that fifth grade year was brutal. She knew that I had more in me than I was giving and that other people were giving me a free pass, and she wasn't going to do it, and here's the definition of, or at least one definition of a great teacher. That was my fifth grade teacher. Maybe I saw her a few times between sixth grade and twelfth grade and nothing after. About three weeks after I was elected governor I get a letter at home with a Texas return address that I didn't recognize, so I opened up the letter and it was a name that I recognized. She put her name and the address and she said Dear Governor-elect Christie. You may not remember my name because I've gotten remarried, but I am Mrs. Manashin, and she said, 'And you appear to be the big-talking, dark-haired young man who I had to straighten out in the fifth grade.' And she said, I saw you on CNN last week getting elected governor, and I have to say, you turned out okay, and I mean, so think about that, right? I was in the fifth grade in 1973ish. '73, '74. I'm trying to remember. This is 2009. It's 35 years later. That woman remembered and she took the time to write me a note. Engaged, caring, right? That's the best of teachers, and Carol what you're saying I think is absolutely true. You need my help. I get it. I'm giving it and I'll continue to give it and I'll continue to speak up for this movement and for what you're doing, but you also said if it's up to only us. Well it shouldn't be up to only you but it is up to you. You already know that and you own it, right? I can tell from the way you're talking you own it, right? So the fact is that we need to stand up, we've got to stand up not for any one particular school. We got to stand up for what this school represents, which are the results, the results of your child going to college, the results of your children going to college, and the fact that whether you're a two-parent family or a one-parent family, no matter how many hours you're working and you're going to school on top of it and all the rest. Well, the school needs to recognize that, and this school does, and so they say, okay, you're not going to be home every minute of every day to be able to say, is the reading done? Where's the book report? Did you do your geometry, right? I saw Mary Pat, my wife, is now staying at home. She had worked for all these years—I'm losing that income too. That's why I'm very sensitive too because the big casualty of me running for president was she took time off from work when I was running for president and then I lost. And people think well, the thing I really lost was being president. No. She decided, you know I like not working, and two weeks after we dropped out of the race I said, so when are you going to go back to work? And she said, oh, I didn't tell you? I'm not going back. We have a thirteen and a fifteen year old and she said I think the kids really need me at home. I'm going to stay home. I'm nervous, Heather. I'm nervous because that's a lot of money she's leaving on the table but I listened to her the other day and she's trying to get the kids to do work over the summer to get ready for the fall. Our son has trouble with math. He is taking geometry in the fall. She's worried, so she went onto this website she found called the Khan Academy, right, and poor Patrick is doing geometry this summer right now. I was getting dressed for work two days ago and I heard her saying to him, Patrick, turn off the TV and get to the kitchen table. We're doing geometry. We're getting it done now so that you can go out and play later but it's got to get done now. Now, I know how hard it was for her to get him to do it when she was there. When you're not there, what are the chances of Patrick going hey, you know, I got a few free minutes here, forget SportsCenter, I'm going to get on the Khan Academy website. You know, right? But schools like this understand that challenge and the challenge to parents. Whether you're a two-parent or a one-parent family, everybody's working hard. Everybody is putting in long hours and we need the support here to back us up so that our kids can do better, and we know if we challenge them that most kids will do better, and—but they need to be challenged by us and by them, so it's not just you but it starts with you, and for us, we do this stuff together, we're going to be able to expand this school, but what's more important is what this gentleman brought up, which I think is the best point of the day, which is why, why is it that we accept any less anyplace else? We can't and we shouldn't and if we see a model that works we should do it.

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