



Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver on Tuesday was honored at the Shema Kolainu legislative breakfast for his role in the historic agreement in the placement of special needs children in private schools. (L-R) Ezra Friedlander, Peter Rebenwurzel, Joshua Weinstein, Menachem Lubinsky, Speaker Silver and Milton Weinstock.

NY Suit: Teacher Tenure Deprives Sound Education

ALBANY (AP/Washington Post) – Choking back tears, former CNN journalist Campbell Brown announced Monday she was challenging New York state's teacher tenure system with a lawsuit that alleges that job protections unfairly shield bad teachers and deprives children of a constitutionally mandated sound education.

"This is not going to be easy and they are so incredibly brave to be taking this on," she said at a press conference in front of New York's City Hall, indicating the seven other parents of public school children from New York City and Rochester who are plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

The lawsuit, filed in Supreme Court in Albany, is the work of a group founded by Brown called the Partnership for Educational Justice.

"If we got rid of tenure they could get better quality teachers," said Keoni Wright of Brooklyn, who is suing on behalf of his twin daughters Kaylah and Kyler, both 7.

State teachers' union president Karen Magee said the lawsuit filed Monday amounts to a politically motivated attack on public school teachers. She said teacher tenure benefits students by protecting good teachers from unfair employment decisions.

"Tenure means teachers can speak freely," Magee said. "Tenure guarantees that caring and dedicated educators can continue to advocate with parents for what's best for students."

The lawsuit comes after a California judge ruled in June that job protections for teachers violate children's constitutional rights. The decision is under appeal, but it's already encouraging critics of teachers' unions in other states.

Jay Lefkowitz, an attorney for the New York plaintiffs, said the California decision "gave everybody a real shot in the arm."

Brown, who initiated the New York lawsuit, was described during her tenure at CNN as an equal-opportunity skeptic who called out liberals and conservatives alike during her hour on the air each weeknight.

But since the end of her CNN program in 2010, Brown has made an unusual transition. After years as a journalist, steeped in notions of fairness and balance, Brown has transformed into an advocate, taking a very public side in one of the many contentious battles over public education.

Brown, 46, has become an articulate voice and recognizable face opposing

tenure, the century-old system of laws and contractual guarantees giving public-school teachers due-process rights in layoffs and terminations.

"I'm a mom, and my view of public education begins and ends with the fundamental question: Is this good for children?" Brown says by phone from New York, where she lives. "In a situation where it's the child or the adult, I'm going with the child. ... Tenure is permanent lifetime employment. There's no reason why anyone's job should become untouchable for the rest of their life."

Brown's path from journalist to partisan was a relatively short one. Two years after leaving the air, she began writing editorial pieces, including one in The New York Times rapping President Barack Obama for his "paternalistic" attitude toward women during the 2012 campaign.

She also had an epiphany of sorts. After encountering stories about the difficulty New York City schools had in firing teachers accused of misconduct, Brown decided to do something about it. Using her own funds as seed money, she formed the Parents Transparency Project, which aimed to highlight the issue.

Her group eventually raised \$100,000 for an ad campaign during the city's mayoral race that asked whether any of the candidates had "the guts to stand up to the teachers' unions," which the ad claimed delayed action on 128 cases of misconduct during the preceding five years.

Brown, whose two sons attend a private religious school, would like to see a broader array of public-school "reforms," from the expansion of charter schools to vouchers and tax credits to fund private- and religious-school tuition. Earlier this month, as keynote speaker at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools annual conference in Las Vegas, she questioned the wisdom of sticking to what she described as a broken status quo. A crowd of more than a thousand gave her a rousing ovation.

"This is the most rewarding thing I've done," Brown says. "I loved every minute of my life as a journalist. But you can write and report and jump up and down and scream, but at the end of the day, what changes? Having children makes you want to connect with other mothers and do something meaningful and not just be an observer. I felt this is what I was always meant to do."

1000
Consecutive Hours
of Prayer
Without A Moment's Letup

**At the Kosel Hama'aravi
From Rosh Chodesh Elul
Through Yom Kippur**

CALL OUR 24 HOUR TZEDAKAH HOT LINE
1-888-KUPATHAIR
Please make checks payable to: American Friends of Kupat Ha'ir
Donations can be sent to: Kupat Ha'ir 4415 14th Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11219
Donate Online at: www.kupat.org

העדות של צדיקי הדור

אלקא דמאיר ענני

חבת ירושלים ואהבת ציון אל תשכח לנוצח בית הכנסת

...The greatness and holiness of the charity of Reb Meyer Baal Hanes, Kolel Chibas Yerushalayim is well known to all... Assisting thousands of Jews in Eretz Yisroel... We therefore encourage our community and compassionate Jews in every community throughout the world, to have mercy and lend a helping hand to the children of Yerushalayim.

The Bobover Rebbezt
יומא דהילולא ר"ח אב

**Kolel Chibas Yerushalayim
Reb Meyer Baal Hanes Charities**
4802-A 12th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11219 / Tel: 718-633-7112
To Donate or to Receive a Pushka call 24 hours a day
1-866-PUSHKA-0