

Petition to the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education

Stop Ms Nezu's Dismissal and Ms Kawarai's Punishment!

This spring, the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education took disciplinary action against Ms NEZU Kimiko and Ms KAWARAI Junko—six-month suspension and three-month respectively—for their refusal to stand up and to sing Kimigayo (glorification of the Emperor: “May His Majesty’s reign continue for a thousand, eight thousand generations”). However, they determined to repeat their refusal at next graduation ceremonies. After long and careful consideration, on the coercion of Hinomaru (“Rising Sun”, the war flag used during WWII and other aggressive wars) and Kimigayo, which deprive their students of right to know and right to self-determination; instill a single, uniform value; and teach the students to obey any orders and instructions, they realized that they can not and must not follow the order to stand up and chant Kimigayo.

The Metropolitan Board of Education stated that the maximum suspension was six months; next spring, Ms Nezu might be fired.

Therefore, we, undersigned, urge the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education:

Not to instruct the relevant principals to issue any and no work order, including “stand up and sing” order, concerning the school ceremonies, and

To follow the ruling of the Tokyo District Court of September 21, 2006* and to stop dismissal or any other punishment against education workers.

* On September 21, 2006, the Tokyo District Court, fully withholding the plaintiffs’ argument, ruled that the teachers and school staffs shall not have no obligation to stand up, to sing Kimigayo or to play accompaniment of it and therefore they shall not be punishable for their refusal to obey unlawful order. The reason why the Tokyo Board of Education lost the lawsuit was that its directive of October 23, 2003 and the its order to principals constitute “improper control” (breach of Article 10 of the Fundamental Law on Education); its constraint of education workers’ refusal to stand up violates Article 19 of the Constitution (freedom of thought and conscience); and therefore, the issuance of work order by principals under said directive has grave and clear defects. Explaining the background, the ruling remarked, “possibility of their dismissal can not be denied, if they repeat their refusal; therefore the envisioned disadvantage is inadmissible.” Now, the threat of dismissal is looming over Ms Nezu and Ms Kawarai..

Signature	Name (block capitals please)	Address (block capitals please)	School (block capitals please)

Committee to Stop Firing of Nezu, Kawarai and Other Teachers

Contact Address: Tama and Islands Area Education Workers Union (Tama Kyoso)
1-1-6 Kita, Kunitachi-City,
186-0001, Tokyo, Japan