



GFT, AFT Local 1581
Together We Win!

Sanjay Sharma, President Timothy Fedenko, Vice President
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May 15, 2018

Jon J.P. Fernandez
Superintendent
Guam Department of Education
500 Mariner Avenue
Barrigada, Guam 96913

Dear Mr. Fernandez:

I am submitting my testimony against the proposed amendment of Personnel Rules and Regulations Section 904.701 Reclassification of Teachers.

I began my educator career for the Guam Department of Education in January of 1981 and after a short break been back again. I have used the Reclassification system twice as the reward of my continued hard work to further my education so that I may give back to our students the experience and expertise that I gained.

It is a fact that furthering one's professional education is costly to the educator's pocket book and the motivation to endure the rigorous requirements it demands, as well as maintaining a full time teaching position may be very challenging at times. The motivation of a higher pay increase makes it all worth the time away from family and the many sacrifices made.

I do not understand the rationale and logic in the amendment only to see it as demoralizing and a setback for teachers. Statistics show that the Guam Department of Education teachers are among the lowest paid in the nation and year after year it has always been difficult to fill certified teaching positions as required by the Every Child Is Entitled to an Adequate Education Act. This proposed amendment will only add to that difficulty because in the end the teacher will be stuck with another bill to pay and the "subject to availability of funds" may take years for the department to pay out to the teacher. This may cause a teacher's credit worthiness and livelihood to be at risk.

As the chairperson of the Teachers Unit of the Guam Federation of Teachers, I implore the Guam Education Board to renounce the proposed amendment and give teachers a reason to stay with the Guam Department of Education and educate the students that parents trust and charge us with. Let us all be faithful to our words of providing adequate education to Guam's public school students.

Sincerely,

Doris A. Terlaje, GFT Teacher Unit Chair

Cc: Guam Education Board