

Education Reform Gets Cool

By Nancy French

8/8/2012 @ 1:22 pm

Naomi Schaefer Riley writes in the *New York Post* about how education reform is no longer the domain of nerdy conservatives or outraged libertarians. Teachers' unions have begun "looking like dinosaurs," to everyone. After all, "hip urbanites don't need to read Cato Institute white papers to find out how bad unions have made things."

Hollywood is even getting into the education reform. Riley writes:

Maggie Gyllenhaal, the ultimate hipster actress, stars in "Won't Back Down," an education-reform drama that hits theaters next month. When did school choice become cool?

The film is the tale of two parents (one a teacher) who decide to save their own kids and many others by taking over a failing school in a poor Pittsburgh neighborhood.

This follows "Waiting for 'Superman,'" the 2010 documentary that depicted the fortunes of those desperately competing for a place at a charter school — from the same progressive filmmaker who gave us "An Inconvenient Truth.

In fact, a whole lot of 20- and 30-somethings across the political spectrum now believe something's seriously flawed in our public-education system.

Indeed.

In conjunction with the film, Wal-Mart and Walden Media are putting on a concert benefiting teachers airing on CBS next Friday with artists like Garth Brooks, Dierks Bentley, Fun, and Carrie Underwood. Every day, Walden is awarding a different teacher with a \$500 Wal-Mart gift card to help cover the out-of-pocket expenses every teacher eventually ends up incurring. (Have a favorite teacher? [Nominate here.](#)) Tweet a shout out to your favorite teacher, using the hashtag #TeachersRock, and your tweet will appear on a huge billboard in Times Square.

That's not your mother's school reform.

It makes me a little nervous to tweet the name of my favorite teachers, however. Twitter-acceptable abbreviations and misspellings won't fly with my favorite 5th grade English teacher, Mrs. Frazier, or my 6th grade English teacher, Mrs. Elliott.

To be safe, I think I might just nominate a math teacher.