Hunterdon Central students react to firing of Muslim teacher

Hunterdon Central Regional High School conferred degrees and honors upon its Class of 2015 on Thursday, June 18.

1 / 35 | Fullscreen | Share | Caption

By Emily Cummins | For NJ.com
Email the author | Follow on Twitter
on December 17, 2015 at 3:35 PM

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RARITAN TWP. — Former and current Hunterdon Central Regional High School students reacted on social media to the termination of history teacher Sireen Hashem, who filed a discrimination lawsuit against the district's Board of Education, superintendent, principal and two teachers in federal court Monday.

In her suit, Hashem claims she was fired because she is Muslim.

The school ordered the history teacher not to "mention Islam in class," reprimanded her for showing a movie about Nobel Laureate Malala Yusufzai, then fired her because her Muslim religion causes "trouble," the teacher claimed in court.

See what students had to say in the Storify below and stay with NJ.com for more on this story.

Storify by NJ.com 3 months ago

Hunterdon Central students discuss the firing of history teacher Sireen Hashem

Hunterdon Central Regional High School students react to the termination of history

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DEPARTMENTS

teacher Sireen Hashem, who filed a discrimination lawsuit against the district's Board of Education, superintendent, principal and two teachers in federal court Monday, Dec. 14, 2015.

N.J. school board called FBI on Muslim teacher after firing, lawsuit says

RARITAN TWP. - Sireen Hashem, a Muslim teacher at Hunterdon Central Regional High School, had just lost her job in what she described in a lawsuit as a firing motivated by religion discrimination when the FBI came knocking on her door in July.

NJ.COM

Following her appearance on CNN Tonight with Don Lemon, Hashem's supporters turned to the #fightforhashem hashtag

ISLAM IN THE CLASSROOM
Sireen Hashem
Muslim teacher claims she was fired for mentioning Islam
LIVE
CNN
6:32 PM PT

CNN Tonight @CNNTonight Follow

#SireenHashem is a Muslim teacher who claims she was fired for mentioning Islam. See intvw: cnn.it/1Qz2QYU

10:54 PM - 18 Dec 2015

21 30

Antoni @Heartbursts91 Follow

#PrayForSireenHashem #FightForHashem

One of many brave and courageous Muslim women dealing with #Islamophobia in the US

5:08 AM - 21 Dec 2015

2 3

Ms. Pinky Stanseski @undergradwoman Follow

I also support #SireenHashem, because I know that part of NJ & I'm glad She is exposing their bigotry! #FightForHashem

8:47 PM - 20 Dec 2015

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ELIZABETH IT ALL STARTS HERE
DOWNTOWN FLEMINGTON

Get JIRA.
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Jennifer Doyle
@FromaLeftWing

Follow

Graduated from HCHS in 1985. Wondering if they'll take my diploma back. Could not be more disgusted. #FightforHashem

2:47 PM - 19 Dec 2015

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Pilar_Alamad
@PilarAlamad

#fightforhashem #HunterdonCentral #nj #hunterdoncounty #bigotry #islamophobia disgusted with this #school

3 MONTHS AGO

Sean Ronan
@ThrainAzrak

Follow

I live in NJ and work near her high school. Firing someone based on their religious and ethnic background is wrong. #FightForHashem

12:40 PM - 19 Dec 2015

⟲ 1 ♥

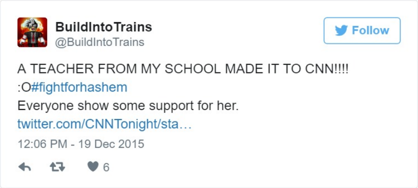
CheeseTomatoToastie
@Wimpylad

Follow

#FightForHashem Intellectual debate not allowed in Schools. Islamaphobia is the new Anti-Semitism

12:10 PM - 19 Dec 2015

↩ 🔁 1 ♥ 3

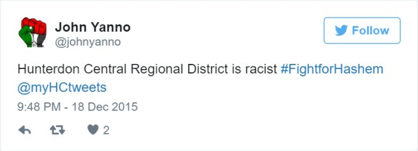


BuildIntoTrains
@BuildIntoTrains

A TEACHER FROM MY SCHOOL MADE IT TO CNN!!!!
:O#fightforhashem
Everyone show some support for her.
twitter.com/CNNTonight/sta…

12:06 PM - 19 Dec 2015

↩ 🔁 ♥ 6

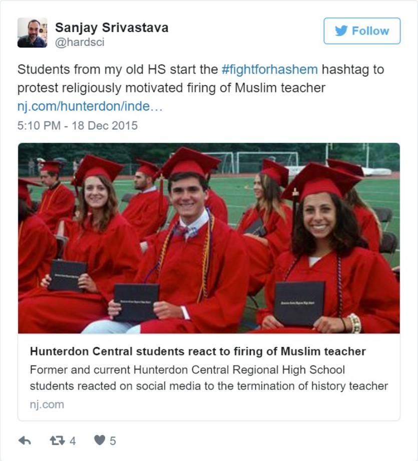


John Yanno
@johnyanno

Hunterdon Central Regional District is racist #FightforHashem @myHCtweets

9:48 PM - 18 Dec 2015

↩ 🔁 ♥ 2



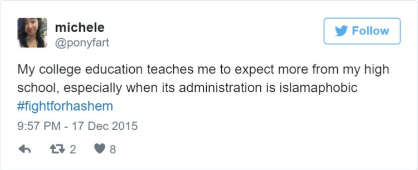
Sanjay Srivastava
@hardsci

Students from my old HS start the #fightforhashem hashtag to protest religiously motivated firing of Muslim teacher nj.com/hunterdon/inde…

5:10 PM - 18 Dec 2015

Hunterdon Central students react to firing of Muslim teacher
Former and current Hunterdon Central Regional High School students reacted on social media to the termination of history teacher
nj.com

↩ 🔁 4 ♥ 5

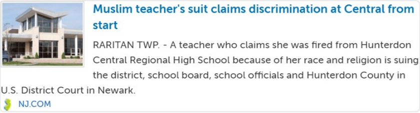


michele
@ponyfart

My college education teaches me to expect more from my high school, especially when its administration is islamaphobic #fightforhashem

9:57 PM - 17 Dec 2015

↩ 🔁 2 ♥ 8

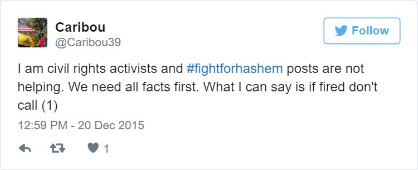


Muslim teacher's suit claims discrimination at Central from start

RARITAN TWP. - A teacher who claims she was fired from Hunterdon Central Regional High School because of her race and religion is suing the district, school board, school officials and Hunterdon County in U.S. District Court in Newark.

NJ.COM

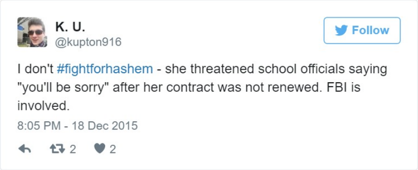
Others used the hashtag to show they do not support the discrimination lawsuit



Caribou
@Caribou39

I am civil rights activists and #fightforhashem posts are not helping. We need all facts first. What I can say is if fired don't call (1)

12:59 PM - 20 Dec 2015



K. U.
@kupton916

I don't #fightforhashem - she threatened school officials saying "you'll be sorry" after her contract was not renewed. FBI is involved.

8:05 PM - 18 Dec 2015

Students also react to the lawsuit and media attention

Manal Nida
@muhnawl
Follow

Legend #fightforhashem

10:41 PM - 15 Jun 2015

10 32

sammi triolo
@slothpatronus
Follow

as someone who has been screwed over and discriminated against by central i am 100% behind ms hashem's claims. islamophobia is unacceptable.

12:41 AM - 18 Dec 2015

2

abbey johnson ॐ
@_abbeyj
Follow

Actually ashamed to call myself an alumni from my high school. #HunterdonCentral twitter.com/cnntonight/sta…

5:35 PM - 19 Dec 2015

2

Adam Powell
@p0well2dapeople
Follow

When ur school reached a new low courthousenews.com/2015/12/16/fir… #HcHellHole #Only@Central

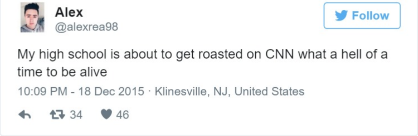
11:25 PM - 16 Dec 2015

1

tp
tphoebs
@tphoebs

So drunk driving scandals and nationally publicized Islamophobia aren't good enough reasons to make a change in Central's administration? Ok

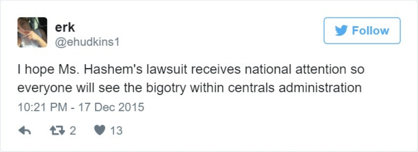
3 MONTHS AGO



Alex
@alexrea98

My high school is about to get roasted on CNN what a hell of a time to be alive

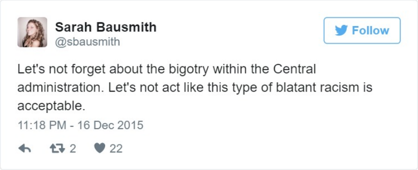
10:09 PM - 18 Dec 2015 · Klinesville, NJ, United States



erk
@ehudkins1

I hope Ms. Hashem's lawsuit receives national attention so everyone will see the bigotry within centrals administration

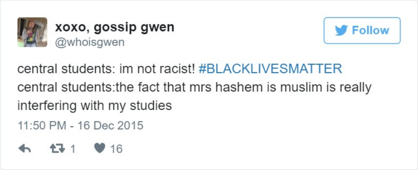
10:21 PM - 17 Dec 2015



Sarah Bausmith
@sbausmith

Let's not forget about the bigotry within the Central administration. Let's not act like this type of blatant racism is acceptable.

11:18 PM - 16 Dec 2015



xoxo, gossip gwen
@whoisgwen

central students: im not racist! #BLACKLIVESMATTER
central students:the fact that mrs hashem is muslim is really interfering with my studies

11:50 PM - 16 Dec 2015

Additionally, students responded in June when Hashem's contract was not renewed.

FreeHashem
#FreeHashem
free Hashem
#freeHashem

#FreeHashem
#FreeHashem
#FreeHashem

chet ubetcha
@jharkness98

Follow

Cooley thank you for taking a teacher away who obviously cares about her goddamn students on the last day of school. Thank god.

10:22 AM - 17 Jun 2015

12 36

Aia
@dkkaflockaflame

Follow

racial injustices are happening and kids are too oblivious to see how serious the matter is, this school doesn't deserve mrs. hashem

11:07 AM - 17 Jun 2015

10 36

The hashtag #FightforHashem was also created at this time.

xoxo, gossip gwen
@whoisgwen

Follow

I was so lucky to have such an amazing and inspirational lady as a teacher this year #FightForHashem… instagram.com/p/4CUwrYEP6D/

1:09 PM - 17 Jun 2015

3 8