

xxxx xx, 2008

Shigeru TANIGUCHI

President, Tokyo Metropolitan Public School Teachers' Union

Nihon Kyoiku Kaikan Bldg. 5F, 2-6-2 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-Ward, 101-0003

Tokyo, Japan

Dear Mr. Taniguchi,

I am a teacher in the United States of America. I have heard here in America about the unjust attentions paid to Sister Nezu Kimiko, Sister Kawarai Junko, and the 410 other Japanese teachers organizing for peace and justice in Japanese schools. Nezu's and Kawarai's acts and statements of conscience, and their refusal to obey the Hiromaru and Kimigayo directives, are a triumph of individual moral conscience and responsibility over the dangers of unreasoned nationalism. In America, we have our own First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which similarly guarantees all citizens the right to free expression, and is a bedrock of pedagogy within American public schools.

The teachers of Los Angeles support Nezu Kimiko, Kawarai Junko and the 410 other teachers. We will continue to monitor this situation closely. Their cause is becoming internationally known as an example of intellectual and academic freedom and a reaffirmation in the basic principles of peace, justice, and diplomacy.

As educators, as we move into the new burgeoning 21st century, a time that has already shown great capacity for fundamental change, we must stay aware of our conscious responsibility to build peaceful and harmonious world views, and to model for our students that which signifies an unflagging devotion to these moral principles. Please do not stand in these teachers way. Instead of punishment their devotion deserves careful reflection and support.

Sincerely,