

COMMON SENSE IMPROVEMENT TO EDUCATION

We constantly hear about how the education system has deteriorated in America, especially for those of us in California. Our government, of course, thinks that the cure to the problem (as it thinks is the cure to any problem) is to through more money and bureaucracy at education efforts. Isn't it funny how our governments do the same thing time after time, and yet expect a different result?

Here are some simple solutions to the education problem, which will also have a dramatic impact on other trouble areas.

1. Everyone becomes an adult at the age of 18 for everything. That means we reduce the drinking age to 18, and raise the driving age to 18! One other provision, however, will be that you cannot obtain a driver's license until one has received a high school diploma.

The impact will be that a) we will not need parking lots at the high schools for anyone except teachers, b) high school aged people won't be driving around for fun, and can spend more time studying, c) there will be fewer deaths caused by reckless driving by teenagers, and d) there will be an incentive to stay in school to get their diploma, rather than drop out.

If they do not get their diploma, they cannot obtain a driver's license until age 21, which means they cannot consume alcohol until that age, or upon obtaining a high school diploma, whichever is earlier.

2. There should be a uniform dress policy in every school until college. Too much emphasis is placed on image and popularity, and not enough on results. If the children want to dress differently after school, and their parents do not have the backbone to maintain some form of discipline in how their children dress, they can do so outside of school hours.
3. Eliminate "Standardized" testing. Our schools are like automobile assembly plants ... crank them out as fast as possible. Teachers, many times at the insistence of school administrators, pass kids on to the next level, even though they have not earned that promotion. Teachers make exams simple, so the kids can pass them and not be held back (or damage their fragile self confidence).

The writer and publisher of the textbooks should include exams that are to be used in conjunction with the textbook so that all students are being tested in the same manner, and so the exams actually test to see if the students have absorbed the material that is being presented. If they do not pass, then they repeat the class. Remember ... no diploma, no driving.

4. Allow teacher to teach and administrators to administrate the day to day workings of the school. Parents may not interfere with these people as long as they are following all of the rules that are created for all schools. Instead, hold the parents responsible for the conduct of their children, and give the schools more authority to discipline those who require it.
5. Finally, let's move to a year round school calendar. Coordinate all of the local schools to the same calendar so families can plan vacations, but keep the school year moving with no more than 4 weeks off in any one stretch.

These three simple suggestions will resolve numerous problems in addition to those already mentioned. There will be less truancy, meaning less crime committed by teens. This will ultimately lead to a reduction in other crimes and help reduce the long term prison population. Furthermore, our children will actually become educated and be able to obtain better jobs, and be more productive to our society, which will result in more American initiative and ultimately more tax revenue. We will no longer need to import educated people from India and China to fill the highly skilled jobs.

Our kids will rise to the level of expectation that we set for them. Let's raise that level of expectation starting now!

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