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Profession, Teacher



Amy Greene Mr. Russo ENGL 1100 September 11, 2012 The American School Systems All throughout history there has always been a battle between every country — For power, money, technology, natural resources, energy, weapons and now education and knowledge. Desperate times call for desperate measures and every country around the globe struggle, strive, and push to become a thriving wealthy community as a whole. America, claimed to be one of the most prosperous countries in the world lacks in the battle of wits, or does it? Is the American society really digging its own grave or, is America doing better than the eye perceives? Positive and negative factors are both played in the education and schooling systems that are being shaped through time. In the articles “ American Schools in Crisis” and “ Tuning in to Dropping Out” and the image that is in the background all give out different messages as to why and how the American school system detracts students from proper knowledge and what its major downfalls are. “ As our society has changed, the schools have had to deal with escalating social problems. ” (Ravitch 1). A direct quote from the article “ American Schools in Crisis” by Diane Ravitch, Diane’s article discusses how American society has many social problems that greatly affect young children and adults in their journey to gain knowledge, wisdom and success. One example of a large forming social problem that is affecting students learning capabilities is the broken homes children and young adults have to live in. Many children live in broken homes of divorced parents, alcoholic and drug behaviors, fighting, and lack of communication, and some children do not even have houses or families to go home to at the end of the day. In modern times, even to just barely get by on his or her own, a person must graduate

high school, and are more or less expected to go to college, the army/navy/military or go directly into the workforce itself. According to Ravitch, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law and the equal education opportunity created a reform of the school systems in which inner city schools become populated with interracial and impoverished children which creates a lesser advantage for students to gain the knowledge and education needed. (Ravitch 2). Disappointing to say, children who are being raised at poverty level and their family struggles to get by have a lower opportunity than those children who are raised in a more well off environment. " The most important educators in children's lives are their families, " (Ravitch 3). Without a good support system set in place in a home, it leaves no motivation, energy and may leave a child feeling inadequate. What are our students studying in school anyway? Math? English? Arts? Music? According to Alex Tabarrok, author of the article " Tuning in to Dropping Out", STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) courses are more essential in this day and age than courses such as art, journalism, and psychology. (Tabarrok 1). It's crucial to get college students graduating with degrees/certificates in fields that are highly demanding in this economy to ensure more job security for those who graduate. When a student attends college it is in hopes of bettering oneself and receiving an education you may use to get a career right after school, with the degrees citizens are going after, there is a lower demand for those fields. " The United states has paved a single road to knowledge. " (Tabarrok 2). This quote is extremely powerful and truly reflects Tabarrok's point of his article; he believes that if apprenticeship programs were opened here in the United States we would be

giving a huge opportunity to students to get a decent education. An apprenticeship program will allow young adults to get better educated for a particular area such as nursing, mechanics and culinary rather than a broad spectrum of basic education. Rather than high school to college to career, there should be more options available to people who chose not to go to a two year or four year college program. Currently there are many vocational schools all around the country, but can be perceived as lesser than attending a four year college or appear more intense than a community college.

College is not considered necessary and efficient in educating our people for the skills needed in this economy. (Tabarrok 2). As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words, and the image from Flickr. com comes with very few words with an enormous meaning. The picture shows an image of a remote and it says less of this, and more of this with an image of a book and an apple. The remote in my opinion represents video games, any television, cell phone devices, and electronics in general that take away from the ability to learn and gain true knowledge. The apple and books represent American education, learning, and wisdom that come with reading, learning, and getting an education. I believe students are not reaching their full potential in school because of the technology that is available hinders the ability for a student to retain information because they know it is at the touch of their fingers whenever it is needed. People that use self-motivation, strive to reach their goals, and refuse to give up after the first, second and even the third try are the stronger people of the society that will achieve success above everyone else. Not in every situation does modern technology impede on education, sometimes, technology is pertinent to learning especially in

certain fields such as chemistry, medical field and engineering. Video games are said to be distractions; children and young adults are spending two, three, and even more hours a night playing video games, computer games or using their cell phones rather than taking time to study, do homework and getting physical activity. Throughout my high school experience, I have picked up on many different issues that really pull from the education system that is in place. One important thing is learning to take a test. In ninety percent of my classes, teachers taught and followed a specific curriculum set by the state, and this curriculum drills the answers and education set for the tests that need to be taken to graduate. This kind of learning is destructive because the information does not “stick” when you are in elementary school and you are learning to read or tie your shoes, that kind of learning “sticks.” A second downfall I see in the American education system consists of the lack of input from the student, the teacher, and the parents. If one of those falls through, the whole plan to a healthy education caves in and collapses leaving a person buried with little light at the end of the tunnel. In summary, everyone perceives American education differently and what their thoughts and solutions are to mend the broken pieces also vary greatly. Not one person will ever be entirely sure why some schools are successful, while others are not; and no person will be able to pin point exactly what the problem is to why one person can achieve success while another will drop out and not graduate or receive a G. E. D. and get a minimum wage paying job. America will not be able to continue to grow and prosper if the education system does not fix a few patches and start producing wisdom and knowledge filled, well-motivated students. If we

continue on the path of drilling information to students just to pass a test, we will fall down the ladder educationally and economically. Education is the key element to success. Works Cited Less of this...2012. Picture. Flickr. Flickr. By TrustoCorp. Yahoo!, 8 Oct. 2010. Web. 11 Sept. 2012. . Ravitch, Diane. " American Schools in Crisis." American Schools in Crisis. The Saturday Evening Post, Sept.-Oct. 2011. Web. 3 Sept. 2012. . Tabarrok, Alex. " Tuning In to Dropping Out." The Chronicle. N. p., 4 Mar. 2012. Web. 6 Sept. 2012. .