



The Future Minds

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The demands in today's society are hard to keep up with. Major scholarships look for students who achieve in as many areas as possible. The attention span of youngsters is diminishing, and teachers struggle to find a solution. There are complaints that today's youth don't vote simply because they're too lazy. In high school, arts-oriented students struggle with science, and science-oriented students struggle with arts.

The goal for education in schools is to form well-rounded individuals who have the capacity to make positive contributions in today's society. Therefore, in order to solve the previously mentioned problems, we need to make changes to our current education system. **Schools should address the learning needs of the students for the next generation by developing the students on three different levels: creating a balance within the individual, optimizing the use of ever-growing technology, and teaching what it means to be a global citizen.**

Creating a balance

Schools should create a balance between schoolwork and volunteering and between analytical and creative thinking.

High schools today do not stress enough the importance of getting involved. When I began grade 8, the only time I remember hearing advice the "get involved" was from a newspaper clipping. What the student gets involved with doesn't matter. It can be a club or a sports team, or another sort of organization. The reason why it is important is because commitment to only homework and studies narrows the student's perspective, and leaves the student's life completely devoid of a break. I have experienced this firsthand. When I joined my school's social responsibility club – the Youth Action Committee (YAC) – in grade 11, I had the opportunity to learn about the issues affecting the lives of those on the other side of the world, and about the importance of being aware of such things. If schools make it a requirement to get involved, then students will be enriched with learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

The balance between analytical and creative thinking will make the student's mind proficient in comprehending subjects in both arts and sciences. As many students, after they finish high school, are unsure about what they want to pursue, having them trained in both analytical and creative thinking will broaden the range of paths they can choose later on. For example, up until grade 10, I had a predominantly analytical personality. This helped me in subjects such as math and physics, but it made it difficult for me to deal with subjects such as social studies and English. I took drama in grade 11 to help my mind work in an environment in which not everything was rigidly defined, and by the end of grade 11, I could think creatively and analytically. Schools can do this by creating special courses that help develop a creative mind for analytical thinkers, and vice versa for creative thinkers.

Using Technology

High schools should use technology as a teaching tool more often. For example, in a lecture, the teacher could post up a question and have students submit their response via text message. This could remove the negative stigma against cell phones in school. Technology can be used as teaching tool as a way to appeal to the different kinds of learners: visual, auditory, and tactile learners. Social studies teacher do this frequently, but imagine how a teacher could use videos and simulations programs in math and science classes! Although many teachers do this already, schools should make it mandatory to explore different methods learning through today's technology. Learning out of a textbook is not a bad thing, but familiarizing the student with technology in the classroom environment will help them view their subject from multiple points of view.

Schools should formally teach safe internet usage in high school. I can say that, from experience, my knowledge about the good and bad things the internet can do for me was self-taught. However, I cannot say that every other high school student is equipped with the same knowledge. The role that internet plays in people's lives is increasing; we use it to communicate, navigate, and investigate on a daily basis; therefore learning exactly what and what not to do with the internet is essential. Schools should run courses specifically geared to teaching topics such as cyber bullying and internet addiction. In addition, the course should teach the practical aspects of cyberculture.

Global citizenship

Global citizens recognize the world as a vast system, and that they have parts to play in this vast system. Global citizens give back to society, in turn making it a better place. Schools aren't doing a good enough job on informing students on current events. I know this from experience. I can honestly say that my knowledge on current events is limited to the short discussions that my social studies classes have had at the beginning of the period each day. With special attention to the fact that it's voting season right now, I have a difficult time following news updates on politicians and political parties. I imagine that this feeling of helplessness is present in many other people who are close to the voting age, and will probably carry on past the age of eighteen. If that is true, then the lack of motivation in the younger generation to vote could originate from a person feeling overwhelmed with so much information about political parties; chance are, they're not too lazy to vote – they just don't know where to start. Instead of teaching history in social studies 8, 9, 10, 11, schools should teach information that is more relevant to students that makes it easy to connect to today's news.

Overall, the 21st Century will be the time where we abandon traditional methods. It will be the blending of textbooks and technology and a merging of classroom and extracurricular learning moments. In order to create a person useful in today's fast-paced society, schools must teach students to be adaptable, flexible, and open minded.
