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Proactive Solutions to Major Issues In Education

Issues of American Education System should be concerning to everyone. One could argue that everyone in society is affected by education. If one member of society is not presented with an opportunity to be educated or his or her education is lacking in some way, his or her life will be directly influenced and will influence the lives of others. A person without a proper education may be unemployed, turn to crime, live in poverty, live without motivation, and lack an understanding of the world and what his or her role is within the world. Education is a main topic of discussion for politicians as they try to foster progress in America. We may be falling behind globally in education, but there are many considerations for improvement. Among topics that are necessary to improve in the American Education System are creating effective teachers and connecting with parents.

Being an effective teacher is essential for success of students in the classroom. Robert Marzano (2003) shows that the most effective teacher can increase student achievement four times the percentile point gain than a least effective teacher (p. 2, Figure 1.1). A teacher is the major deciding factor in a student’s education. Although it is difficult to measure, if the teacher is unable to be efficient in techniques like engaging students, differentiating instruction, and building inspirational relationships a teacher should not be deemed as effective.

A teacher’s effectiveness can be formed by self-motivation and support from others. As Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education, noted in 2013, Common Core standards set the bar for students to preform high, but it also allows teachers to go “deep into content and innovate.” A teacher should be motivated to continue improving in both pedagogy and content knowledge purely to be the best for their students.

If self-motivation is lacking each state, district, or school should also encourage and provide opportunities for the professional development of their teachers. Development of the staff could be done through offering workshops or opportunities to attend conferences that are paired with sharing, collaborating, and applying the new techniques learned. Especially with the new standards, Arne Duncan also stresses the importance of teachers receiving support from their peers. Observing should be encouraged in each school. Individual teachers can set goals to reach and peers can observe and keep each other accountable in the progress. The district can offer incentives for professional development and progress in the classroom too.

Another issue in the American Education System is the poor connection between teachers and parents. According to *Effective Teaching Methods*, “coordination and collaboration between home and school improves learner achievement, attitude toward school, classroom conduct, and parent and teacher morale” (p. 56). Because a home is where the student begins to learn and continues to learn after leaving school, it is important to utilize a student’s family, no matter how diverse. Parents desire success for their children and it is a teacher’s job to encourage parents to participate in the success they are trying to foster in the classroom.

An inspiring example of positive parent-teacher connections is Liberty Elementary School in Nebraska. The teachers are proactive with parents at Liberty to make sure they are partaking in their child’s education not just the discipline, for example. Using an assignment notebook is a way teachers have opened conversation with parents. A student must have their parents sign their notebook at home after completing an assignment, which informs parents and encourages interaction with the goals in the classroom as well as keeps the students accountable.

Providing resources for parents are another way Liberty Elementary is succeeding to include parents in the overall achievement of students. Schools, especially with a large population of SES families, should provide additional resources for the parents like a health clinic, extended classroom hours, or even classes for their further education. By showing parents they are important to the classroom and the success of their children, participation and conversation will increase.

Although the issues of the American Education System can sometimes seem unending, it is important for everyone to be informed in order to remain proactive. Education is essential for success in many aspects of live and without it society will be greatly influenced. It is not solely the teacher or parents role to face the challenges of the American Education; it takes support from every level of society to ensure each student will be successful in the classroom and beyond.

Reference List

Marzano, Robert J. (2003). *Classroom Management That Works: Research-Based*

*Strategies for Every Teacher. Virginia: Association for Supervision and*

*Curriculum Development.*