

## ESSA to impact Common Core Implementation

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On Nov. 30, a congressional conference committee passed a new bill that would replace the No Child Left Behind Act, a government aid program implemented in 2002 for disadvantaged students. This bill is known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). According to Huffington Post, the ESSA would transfer the federal responsibility of supporting low-performance schools to the states and prevent the federal government from intervening in local and state decisions.

"I think [states should control academic standards] because states can determine and differentiate specific needs [more than the federal government. Common Core] has made me much more aware of how I need to implement more technology. It has challenged me to provide better instructions to students and help students access material in order to achieve success in [their] college and career," English teacher Shelley Gee-Ryan said.

According to the New York Times, the quick acceptance of the Common Core Standards is associated with the Obama administration's Race to the Top competition from 2012. The competition awarded states that adopted the standards, allowing

them a chance to earn a share of \$4 billion.

"I think that [Common Core] was used for the overall benefits in California [not for more funding,] because Common Core gives everyone a basic understanding of what they're learning and no one is left behind," junior Alina Cortez said.

### EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

- Replace No Child Left Behind
- Allow teachers and local school districts to have a stronger voice in academic standards

The proposed ESSA would allow states to opt out of the Common Core program without losing funding from the federal government, according to the Education and the Workforce Committee.

"Common Core was definitely something new. It has more of a 'can you describe how you got this' type of concept which is different from just getting an answer and moving on," freshman Anna Tam said.

The Obama administration spent millions to help develop new online tests such as the tests created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. However,

over the past two years, states have passed various types of legislation to disengage with Common Core's testing consortium. Indiana, South Carolina and Oklahoma have already dropped Common Core testing due to opposition from their governors.

"I feel that students are not being prepared for college [with Common Core] because there is little practice and everyone is learning at a slow pace. We should go back to the traditional system," senior Raymond Huynh said.

According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative website, the federal government does not govern Common Core standards, and teachers and principals have always driven the implementation of the program. The ESSA would give states more leeway in many important decisions while ensuring that they would not settle for the bare minimum academic standards to comply with the law, as stated by the U.S. News & World Report.

"I think that the intent behind Common Core is great. It helps unify an education system and is making a step towards higher education. Right now, things may be a bit confusing and unsettling with Common Core, but I think we have to understand that results in education take time," sophomore Jennifer Nguyen said.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN

## News Briefs

### Los Angeles Unified School District Faces Possible Transition into Charter Schooling

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On Nov. 17, the Los Angeles Unified Board of Education discussed the idea of changing the district into an all-charter district. According to Uncommon Schools, a teacher led organization concerning education, this means that the schools in the Los Angeles School Unified School District (LAUSD) will be publicly funded schools with greater flexibility in its operations. Meanwhile, students will have a greater responsibility to complete schoolwork on their own to keep up their grades. The Board of Education is still weighing the benefits and consequences of the change.

Charter schools are well known for giving students' families different schools to choose from, according to Uncommon Schools. Not every school fits all the needs of students or their families, according to Occupy Theory, an online magazine organization. Charter schools also have liberty in choosing which students they accept, not adhering to a normal public school's standards. In contrast to the student acceptance policies of public schools, they can adopt different visions and attract families who are interested in them.

Even though being an all-charter district comes with many freedoms, it takes away many qualities a normal public school will have. According to Occupy Theory, a charter school may be unfair to certain groups of students. Likewise, schools will not be as diverse as public schools. KPCC, a public media network in Southern California, reports that LAUSD Board President Steve Zimmer believes the act might drive the school district into bankruptcy.

"One problem that occurs with charter schools is that without the control of what schools are spending, it's difficult to manage whether schools are making purchases that actually 'improve' the school," junior William Rodriguez said.

This change will strongly impact students and administrators in LAUSD greatly. According to the article from L.A. Times, LAUSD has plans to put over half of their students in charter school, on top of the 16 percent of student enrollment of charter schools. On top of this the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation has a 490-million dollar plan to make 260 more charter schools in the next eight years. LAUSD, being the second largest school district in the nation, already enrolls more than 100,000 students in charter schools, which is about 16 percent of the school district. They are trying to put more students in charter schools by making more charter schools.

In the end, the Board of Education is still deciding whether or not to use this idea, and there are many factors they have to consider before making this decision.

## Recent Survey Indicates US has Shortage of Teachers

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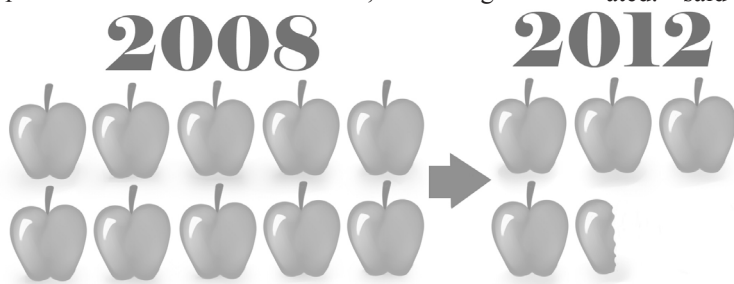
According to the New York Times, enrollment in California teacher preparation programs and the number of credentials issued has dropped by more than 55 percent from 2008 to 2012. In a survey administered by The Field Poll from Sept. 17 and Oct. 4, 2015, results showed that a majority of Californians are concerned with the steady decline of teachers.

Additionally, the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning stated that in order to maintain the necessary amount of teachers, an additional 100,000 teachers are needed over the next decade. However, the inability to recruit 100,000 teachers is caused by several factors.

"I don't think the cause [for the teacher shortage] is because there is a lack of people available but [rather] a lack of respect for the profession that causes people to lose their passion or desire to teach. Teachers have become disrespected [...and] are blamed for poor education in America.

However, everyone including, students, teachers and parents, plays a part in education," English Department Head and AP Ambassador adviser Nancy Padilla said.

There could be several consequences that come along with the shortage of teachers. For instance, according to the



researchers from the RAND Corporation, a shortage of teachers means there will be less teachers that educate in specific subjects such as math, science and special education. Without teachers educating in specified subjects the quality of education will decrease over time.

In order to tackle this problem, some possible solutions include providing free or reduced housing to teachers, as suggested by the Indiana State Board of

Education. These attempts were proved to be ineffective, especially in rural districts, where funding was not sufficient.

"A good solution might be putting more activities such as spirit days that make our teachers feel more appreciated," said sophomore Leslie Gutierrez.

Although some methods have backfired, there are some that have succeeded. As stated in the New York Times, California governor Jerry Brown, persuaded voters in 2012 to pass a sales and income tax measure that raised funding for public schools. As a result, budgets for public schools are slowly recovering which allows schools to begin rehiring teachers.

"On a daily basis, I see my students grow as individuals and improve their skills. It doesn't get better than that. Still, pay, support, and respect for teachers as professionals all need to increase to attract people to the profession," AFE Adviser Karen Jacobson said.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN

## SGHS Journalists Win Award for Standing Up Against Censorship

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Certain staff members of San Gabriel High School's newspaper, The Matador, have won awards for their ongoing fight against censorship, according to the Pasadena Star News. In May, students who wished to publish a story regarding the termination of first year Speech and Debate coach and English teacher, Andrew Nguyen, were instructed not to by principal

Jim Schofield. The students then organized protests, stating that he had violated their First Amendment rights. The Matador then issued a statement stating that censorship violated their right of freedom of press, according to Pasadena Star-News. According to Alhambra Source, the newspaper staff then went on to address the school board. Because of their actions, selected members of the Matador staff have been awarded the 2015 Courage in Student Journalism Award by the Student Press Law Center and

the National Scholastic Press Association.

"As a [Speech and Debate member], I really appreciate the Matador for fighting for our cause and I think they really do deserve this award for courage," SGHS senior Shayna Quach said.

Kelly Ho, Thomas Wang, Sydney Trieu, Rebecca Lei and Simon Yung are the selected students who will receive the award this year at the National High School Journalism Convention in Orlando Florida according to Pasadena Star News.