

Police Presence in Schools Provides Essential Safety and Security

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School safety and security are important for the well-being and promotion of a good learning environment. Police presence can be a major factor that reinforces the sense of safety for all students and staff. Having police officers on a school site will prevent and discourage violence that is otherwise more likely to occur on schools without any police presence. While the officers may not be able to control all aspects of student behavior, they will be able to act faster in case of an emergency than with only the availability of administrators and staff.

According to Washington Times, with the recent increase of school-related violence and the 142 school shootings across America since December 2012, police officers are now even more necessary to promote a safe learning environment. The Safe Schools for Safe Learning Act of 2013 was supposed to guarantee a secure area for students, but the continuous problem of school violence has proven its guarantee otherwise.

It is important to note that police presence is greatly beneficial only under mod-

eration so interaction among students will not be intimidating and students will not feel an invasion of privacy. It is crucial to ensure the well-being of students,

sense that they are able to supervise lunchrooms, promote drug and alcohol awareness and even become confidants for students who have never even con-

from becoming crime victims. School officers are no longer seen as those who only arrest; they also become problem solvers and mediators for students.

Student safety is not something that can be risked. Without the firm reassurance of security on school grounds, schools are presented with the chance of having to suffer devastating and irreversible consequences. It is better to act now with more security than to leave room for peril in student safety. Funding for student resource officers can come from the Community Oriented Policing Services, a program designed to assist law enforcement in hiring police officers to build partnerships in the community and combat school violence.

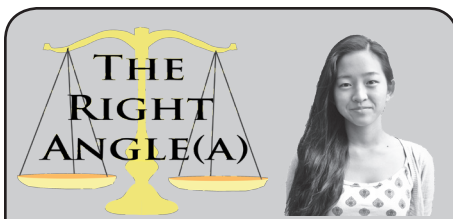
Especially with the recent San Bernardino shooting and LAUSD bomb threats, having police presence is even more necessary with the dangers in vicinity. Since AHS is close to Los Angeles, one of the largest cities of the nation, it is more vulnerable to the risks of violence. With proper management and a balance among police presence in schools, the feeling of being safe will be greatly beneficial to both students and staff, and might even boost overall academic performance.



but it is also necessary to consider the possible fear that may foster on school grounds due to overcontrolling security.

School officers are a hybrid, in the

considered the thought of befriending an officer. While school resource officers are able to enforce law at any moment, they also influence students and prevent them

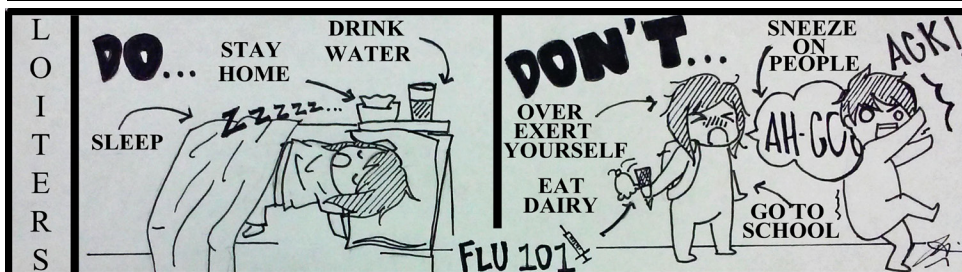


Why Women's Colleges Matter

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To those that remind me there will be no boys on campus should I choose to attend a women's college, there's nothing to fear - I'm very much capable of reading and understanding the words "women's college." In turn, I would like you to keep in mind that I am also very much capable of making my own decisions and that I probably know myself better than you do. And if that still doesn't satisfy your oddly-placed curiosity, don't worry. Of the women's colleges I am applying to, there are many nearby coed campuses where I might find a member of the gender that has historically treated women as, for lack of a better analogy, dirt.

While it's true that some women's colleges were founded to "create wives" for men graduating from nearby universities, it's very clear that these institutes no longer operate with those intentions. If anything, I truly appreciate how they have been transformed from institutes perpetuating gender roles to the establishments they are today, empowering young women across our nation to pursue higher education when they find persistent disadvantages in today's education system. In fact, in a study released by the National Association for Research in Science Training, teachers unconsciously give female students less attention and asks them lower-level questions than male students. So to anyone who still questions my college application decisions, just remember that I would never make such an important decision without being informed. If I do end up attending a women's college, I can rest easy in the knowledge that I am receiving a quality education from professors that won't give me less attention simply because I don't possess a Y chromosome.



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In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was passed with the promise that all students would excel in English and mathematics by the time it expired, the 2013-14 school year. However, the year is now 2016 and we've been left with few of these promises fulfilled.

Fortunately, President Obama managed to sign into action the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) just before 2015 came to a close. This act further allows schools to break off from the one-size-fits-all directive that has become the norm in American schools.

According to Education Week, ESSA puts an emphasis on new age skills such as collaboration, adaptability and critical thinking - today's instruments of success. These skills will be taught in order for students to properly compete with their international peers. By helping students obtain these skills ESSA will also prepare students in life after high school and as they pursue a career.

Most importantly, unlike NCLB which demanded students be tested regularly to measure success, the ESSA significantly reduces test taking. By doing this, ESSA is getting rid of tests that are both unnecessary and low-quality.

Instead, it is shifting from the traditional multiple choice exams to ones that allow students to leave open ended responses. Rather than filling in a bubble with an answer already provided, students are now allowed to generate their own personalized response. This further encourages students to form their own opinions and constructs critical thinking and career-ready students. It is incredibly important that students are properly able to form strong opinions on things they are passionate about and ESSA helps them achieve this. Although ESSA will be implemented during the 2017-18 school year, it is a notable improvement from NCLB.

MOOR graphics by LESLIE HWANG

Taking a Gap Year: Refreshing Opportunities

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Around this time of the year, a majority of high school seniors have finished applying for college. However, going into college right after high school may not be a right option for those who feel uncertain about what they want to pursue in future. This might result in taking multiple courses or switching to another major after wasting several months or years on one. Rather than going to college with uncertainty, students can take a gap year and defer their enrollment in order to have more time exploring their true passions.

Students can consider of travelling, volunteering, working, learning, interning and more during the year off. Travelling can give students chances to experience a new found culture and think alone without having someone to affect their decisions. Students can get a concrete sense of what a particular field is like and whether or not it suits them through volunteer work. Students who decide to work or intern can develop valuable skills and affirm their career choice. Learning another language can be a huge asset to one's future career.

According to American Gap Association, a nonprofit organization for gap years, 60

percent of students who took a gap year after high school have reported that their gap-year experiences helped either determine or confirm their choice of career and academic majors. As students have greater clarity on their career ambitions, they can save time and money and are less likely to take the national average of five to six years to graduate college.

Some students may fear being judged for not transitioning directly into higher education but they should not feel this way because taking a gap year for the right reasons will benefit them in the long run. According to the data compiled by Robert Clagett, former dean of admissions at Middlebury College, the aver-

age GPA for students who took a break was consistently higher than of those who did not. Beyond personal exploration, according to Holly Bull, president of the Center for Interim Programs, gap year students are also advantaged in the job market later on because their valuable experiences are building a resume that is directly relevant to getting a job. Therefore, a gap year can benefit students who need more time to find their goals or want work experience before college.

