

## Student Needs Finally Met by Jeb Bush's Plan

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On Jan. 18, Jeb Bush, former Governor of Florida and current Republican presidential candidate, released a plan to challenge current issues in America's education system. Bush's plan is based on accountability for student achievement and an emphasis on early childhood education. This education reform plan will take decision-making away from the federal government and return the authority to states, local districts and families.

First of all, Bush's plan will ensure that money is spent directly on children's education by allowing states to give funds to parents supporting charter school expansions. Currently, families usually conform to their local school where they lack representation and have few opportunities in decision-making. Under Bush's plan, families could now find the learning situations that best meet their child's needs, making this a significant improvement from our current system.

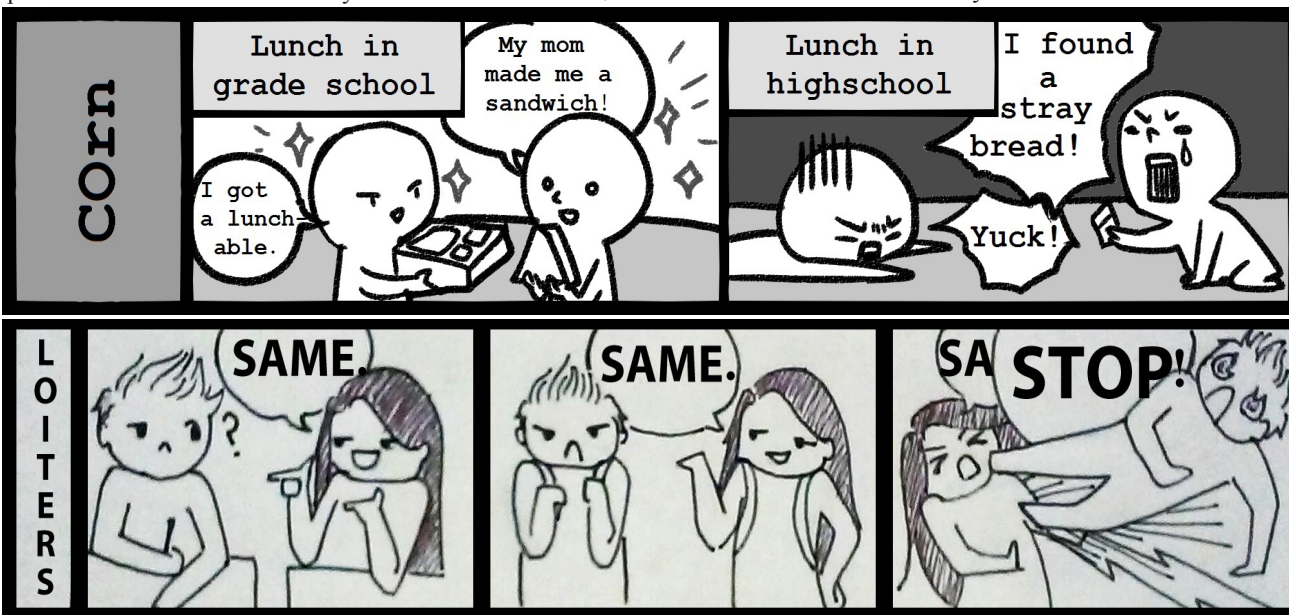
Bush's proposal not only aims to provide families with choices they have never had before, but also provides families with an opportunity to access information they need when evaluating schools and making critical decisions. He will encourage the



creation of much-needed state databases that make information on student outcomes, such as retention, completion, unemployment and earnings, available to the public. In this way, students and parents will now have a better understanding of a school before making crucial decisions on whether or not they should attend it. Furthermore, debt is one of the

major problems that currently plagues many college graduates. Regardless of opportunities such as Free Application For Federal Student Aid and financial aid, many are still unable to pay back their loans. However, with Bush's new plan, high school students would have access to a \$50,000 line of credit and would pay back 1 percent of their income for 25 years for every \$10,000 spent. Bush's plan is more convenient because it allows students to pay off their debts at a consistent, gradual rate. Additionally, Bush's proposal will create one million scholarships of \$8,000 every year in Lifelong Learning Accounts for low-income families. This will help students pay for college expenses and economically compete with wealthier families. Therefore, Bush's plan is better because it would provide different options and increased financial aid to help students succeed in their education.

Unlike the current education system, Bush's proposal embraces the much needed flexibility that today's school structure lacks. His proposition puts student necessities over government agendas to allow children to obtain distinctive needs. Bush's education plan can benefit students and ultimately boost success in education.



## Phone Reductions: Good Things Come in Small Sizes

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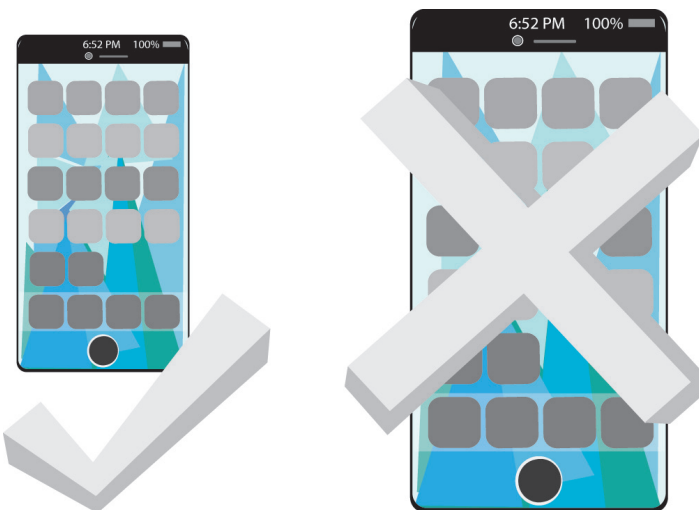
From the creation of early handsets to modern-day cellular devices, phones have come to be an extremely useful product. Today, the evolution of phones is centered around their size. Now that nearly all phones have touch-screen capabilities and can access numerous applications, the decisive factor that distinguishes certain phones over others is size. Phone companies develop new devices on the belief that bigger is better. However, there comes a point where these phones become too big, making them inconvenient for their owners.

One of the biggest phones is seven inches produced by Lenovo. Over-sized phones cause an inconvenience to people since they do not fit in pockets nor in one hand. Also, big phones consist of a larger battery which take longer to charge. Despite its convenient screen for entertainment, large phones are not necessarily stronger devices compared to smaller ones

since larger devices consist of a lot of plastic which can be easily destroyed when dropped. In addition, larger phones are more prone to being dropped. Another disadvantage of large screen mobile phones is that the screen tends to lack accuracy and sensitivity. Many are overly-sensitive, not allowing users to take good control over the device. Excessive sensitivity of the screen may lead users to mistype words, deleting data and even accidental dialing.

In March, Apple Inc. is going to produce a special edition called the iPhone 5s which will be smaller. Due to the enhancement of the phone sizes in the past years, it is no surprise that the upcoming editions will reduce in size. Besides being inconvenient, large smart phones will become virtually no different from tablets.

MOOR graphics by LESLIE HWANG



## CAN YOU DIG IT?



### New Perspective on a New Year

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The word eventful is a word I do not normally use to describe my family life. However, from the back-to-back family reunion dinners, lengthy house cleaning sessions and various grocery market trips, the time I spent with my family this past week was extremely eventful. The traditions that come with celebrating the Lunar New Year always seem to bombard the lives of most Asian families during this time of year and to the surprise of my childhood self, I have finally understood why they are important.

Just like 99% of Asian children out there, all I associated Chinese New Year with was free money. As a kid, I openly admit those bright red envelopes of money easily became my favorite part of Chinese New Year. I even vigorously questioned the customs my parents followed. "How does organizing my room clean out bad luck? Why can't I wash my hair on New Year's Day? Where did all these oranges and orchids come from?"

Now, even though I find myself dominantly immersed in American culture, I have realized that Lunar New Year traditions mean much more than money and worrying about prosperous fortunes. Perhaps it's the fact that I have grown accustomed to these annual traditions, but spending time with my family during this Chinese New Year has made me realize how ancestral and long-established this holiday truly is. After all, Lunar New Year derives from layers of myths and traditions, resonating the fact that cultural ties are significantly crucial to maintain the traditions we often take for granted. Without the traditions we associate to our cultures, our sense of identity would be lost.

The fact that I can gather with loved ones to celebrate a healthy and thriving year is something I have overlooked as a second generation Asian American, and I am glad that I have learned to associate Chinese New Year with much more than money. The traditions I once did not understand bring about one of the happiest weeks of the year and I totally dig it.

## AVOID A MASK OF IRONY

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Almost everything in our modern culture has an ironic pose. Living ironically is a mode of self-defense people use to avoid taking responsibility for their decisions. As Christy Wampole from New York Times accurately coins, to live ironically is to "hide in public."

Most times, irony is a tool that we use to neutralize awkwardness in moments of extreme enthusiasm or emotion. We counter vulnerability with some snark or sarcastic comment to distance ourselves from the discomfort we feel with the unfamiliar amount of sincerity. For example, irony is evident when the idea of love becomes ludicrous. A friend may be trying to show affection or care and one hiding behind irony may respond with, "Ew, you love me? We're not in a corny movie; don't be absurd." Another example of this is when someone who hides behind irony is assumed to enjoy a certain type of music, clothing, etc. They will both deny and express contempt in order to eliminate the possibilities of being judged. In other words, you could be the one listening to Justin Bieber all day everyday while dismissing his music as absolute crap.

We live in an age of irony so deep that it is cutting us off from the earnestness and sincerity essential to an authentic life. Living ironically is being too embarrassed to enjoy anything honestly. When there is too much irony, it becomes a problem in which we lose a sense of ourselves. While at times, irony can be a witty way to look at new ideas, it ultimately prevents us from being able to handle any type of direct expression.

Irony may be a huge part of our modern culture, but distancing ourselves allows us to more often say what we mean and genuinely consider seriousness despite the possible risks. Cultivating humility and thoughtfulness everyday is something everyone needs to learn in order to live a more expressive and meaningful life.