

America: Where Students Gamble for an Education

JIMMY TANG
Copy Editor

How would you feel if the fate of your educational quality depended on the roll of a dice? For some students, this roll can serve as the deciding factor between their success or failure as adults.

As a result of the declining credibility of public schools nationwide, many concerned families have turned to charter schools in order to provide their children with a better education. Like traditional public schools, charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are supported by taxpayer funds and bylaw, are required to accept anyone who applies. Charter schools differ from public schools in the way that they have more freedom to make decisions that are in the best interest of their students. In other words, they operate outside of the traditional school district bureaucracy and rules. With only 5,000 charter schools nationwide, families have been forced to compete

against one another to enroll in these schools.

Due to high student enrollment, certain charter schools in the United States, such as the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) in Los Angeles, CA and SEED Charter School in Washington, D.C., have been forced to base their enrollment on a lottery system under a Federal law. A growing number of students are applying to charter schools because they hold higher-performance rates in comparison to the traditional public schools in their respective areas. The only problem with this is that students who are not chosen in the lottery are forced to go to schools with lower performance rates.

For Daisy Esparza, an elementary school student living in East Los Angeles, enrolling at KIPP was her only option of escaping the poor education offered in her school district, where six out of ten students do not graduate from high school. Daisy was only in the fifth grade, but she already knew

where she wanted to go to college in order to become a veterinarian. Because of her family's financial struggles, private school was not an option. Unfortunately, with only ten spots available at KIPP for the 135 students applying, Daisy only had a 14% chance of getting in. She was not chosen.

Critics of charter schools argue that they divert funds away from traditional public schools. A study by the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools revealed that charter schools face similar, if not more, financial barriers than public schools. Despite this, charter schools have shown dramatic student achievement growth, graduation rates and college acceptance rates, particularly in low-income communities, according to the Broad Prize Foundation.

Regardless of a school's traditional public or charter status, they should all be held accountable for their performance and student achievement. Unlike traditional public schools, charter

Charter School



Public School



Student Performance

schools must go through a testing period in which they are evaluated on multiple factors including student achievement. These tests decide whether or not a charter school will remain open. Although closing pub-

lic schools with low-performance rates is considered unfair by some standards, there comes a point when schools are doing a disservice to the community by providing their students with a poor education.

Staff Editorial: Evaluating the Benefits of Gender-Based Education

In education, the ability for students to grasp a curriculum is crucial to success. As many students are unique, the class should reflect each individual's needs. In a shallow overview of demographics, an obvious distinction would be based on gender. Now, if that were an influential aspect for success, also consider the impacts in the classroom.

Woodward Avenue Elementary School in Florida transformed boys labeled with ADHD, passing at 37% on a state standardized test, to becoming proficient students with a 86% passing rate another year, by placing them in a single-sex environment. On the other hand, girls would study a curriculum that empowers them to free themselves from traditional restraints, such as stereotypes

about "girl subjects" and "boy subjects." Some consider being around the same sex socially comfortable. Where everyone has more similarities, there may be relief from self-consciousness and judgment. There must be something right about the single-sex setting.

However, gender is not necessarily an obstacle to an individual's academic success, while there are many other factors that may contribute to one's opportunities to do better in class. The out-

look for success may be determined by one's cultural or socioeconomic background, especially when many single-sex schools receive privately-funded resources in class. While the matters of finance are set aside, the disadvantages set in.

Segregating students by gender, in the name of necessity, gives the notion that boys and girls are unequal in ability. This may reinforce stereotypes instead of breaking them.

Many single-sex schools in the past were meant to reinforce gender roles. Girls' schools, for example, would restrict girls in a cult of domesticity. Although many those schools have progressed to contemporary ideals of personal empowerment, the co-educational classroom promotes equality, where all participate in the

same place without being separated. Each environment has social or academic advantages. Perhaps, in eliminating the potential gender conflicts, students will be able to focus on academics. However, single-sex schooling is not the right option for every student, and it may have social disadvantages. Since students' performances do not wholly rely on their gender, a single-sex environment is not necessarily more beneficial than a co-ed one.



Dress Right for Flight

SARAH TAKHAR
Staff Writer



Once upon a time, people wore proper, well-fitting clothes rather than the low-cut shirts, short skirts and pants two sizes too big. Though everyone is entitled to have their own unique fashion sense, places such as airports have decided to implement a dress code.

Although airports have not enforced dress code, there are standards to follow. A staff member may deem sagging pants, missing shoes and revealing clothing inappropriate. The person will be asked to change their attire. If a person refuses to comply, the staff calls security and has them removed from the premises whether the passenger is on their flight or not.

It is reasonable for the staff to ask passengers with inappropriate clothing to change into proper attire because children are likely to be on board and it is unjust to expose them to this inappropriate clothing—or lack thereof.

An airport that regulates what people wear on airlines can create an environment where no one is uncomfortable because of someone else's revealing attire. After all, there are few people who want to see the color of the underwear of the person sitting next to them.

CAT'S CRADLE

Catherine Chiang



Opinions Editor

Sorry for Caring

When people realize the truth, they look at me like I have three heads.

"Oh... you're a feminist."

I've never understood this reaction. I don't understand why my friends respond with a tone of disgust and confusion, as if the stigma that all feminists don't shave and hate men is true, and I've suddenly morphed into that stereotype. I don't see why I have to hide the fact that I believe in the power of women, that I have to feel ashamed when my peers discover that—gasp—I care about the injustices women face in today's society.

I don't understand how, in the 21st century, advocating for women's rights has become something others frown upon.

Maybe my peers have decided that being a feminist is unnecessary; after all, the age of suffragettes is long over. But it's the fact that people still think it's acceptable to throw around offensive, demeaning comments about women when they wouldn't dare say something that could be perceived as racist, that it's respectable to fight for gay rights, for civil rights, for animal rights—but not for women's rights, that makes me believe otherwise.

Just for the record, I don't hate men and my personal hygiene is pretty typical for a teenage girl. And in the future, I'm not going to deny any more accusations. Yes, I am a feminist; yes, I want to empower women; and no, I am not ashamed.

