

America's public education fails students

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For a country that prides itself on being the best in the world we fail our children with our educational system.

According to the World Top 20 Project, South Korea ranks as the top country for education, while the United States comes in at 16. These ranks are based on the overall quality of education and our country falls further and further down the list every year because while other countries make improvements for their public education, America remains stagnant.

According to the Center for Global Education, the leaders of South Korea their successful system results from having good teachers and education leaders. South Korean teachers can expect to earn a fair wage and teachers are well-trained.

In the U.S., we have a saying "Those who can't do, teach," which stems from a system of ignorance. It comes from a government who does not consider our education as a top priority.

Rachel Minton, a senior Latin teacher-licensure student, said she thinks teachers in America are undervalued. Not only are teachers responsible for teaching the content of their classes, but there are so many smaller jobs involved with teaching that are often overlooked.

"Teaching the content is only one small part," Minton said. "Teachers have to be almost like counselors oftentimes, as many students view teachers as a safe place to go to with their problems. They have to manage overfilled classrooms, often times filled with students who would rather be playing games on their phones and we have to find ways to sort of force these kids to be interested in the content we're presenting them."

American parents tend to blame teachers for poor education. Test scores are used to determine the quality of a teacher with no consideration on the classroom environ-



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Despite the U.S. calling itself "great," the nation's public education system ranks 16th in the world.

ment, resources, or student population. Teachers in our country are overworked and underpaid.

Training is not centralized in the U.S. and teachers-in-the-making pay thousands to get certified with no guarantee of getting a job within the state they are certified. When these teachers do get a job, it rarely pays enough to both cover student loans and still survive.

I have known many teachers in my life who either go the private school route or quit in order to pursue a career with better pay. This is a shame because those with the passion and potential to shape the future of the country are turned away from teaching.

Growing up, I always thought I would be a good teacher. I tutored my fellow peers in math and science throughout high school and genuinely enjoyed it. Yet, I was turned away from this career based on the poor treatment I witnessed my mother, a public school teacher, go through.

Minton said she chose to teach because of her passion with Latin

as a subject and her love of working with students. She did admit she was apprehensive about becoming a teacher at first due to the horror stories she heard about late night grading and low pay. It wasn't until she took education classes at UNC Asheville she realized that working in the classroom made her feel at home.

The U.S. has an individualized approach to everything, meaning everyone in our country values their own personal freedoms more than the general freedoms of the whole country. We let our states decide the majority of education ordinances, leading to disparities in education between states and no national standard. Meanwhile, fostering a unified national identity is what South Korea values.

In South Korea, students have access to the same amount of education and the same quality of education. Every school in Singapore is equal, every teacher in Singapore trains at the same institution. The country holds their teachers to high standards, treats them with respect

and trains them well. Class time is not wasted and students take learning very seriously.

South Korean schools value consistency in their education. Their technology is simple, the school design is basic and yet they are ahead of us. They value education so much they want to succeed and strive to be the absolute best. In South Korea, as long as you are driven and willing to learn, you can do well.

In our country, success is not based on education or hard work, but on the background of the student. Private schools offer the best quality of education, but only those with money can attend these schools. So students that come from wealthy backgrounds get the good education which leads to a good college and then a high level job. Students that come from lower income households simply do not have an equal chance.

There is no simple fix for the American public education crisis. However, our country will need to work together to create some sort of plan or solution.