

There appears to be apathy among youth today as to political involvement. If given the opportunity, what would you do to change it?

If I were given the opportunity to change the way youth felt about political involvement, I would implement a plan to make involvement mandatory for high school students, I would make classes about politics mandatory throughout all of the years of schooling, and I would create forms of media that students could take advantage of through popular social networking websites. These three facets of my plan would work together to make political involvement not only a necessary part of schooling, but also an enjoyable part of everyday life.

Students are already required to perform community service as part of their graduation requirements. I believe that political involvement can also be described as community service because the election of more representative candidates is beneficial to the community. In my plan, a minimum of fifteen hours out of the seventy-five required for graduation must be logged at a lobbying organization or campaign office.

Another graduation requirement that could be expanded is the Government and Economics class in the senior year of high school. I believe this is too little. Under my system, all history classes starting in the fifth grade will be comprised of three quarters of history and one quarter of government studies. The world history classes will study the effectiveness of governments around the world and compare them to our American government. This will affect the students in two ways. Primarily, they will learn about the governments both in the United States and around the world, and learn the connection that policy had on major world events. A term paper would also be required. A side effect would be that in learning about the government, they will also learn about the

issues, and their internal political efficacy would rise, thus increasing their chances of participating in politics at a later date.

The third part of my plan, social networking, would not be mandatory, but instead be assigned at the discretion of the teacher. Current students are already very immersed in their social networking websites such as Facebook© and Twitter©. In my plan, every politician would create an official twitter account specifically for use by students, for debate topics and communication. This has already been done on a small scale by allowing members of the YouTube community to ask questions to presidential candidates for an online debate. A similar system would be used for the students. The other social networking sites would be homes for debate and discussion among the students, where they can explore different beliefs and talk about their ideas.

In summary, my plan to change the youth's apathy toward government would include mandatory school involvement as well as a sandbox type interaction online. This plan would not only help the students, but also help the community through the election of more representative officials. It would also encourage students to be involved in the future.

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