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To:
Date: 2/20/2018 7:48:51 AM
Subject: Education ~ Website email from Mark Williamson

Good day, Lieutenant Governor Bryant. My name is Mark Williamson, as I am sure you might deduce from the mandatory data field listed above. I am contacting you in regards to some questions the student body at my high school, Wagener-Salley High School, has in regards to the education system. Many of the student body officials at this school seem to be of the opinion that the requirements to graduate, being Mathematics and English classes, are damaging to these subjects and their respective integrity. I concur. I write this per my unofficial appointed position, but also out of genuine interest in the matter. Take for example, the cold war, if you will excuse my straightforwardness. In the cold war, there was a significant push for Math and Literacy, and engineering and other related fields. This is because of the space race, which urged our education system to emphasize these fields so we could beat the USSR. And also because missiles and subsequent arms would enable a victory, and were necessary for our survival. Being toe-to-toe with our foes at a minimum, if you excuse the colloquialism. But in recent years, with the perceived, if not actually real, decline in the faith of American exceptionalism, and the lack of an obvious arms race, these fields have fallen into stagnation. Furthermore, the education system is perceived to be failing. Thus, it stands to follow, the corollary to the logic is that these fields as they are taught are falling behind as well. Many of my peers seem to be of the opinion that forcing individuals who are otherwise unwilling, and respectfully, sometimes even so unwilling, to take classes they do not share an interest in is leading to a decline in the standards of the classes, in the context of actual material taught and not the standards covered, although perhaps those too. And this is through no fault of the faculty or the staff. They have the best of intentions. But naturally, when you flood a given area with unwilling and apathetic participants, the level of excellence will decline. This is basic statistics. Nevertheless, all this must be tiresome to one such as you, who examines the issues daily. My belief, including that shared by my peers, is that many students in the modern day in our region of America seek more vocational skills and less hypothetical ones. And not a lot of Mathematics or an understanding of Literature is needed to fulfill these roles. These professional skills in many cases pay more than certain college-educated fields, and especially since many students in South Carolina fail to achieve scholarships. So, in summary, it stands to reason that if you over-saturate the fields of Mathematics and English, for archaic and obsolete reasons, in an area that has little ambition to pursue these fields, it will lead to a decline. Many of my peers and leaders in the student body, including the Class President and the Senior representative of the class, seem to be of the opinion that the graduation requirements of Math and English should be abolished. I would be much obliged if you would be so inclined as to reply, but understand that you are a very busy man, and this might not even reach you. But if you should happen upon this, I request that you e-mail correspondence if possible. I feel it is simply easier and more convenient for both parties, however, I accept that in this particular scenario a certain compromise should perchance have to be reached. Much obliged for your time, and the time of your staff. -Sincerely, Mark Williamson

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