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### **Learning Has Lost it's Luster**

In my first two years at Washington High School, I was adamant about doing my homework, maintaining motivation, and making school as interesting as possible. However, with the senioritis setting in halfway through my junior year, school can be a drag; a chore that pulls me out of bed far too early and leaves me stressed and exhausted by the end of the day. When I started school, I loved learning. The satisfaction of finishing a huge project or understanding a new concept was more than enough to keep me engaged and interested in school. Now, as a senior who is more than ready to move to the next step in life, learning has lost its luster. Instead of seeing AP and College Credit classes as intriguing challenges, they're seen by many as GPA wreckers, an added stress for upperclassmen that lose their advanced appeal by November. Recently, I heard a student in one of my AP classes utter the words every teacher fears: "I am tired of learning." The mental stress of these classes and the pressure from teachers and parents to keep grades up and keep a positive attitude about school have driven students in my school to be tired of learning and, rather than viewing advanced classes as challenges and college readiness work, viewing them as burdens that don't always seem worth the effort.

My message to my school board on improving education for the students that follow me is this: You must keep school interesting and exciting- enticing to students. You must encourage students to take the advanced classes, but they must be consistently intriguing and engaging. Students cannot walk across the stage at graduation feeling like learning is no longer worth the effort. Learning and gaining knowledge is such an exciting thing, a blessing that we are fortunate to have, and there are students walking these halls that would rather be anywhere else. Students must feel like the classes that require hours of homework and late night study sessions are worth the time and effort. School must be a place that students want to go to.

You must offer as many opportunities as possible to our students to make school a desirable place to be. Washington High School is an amazing place, full of brilliant opportunities for most students, but I'm confident that there are more options and opportunities that can be made available. Students must feel like their classes are important and relevant to their future plans. Encourage teachers to explain why a concept matters, how it applies to real-life situations, and keep students engaged in class. Offer options for assignments when possible. Help teachers and students alike learn to handle and alleviate stress. Most importantly, the desire to learn and go to school must be preserved. Think how much farther our students could go if they had the same desire to learn that they had at the beginning of their education. Knowledge is powerful, and students cannot gain it if they no longer have the desire to acquire it.

I am beyond excited to begin the next chapter of my education at Fontbonne University studying to become a special education teacher. I feel ready and well-prepared by my teachers here at Washington High School to achieve this goal. I am eager to learn at this next step in my life because I feel as though the knowledge I'll be acquiring is relevant and important to me. I want to be a part of the education system because I love working with kids and seeing them

succeed is so exciting. As an educator, I want to help students to love learning and make it as appealing and exciting as I can. Education is so incredibly important, and I hope to be a teacher that makes school a desirable place to be.