

Climbing Does Not Stop at the Top

Caps tossed to the sky, diplomas distributed, goodbyes exchanged with the ones I began school with—senior year is drawing to a close. As a Metro Nashville student from Kindergarten to Twelfth grade, I can testify for the improvements and struggles my Tennessee schools have encountered. Higher standards, recently associated with the Common Core State Standards, have always been a target area for classrooms and curriculums. When asked what higher standards mean to me, I can define my answer in three words: diligence, reciprocation, and versatility.

As one seeks to reach a goal, diligence is required. Hard work results in improved productivity, and I believe this to be true from an educational perspective. To achieve the higher standards the state of Tennessee is working towards, I feel the schools must first make sure that students are equipped with a solid foundation of their classes' information before more positive changes can be achieved. Frequent testing helps with comprehension, but in my experience, students have a difficult time with recalling information they learned in years prior. Teachers and faculty have exhibited the diligence and devotion to grow their students' intellects. Diligence is not only required from the teachers and faculty, students must hypothetically meet their educators in the middle, investing their focus and determination to learn and comprehend the material.

While teachers explain their lessons, I hope my classmates do not relate the teacher from Charlie Brown with the way our teacher instructs the class. Learning takes understanding; it requires not only the teacher to communicate the lesson, but the students to reciprocate it. Tennessee schools are improving in leaps and bounds, and I feel communication is a key role behind this success. Improving the communication skills between teachers and students, as well as ensuring the reciprocation from the class makes for an unbeatable duo.

The last word I relate to higher standards is versatility. Not every student learns in the same way, hence, teachers and educators must be able to convey their lessons in multiple manners. With a flexible mindset, more students will be reached and will effectively comprehend the lessons. I applaud my teachers for possessing this wonderful capability; I admire the drive they have to ensure that I understand what they are teaching. By aiding teachers with different ways to communicate their lessons, I feel classrooms will have improved test scores and students will be able to better relate and understand the material.

While Tennessee has surpassed milestones in the pursuit of bettering education, it is encouraging to know they will not stop improving even after achieving national recognition. Higher standards are a prime way to propel the students of Tennessee towards readiness for college and careers. With diligence, improved lesson reciprocation, and versatility, the barriers Tennessee schools will overcome will be innumerable.