

Dear Mr. Porcello and Dr. Thompson,

As current students attending Perry High School, we think that there are many things that the school is doing exceptionally well. The school is excellent in hiring teachers that are kind and welcoming. The school also does an incredible job in having its students only attend four classes a semester, while offering a new set of classes the following semester. Although the school does many things incredibly well, there are also a few aspects in which the school can improve upon. One of those aspects is offering a more diverse set of electives for students to choose from.

Manchester School of Technology High School in New Hampshire has a very unique set of classes that differ very much from the classes in Perry. The classes that they offer are vocational, but they combine the elements of math, science, and English to make sure that the students aren't missing out in any of the important subjects. Students that have graduated from the school have seen great success in college. When asked how they felt their high school experience has helped them in college, many students have responded by saying that they have been able to fit right in because the classes they have taken in high school have prepared them for college, while also saying that they didn't think they would've gotten that far if they had been in the traditional classroom. If Perry can offer a more diverse set of electives that combine some of the elements of math, science, English, and etc., this would lead to the school doing a great service for their students. It would start giving students an idea of what they might want to do in the future and ultimately would leave them more prepared for college.

When students attend school, they often feel bored or disinterested in the material that is being taught to them. When electives are brought into play, they really change students' moods and perspective towards their school work. Electives serve as a way for students to take a break from traditional class subjects and make them dive into other subjects that are deemed as exciting, unique, and refreshing. A national survey was conducted in 2018 by Edutopia, where students ranging from 6th to 12th grade were asked about what made them more engaged as learners. The common answer that was found was that they felt student choice made them feel most engaged as learners. According to researcher Robert Marzano, student choice was also "linked to an increase in student effort, task performance, and subsequent learning." If Perry High School were able to bring more diverse electives for students to choose from, then there would be even more engagement in students when it comes to learning. Students would be more attracted to school and this attraction will soon bring better grades and results. Not only would this benefit students in high school, but it would also benefit students in college because the process of selecting electives in high school will be the same process that they will see in college.

It could be argued that these ideas could be very difficult to come into fruition because bringing more electives to the school means spending more money. Whenever the school needs to make budget cuts, electives are usually the first classes to be eliminated in order to make room for the more important classes. The truth is that electives are just as important as Math, Science, and English. One of the perks of having electives is that it helps students see

their strengths and these strengths might not be revealed in more traditional classes. Not only that, but electives help students develop behavioral, social, and practical skills, as well as boosting their confidence at the same time. Having a diverse set of electives at Perry could help students find their interests and those interests can take them far in life by helping them see if they are interested in certain careers in the future.

In conclusion, if Perry High School were to bring more diverse electives, I think it would really benefit students after high school and beyond. Students would be able to engage with the material in school much easier and get better grades. Students would bring back their curiosity and creativity when selecting their electives as well. Ultimately, all this would help students because they would explore and find out what they would want to do with their lives after high school and in the future. A school's main job is to prepare students for the real world, and if these education reforms were to take place in the future, then the school would succeed even more in its mission.

Thanks for your consideration.

Works Cited

"Khadaroo, Stacy T. "Reinventing High School." *The Christian Science Monitor*, 21 May 2017.

"Wolpert-Gawron, Heather. "The Case for Electives in Schools." *Edutopia*, George Lucas Educational Foundation, 27 June 2018, www.edutopia.org/article/case-electives-schools.