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### If Teachers “Were Congressmen:” A Satire

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# Academic Leadership Journal

## If Teachers “Were Congressmen:” A Satire

I am an Instructor of Psychology at a local junior college, and would like to share an idea with you. Given the fact that students are “our best customers,” and that they spend a lot of their own hard-earned money in order to get a good education, they should, I feel, have a greater opportunity to influence the grades assigned to them by their instructors. Therefore, I would like to propose a solution for this problem. Why not allow students the opportunity to give money to their teachers in order that their instructors might have something to consider before actually assigning their students a grade. Although, I would, of course, suggest that there be an upper limit on how much money that each student would be allowed to “donate” to each of their respective teachers—for example, let’s say no more than \$1000 per student per class. And not to worry, I am sure that we could all rest assured that teachers, just like our congressman, are “just brimming” with moral integrity, and would, under no circumstances, allow their decisions to be influenced by how much money they actually received from their students.

Such a plan would be good for our schools, since it would help to alleviate the problem of how “school” is so often dissociated from “the realities of everyday life.” You see—allowing students to “donate” money to their respective teachers would be a “really good lesson” ———a kind of real life lesson for all students, something that would enable each and every one of them to learn, in a first-hand manner, just how “the real world” really does work.

For example, poor students could learn that it is best for them to keep their mouths shut, and to just go on pretending that their efforts to get a grade has absolutely nothing to do with how little money they might have to give to their teachers. And then, of course, students “with money to burn” (the sons and daughters of rich folks) could learn to pretend that the money that they give to “their teachers” is in no way a bribe, but rather just a “little token” of their appreciation for a job well done by their teacher. Now, for those students who seem to have “a gift for gab,” and are the kind who may have learned to have little regard for telling the truth——well, they could pretend that they are “lobbyists” and go about representing various groups of richer students in order to help them (the richer students, of course) to be “better able to negotiate” grades with their teachers. And, as an added benefit, these “student-lobbyists” would have the opportunity to find out just how lucrative the life of a lobbyist could be, that is, as long as one wouldn’t mind saying exactly what those “with the money” want (or, should we say, “tell”) them to say. And finally, teachers would have a rather precious opportunity to discover what it “must be like” to be a congressman—— how very difficult it must be in order to follow one’s own conscience and to learn how to say “no!” to “cash up front,” especially when one might just perhaps need a little extra money in order to help out with “paying for the groceries.”

Overall then, I think that you would have to agree with me that such a plan would be of great value—one in which everyone would benefit. Teachers would, no doubt, end up being paid much better—paid what they are, in fact, truly worth, as well as being paid by those who have “the wealth of knowledge” to determine the “real worth” of a teacher. The schools would quite certainly benefit, since they would no longer have to worry about where to find the money in order to pay teachers a more respectable salary. Parents would, of course, benefit since they would not be taxed nearly as much, and they could pay on a more equitable (come as you go) basis; kind of like a “use tax”——the more that the teacher is used, the more that the parents must pay. Finally, and most importantly, such a plan would enable our young people (the potential leaders of our world) to have a genuine opportunity to appreciate the truth of what our grandparents have always said “that there is no free lunch,” that, as grown-ups, in the real world, you will have “to pay” for everything that “you get” in life!

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