

Student input in the policies that shape their education is critical to the efficiency of the institution and quality of their education. However, more often than not, students are left out of the conversations that construct said policies. As an involved and active student in my school and an avid lover of politics, I have become more and more interested in the education policies of our school district. A couple months ago, I went to my first school board meeting. It was clear that something's got to change.

Being an opinionated and loud-mouthed person by nature, I have always been a huge proponent of student voice. I believe that if a school board is truly doing work for the best interests of students, they should be actively consulting with students to learn what they could be doing better or how they can truly be serving the genuine needs of the students.

However, as I sat through the meeting, I did not feel like that was taking place. .

Principals from various schools presented and had new classes and electives passed through the board.

One of the board members asked a principal if he had asked students what they wanted; he didn't have a clear answer to this blatant, yes-or-no question.

In another instance, a board member began to go on a tangent about students and grades and she stated, "I could probably ask 100 students about what they would think and they would probably say...."

Key word: "probably."

Although one could argue that the responsibility for student outreach should be on the student representatives to school board, that is just not true. The job of the student rep is to update the board on the happenings and events taking place at school. It is unfair to those student representatives to have to assume the position of being a voice for thousands of students when they too are just that: students.

When our education and consequently our future are in the hands of these elected officials, students deserve the right to a ballot. Students all around are becoming increasingly passionate and engaged in these elections, arguably more so than those who vote in them. We need more than one seat at the table; we need the power to put people we believe and trust in to give us the education we deserve. That starts here.