

We often don't recognize, and thus don't appreciate, the extent of our prosperity. We take for granted the liberties and privileges that are associated with being in a prosperous nation. However, our forgetfulness does not absolve us the responsibilities of providing a relevant education to the next generation. Innovation is not an esoteric art; rather, it's the simple cooperation of inspiration, ingenuity, and imagination. Because inspiration is a deeply personal experience, we must encourage young minds to pursue their curiosity from the earliest memories of school by creating a project-based curriculum that appeals to individual interests.

The American education system has begun to resemble an assembly line. Teachers work quickly to include materials deemed important. Standardized tests are a form of quality control. "In the past decade, the line has been sped up, the workers are asked to add more bells and whistles, and the raw material at the beginning of the line have decreased in quality" (Alan Rosenberg). This system is ineffective and defunct. Modern society demands a passion in building a brighter future with the tools we have. However, students are not too inspired by STEM fields. The misconceptions that science and engineering require a prerequisite intelligence and are rigid and disinteresting hinders their natural curiosity. STEM is open and unconfined; it responds to whoever sculpts it.

Our education system must be overhauled to incorporate a project-based curriculum. Students need to work in groups to solve simple problems by designing and carrying out their own experiments. This encourages students to go beyond traditional comprehension and gain a practical understanding of the world. Rather than using textbook learning methods, students

will be guided in designing and testing their own hypotheses. Appealing to the individual needs of each student through a project-based curriculum is essential to inspiring them to innovate through pursuing STEM.