

INBOX

Students are creative human beings, not nuts and bolts

I would like to respond to the guest essayist who wrote in “Teachers should face creative constraints” that teachers must have limits placed on their autonomy. While I agree that there are minimum standards to which schools must adhere, I believe that comparing teachers and education to engineers and what they build is a flawed metaphor.

Buildings, cars, and bridges are inanimate objects, while our students are living human beings, with unique sets of skills, creative energies and emotions. Some of the best secondary schools in the nation are independent schools, which are not forced to give standardized tests (I teach at an independent school). Is the best measure of how well a teacher has conveyed history a standardized test, which is largely based on memory, or the way in which the students can use their knowledge of history to make sense of the world they live in?

Ted Hunt, Perinton

Danger awaits journalists as they attempt to keep public informed

I wish to thank all journalists for the difficult and often unrecognized work you do to keep the public informed.

Unfortunately, a large portion of the public is unaware of journalists: education requirements, the standards and ethical codes you follow, and the personal risks you face in the performance of your job.

Recent news reminds us that journalists have been killed in every part of the world in their search for the truth. The Committee to Protect Journalists tracks worldwide deaths of journalist in the line of duty. Forty-two to 76 journalists have died on the job each year in the past decade.

Americans should be very concerned when President Trump verbally attacks journalists. In my opinion, when Trump attacks journalists he is attacking the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech.

Stephanie Booth, Brighton

Juul e-cigarettes are enticing young smokers

An electronic cigarette product called “Juul” is extremely popular with high school students across the country. Juul’s design and sweet flavors are attractive and many children and parents don’t realize the product contains nicotine, an extremely addictive substance.

Vaping devices like Juul are attracting new customers, including teenagers, who have never used tobacco. Developing brains are more susceptible to addiction which can lead some individuals to other addictive substances. I urge the Federal Drug Administration to use its authority to regulate all e-cigarettes to keep them out of the hands of youth. Delaying regulatory enforcement of e-cigarettes may undo years of progress toward reducing the number of people who are dependent on nicotine.

Dr. Hugo Alvarez, Preventive Medicine Resident, University of Rochester

The president should set the example for all of us to follow

The power of words to deflect...The statement he made is “we” need to come together and tone down the divisiveness. The statement needs to be not “we” but “he.” The president needs to set the right example for all of us to follow; this is called leadership.

Allen Platt, Brighton

Here's a thought: How about American Discovery Day?

I recently read an article on the online

Democrat and Chronicle about the recent first annual Indigenous People's Day in Rochester, and the effect that observance on the Italian community in our city. I thought that was an interesting perspective, and I had never made the connection between Columbus and the Italian American population.

My question is, why should we mandate a holiday one way or the other? Who has the authority to truly decide what a holiday means? Perhaps this date could be dubbed "American Discovery Day," or something of that ilk, which describes the holiday in a way that doesn't take a stance. The concept would be open ended enough so that the holiday could be celebrated however one pleases. I believe that this would eliminate some the controversy surrounding this issue today.

Evelyn Van Arsdale Macedon

The opioid epidemic needs our attention and needs it now

There is a crisis in this nation that continues to go unaddressed. Opioid related deaths were on the rise in more than 20 states between 2015-2016. According to the CDC, opioid-related deaths are on the rise among men and women across all races and nearly every age demographic. This issue affects everyone, from children as young as their early teens, to the elderly who are often prescribed opioids for pain mitigation.

This category of drugs is highly addictive, a trait unmentioned by pharmaceutical companies that began pushing their use in the early 1990's. The addictive nature and over-prescription of opioids began the diffusion of prescription drugs into society for recreation through illegal sales. In 2016 and 2017, more than 2,000,000 Americans suffered from an opioid use disorder. This number is absurd and will continue to rise if action is not taken.

Cassidy Draper, Pittsford

The right to vote is valuable; please don't squander it

Seventy years ago my father died from a tragic accident in the building of the Star markets grocery warehouse. I remember that when he was in Genesee hospital he was most concerned that he would be unable to vote. This is a valuable right all citizens have, this being the right to vote. Please don't neglect this.

Allen Platt, Brighton

Protecting quarterbacks will benefit the NFL in the long run

I feel that the NFL's new roughing the passer rule may be the best thing to happen to the league in quite a long time. To elaborate, the NFL has gone in a new direction over the last few years, where quarterbacks generally dominate football games more than any other position.

For instance, when Aaron Rodgers was injured early in the 2017 season, not only did the Packers miss the playoffs, but their audience in telecast last year dropped by nine percent from the year before, when Rodgers was healthy. NFL owners want to protect their fragile franchise players to keep their ratings up, keep the fans happy, and stay competitive. If it means saving Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers, Andrew Luck, and recently Jimmy Garoppolo from being injured again, I say that making the NFL "softer" may be quite beneficial for the league in the long run.

Bobby Shearer, Victor

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