

A strong educational system is one of the indicators of a successful government. Although the United States continuously ranks among the top education systems in the world, it is no longer considered the best. According to worldtop20.org, countries such as Finland, South Korea, and Japan are now considered the best education systems in the world. These rankings are based upon early childhood enrollment rates, high school and college graduation rates, and adult illiteracy rates. It is also based upon primary and secondary math, science, and reading scores, as well as completion rates. A strong educational system is able to happen only when the government successfully plays their role.

The governments job of forming public policy in the area of education currently encompasses a wide set of tasks such as; setting guidelines for curriculums, making decisions about the distribution of resources, and deciding on the correct path regarding the licensing of educators, as well as many other tasks. The main overall role of the government concerning education is to set standards. This is because without the government setting standards that need to be met, then the education system itself would not be structured enough to provide quality education as an overall country. The U.S Department of Education states on their website, “Please note that in the U.S., the federal role in education is limited. Because of the Tenth Amendment, most education policy is decided at the state and local levels”. Although the federal government does not currently play a big role in education policy, each level of government (federal, state, and local) does indeed have a role.

When it comes to what U.S students are learning, I have various views on what each level of governments role should be. I believe that the federal government’s role in education should be to set general learning objectives for students in each grade. In other words, students should be expected to know the same things at the same time. I believe that it is the role of each state to set a curriculum that will meet the standards the federal government has set for each grade. This is not saying that curriculums should be exactly the same across states, as they will be sure to differ due to topics such as area studies. However, they all need to address the learning objectives. In my opinion, the locality should have the role of setting a schedule regarding when each objective should be taught. Also, I believe that licensing should be decided by the federal and local governments. Lastly, funding should be done by the federal and state governments, with budgeting done by the localities.

Within the state level there is also a legislative and executive branch. As seen on obamawhitehouse.archives.gov, “In every state, the executive branch is headed by a governor who is directly elected by the people. In most states, the other leaders in the executive branch are also directly elected, including the lieutenant governor, the attorney general, the secretary of state, and auditors and commissioners. States reserve the right to organize in any way, so they often vary greatly with regard to executive structure. No two state executive organizations are identical”. I believe that the executive branch should be the main point of communication regarding interaction at the federal level. By this I mean that the executive branch should be the one communicating with the federal branch regarding topics such as funding for example. I also believe that they should be the ones who implement the decisions made by the legislative branch.

Obamawhitehouse.archieves.org describes the legislative branch as the following, “...states have a bicameral legislature made up of two chambers: a smaller upper house and a larger lower house. Together the two chambers make state laws and fulfill other governing responsibilities...The smaller upper chamber is always called the Senate, and its members generally serve longer terms, usually four years. The larger lower chamber is most often called the House of Representatives, but some states call it the Assembly or the House of Delegates. Its members usually serve shorter terms, often two years”. I believe that the role the state legislative branch should have is that they should be the ones making the decisions which will then be told to the executive branch. The legislative branch is made up of such a huge amount of people that I feel that it is better able to encompass a large amount of opinions, leading to a larger perspective and less biased final decisions.

References

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