

The Political Program of the American Student Union



We The American Student Union Demand:

1) A New National Youth Administration where all students are supported in their studies, find meaningful work, and are prepared to build the America of tomorrow.

1. Establish a Work-Study Program that focuses on enhancing youth training and experience in the fields of Industry, Science, Technology, and Manufacturing. The Work-Study Program will be offered at all High Schools and Colleges. All American youth will have access to this program regardless of their respective background. The New National Youth Administration (NYA) would fund and organize this program.
2. Students/Youth should be paid monthly for projects and study. American youth who are contributing to scientific research and other initiatives should be compensated for the labor that they provide. The pay should be on a monthly salary basis and the programs would be overseen by the new NYA.
3. Assistance for Mothers who are students (HS, Undergrad, Postgrad, Trade) such as subsidies and guaranteed income. Due to the high cost of raising children, many American women choose to not have children. This especially applies to women who are already dealing with student debt and are overworked and underpaid. American mothers should be relieved of debt, have assistance in limiting work hours while maintaining fair pay, and have access to childcare to free up mothers' time to be full participants in society.
4. All students should have access to stable dorm housing. This would include a limit on students per suite and dorm. Hygienic conditions must be guaranteed by the New NYA and students should not be responsible for bringing toiletries and other necessities for dorm life. The current system of for-profit room and board must be abolished and replaced. There must be assistance and protection for students who are fleeing from

domestic violence; lack of housing is one of the main reasons why women are unable to leave an abusive partner.

5. Youth-guaranteed employment in public works. America is suffering from a deep infrastructure decline. To rescue our country we must employ all unemployed or underemployed youth in public works programs. These public works would involve building HSR, repairing roads, bridges, sidewalks, and tunnels, and maintaining/protecting national forests.
6. All students and youth must be guaranteed free meals on campus provided for by the school and funded by the New NYA. High Schools and colleges must offer quality food that is up to nutritional and edible standards. Meals would include Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner.
7. American youth must be given pathways apart from white-collar labor: industry, medicine, engineering, and the sciences. Paid-apprenticeship programs should be initiated under a new NYA with full union rights, fair pay, and at no expense.
8. All DACA recipients should be given immediate American citizenship. The US Government through its destructive policies has caused several migration crises. It is not the fault of the children who came to this country without free will that they are perpetually stuck. As these children were raised and grew up in America, they are Americans.

2) A National Education Funding Bill where schools are not left closed or neglected, and the arts are sponsored to reinvigorate the culture of America.

1. A Minimum Federal Funding Benchmark must be established for all American Schools. This can be done by balancing the American budget i.e. cutting military spending and corporate welfare. American education today is criminally underfunded and a mere afterthought. The youth and students of America are the future of America. Fifteen percent of Government spending must focus on public education.
2. A benchmark of allocating at least 4% of the state budget towards public education. Public education is criminally underfunded and undermined by charter schools. All American youth are entitled to a proper education and a pathway toward independence upon adulthood.

3. A cultural section of a new NYA must be established. This section would involve making sure that all American schools offer programs that enhance the cultural development of American youth such as music, art, and crafts. Intellectuals in America should be given incentives to become paid volunteers in this section of the new NYA. Without cultural development, a new America cannot properly express itself.

3) A New American Youth Congress, to involve American youth in forging a better future for our country.

1. The American Student Union will seek to build unity with any youth organization in America which shares our values and goals. The goal of the ASU will be to create a coalition of American student and youth organizations which would then form a larger formation called “The American Youth Congress”. The AYC would include organizations representing the particular interests of oppressed nations, diaspora, women, people with disabilities, and other groups. This larger coalition would strengthen the work of ASU.
2. Politicization is occurring amongst younger Americans at a rapid rate. American youth and students must be pushed in the right direction to embrace a sense of duty to our country, to build a peaceful world, and to fight alongside the American working class for common dignity. Destructive tendencies and political thoughts such as doomerism, racism, sexism, and destructive individualism shall be driven out of the political life of our country’s youth.
3. The AYC would make clear stances and demands on elected officials. This organization would be a political organization along the lines of a PAC or groups such as the NAACP, ADL, and other formations that endorse and provide support to various candidates. Local, state, and federal politicians would be pressured to accept the AYC’s political program.

4) Expanding student healthcare, to invest in the future of our country by investing in the health of American youth and students.

1. Government coverage of students’ healthcare on campus through all levels of education. Currently, some universities provide health insurance plans for students, but not all. Many of these insurance plans have sub-par coverage, likely due to universities trying to cut costs and health insurance companies prioritizing the accumulation of profits over the American people’s health.

2. Sufficient government funds must be reallocated towards healthcare for all students, through all levels of education, rather than a handful of universities choosing the cheapest possible insurance plan to offer to their students. This must include visits to specialists, in addition to on-campus healthcare.
3. Establish a national benchmark of every school having a health clinic or center. In most states, school nurses are required to receive the same training and education as other nurses, in addition to certification for school nursing. Despite being fully qualified to provide quality healthcare, school nurses are only authorized to administer medications that have already been prescribed by a doctor to students, in addition to a few over-the-counter medications. Every school must have a health clinic or center on campus which is available free of cost to all students and staff. For school nurses to meet the healthcare needs of students and staff, national standards must be set for the training which is required for all school nurses, as well as for other healthcare providers in campus health centers.
4. Campus health centers must provide dental, vision, and mental health care. Just as the eyes and teeth cannot be separated from the rest of the body, the same applies to the mind.
5. Address the high rates of mental illness among students and teachers by hiring trained counselors to offer mental health support on campus. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC reported that 1 in 4 young people had seriously contemplated ending their own lives. This is indicative of a massive national mental health crisis. In addition, most children and young adults spend a lot of time online, and there is a growing amount of evidence that suggests that social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok induce symptoms of mental illness, especially in adolescent girls. To address the ongoing mental health crisis in the United States, there must be trained mental healthcare professionals on campus.
6. Provide free vaccinations for all students, as well as free STI/STD testing in high school and college and free reproductive healthcare. Students are required to be up-to-date on their immunizations to attend school; therefore, these immunizations must be available to all students, free of cost. According to the CDC, people from ages 15 - 24 make up 25% of the sexually active population in the United States, but half of all new sexually transmitted infections (STIs) occur among this age group. The most common STIs among college students include chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, human papillomavirus (HPV), and syphilis. To address the high rates of STIs among young people, it is necessary to provide testing and treatment, and education on how to prevent infection.

7. Paid maternity leave for pregnant students and students who have recently given birth. Giving birth in a hospital in the United States, it can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to over \$25,000 on average. Despite these high costs, our country has some of the worst rates of maternal and infant mortality in the developed world. No woman or girl should be punished with medical and student debt for the “crime” of bringing new life into this world while pursuing an education.
8. All students must have the right to choose a healthcare provider of the same sex, especially female students who need OB/GYN care. There are many reasons why women and girls may prefer to have a female doctor: Muslim women and girls’ freedom of religion must be recognized and protected, survivors of sexual abuse are often re-traumatized by a male doctor inspecting their genitalia, and some people (whether female or male) simply feel more comfortable receiving healthcare from someone of the same sex.
9. End suspensions and expulsions as a result of pregnancy, and ensure that pregnant women and girls have equal access to education. Title IX and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been significant steps forward to protect the rights of pregnant students. Schools are required to give reasonable accommodations to pregnant students and students who have given birth, allow students to return to school after maternity leave, and not discriminate against students based on their pregnancy or childbirth status. However, many public and private schools get away with breaking these laws. Far too many pregnant (and disabled) students are still being subjected to various forms of discrimination, including harassment from teachers and segregation from other students. Public and private schools must be required by law to educate all students and staff on the rights of pregnant students and students who have recently given birth. There must be a zero-tolerance policy for the expulsion or suspension of students based on pregnancy or childbirth.

5) An End to the School to Prison Pipeline which benefits private interests through prison labor, and destroys families.

1. The ASU calls to end all SRO programs at all academic levels. SRO programs are ineffective at reducing on-campus violence according to the National Education Association. SRO programs create tension and disruption in an academic environment. SRO programs tend to unjustly target vulnerable students with excessive disciplinary measures such as students with disabilities and students from a minority background. SROs programs are also costly with the government issuing upwards of two billion dollars in subsidies earmarked for such programs nationwide.

2. A clear distinction between Law vs School Discipline must be implemented nationwide. Too often youth are treated like criminals for infractions committed within the school and with classmates. Fights, drug/alcohol use, and other social ailments should not be punished by ruining a student's permanent record and life. Programs for recovery, education regarding substances, and non-violence initiatives should be forward instead of punishment. Students and youth must have their futures prioritized, not jeopardized. School discipline must be geared towards rehabilitation, not punishment.
3. End all restraint and seclusion programs. Children who are not cooperating within the classroom should not be physically harmed or secluded to the detriment of their mental and physical health. If a student is disciplined it must be proportionate and not harm the ability of the student to succeed in an educational environment.
4. Special consideration toward students and youth with learning, physical and mental disabilities. For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), teachers and professors must be required to adhere to the student's IEP. Appropriate funding must be allocated to help students with disabilities learn like any other American student.

6) Teachers and staff must be fairly compensated for their important work and be allowed to collectively bargain.

1. The American Student Union views teachers as a major part of improving conditions for American students and youth in general. Teachers play a major role in developing the American populace and workforce and deserve to be fairly compensated for the positive impact they have on society. As such we pledge our full support to teachers' unions and their fight for fair labor contracts.
2. Teachers and Professors are not the only ones in the education system that deserve better compensation and more fair processes for determining compensation. The American Student Union supports more labor rights and higher compensation for those at all levels of the education system. Custodians, Nurses, Cooks, Coaches, and all other types of staff within the education system play a valuable role in developing the youth and deserve compensation for this work that doesn't leave them struggling to make ends meet.
3. Class sizes in the United States have grown far too large, in attempts to maximize financial efficiency American education has stretched resources far too thin, leaving the teachers overworked and resulting in suboptimal education for students. Smaller class

sizes have been shown to improve understanding by allowing more direct assistance and feedback from teachers and professors. To properly educate the students of today and tomorrow the American Student Union wholeheartedly supports decreasing class sizes in America and increasing the ratio of teachers to students.

7) An end to Imperialist wars, fraternal relations with anti-imperialist nations around the world, and an end to campus militarization

1. The American Student Union supports the Palestinian people and their struggle for statehood, self-determination, and peace. The ASU stands with Palestinian diaspora organizations and youth groups on campus. We condemn unconstitutional attempts to censor, disrupt and prevent Palestinian solidarity organizations from participating in the political life of American youth.
2. The ASU has established fraternal relations with other student and youth organizations across the world. We are a member of the OCLAE. As such, we the ASU demand exchange programs between American students and students of anti-imperialist nations.
3. The ASU opposes US military hegemony, regime change operations, and the existence of NATO. NATO is the enemy not only of students and youth across the world but of all the American people. We call for the abolishment of all overseas bases, NATO, and all current military deployments not on US soil.
4. The ASU calls for an end to the JROTC and ROTC programs. These programs serve nothing but to trick, confuse, and direct American youth and students into servitude of the US military. The US military in its current form is an imperialist organization and stands opposed to the principles and program of the ASU. The ASU calls for a massive cut to the US military budget and to reinvest this money into social services for the American youth and people.