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Post-Debate Reflection

 Both teams from the debate did a very thorough job explaining each side of the issue at hand. Before the debate, I read the assigned texts and was on the con side of the argument. After the debate, I still remain on the con side. The pro side clearly presented very good arguments and a part of me wanted to side with the community approach, but I still believe that it is too broad and will not end up having effective outcomes. Although I still firmly believe in the education approach, there are many aspects of the community approach that I agree with that were stated in the debate. I believe that in a perfect world the community approach would work successfully. One of the articles we were assigned states, “A comprehensive array of programs—such as affordable housing, social services, small business assistance, educational reform, and job training—is targeted to improve socio-economic indicators” (Hopkins). I believe that all of these programs seem like a great idea to solve poverty. I also that it is very hard to just rely on education to solve poverty. In addition, I believe that many children do spend more time in the home setting than at school. With this being said, although I do agree with these arguments I think that our nation needs to address one issue at a time and start from the root of the problem and successful outcomes with eventually trickle out.

 The con side of the debate argued that education can resolve poverty. Although that seems like an absurd statement to most, after reading the texts and listening to the debate I would have to agree. Without going to a good school I do not think I would be where I am today. My teachers motivated me to be better, to set goals, and helped me plan for my future. They were always tracking down students if they believed they weren’t working to their best potential or thought maybe they needed some extra help. The teachers truly cared about their students, and I think that is why my school (grades K-12) is ranked at one of the top in the state. If funds were put directly into the schools to hire the best of the best teachers, provide ongoing education for them, and eventually create an afterschool studying/tutoring program I think that poverty could dramatically decrease. I think that by targeting one aspect to the problem of poverty there is more of a chance for it to be eliminated. I agree with what the con debaters mentioned about extending the school day and putting more money into schools to make them more like KIPP schools. Before the debate I held a firm opinion and I continue to hold a firm opinion. I think that if we educate the children of our future to the best possible standards, they will be educated enough to set goals for themselves, plan for a future, and eventually move up the ladder out of the terrible world of poverty. Growing up, I knew what it was like to not have money and to have parents that didn’t have a college education. I knew what financial burdens felt like. I believe that the children in poverty also know what this feels like, and with the proper education and resources they could have the opportunity to change their lives and not have to make their children go through what they went through. Motivation and a good education are key to our children’s futures.

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