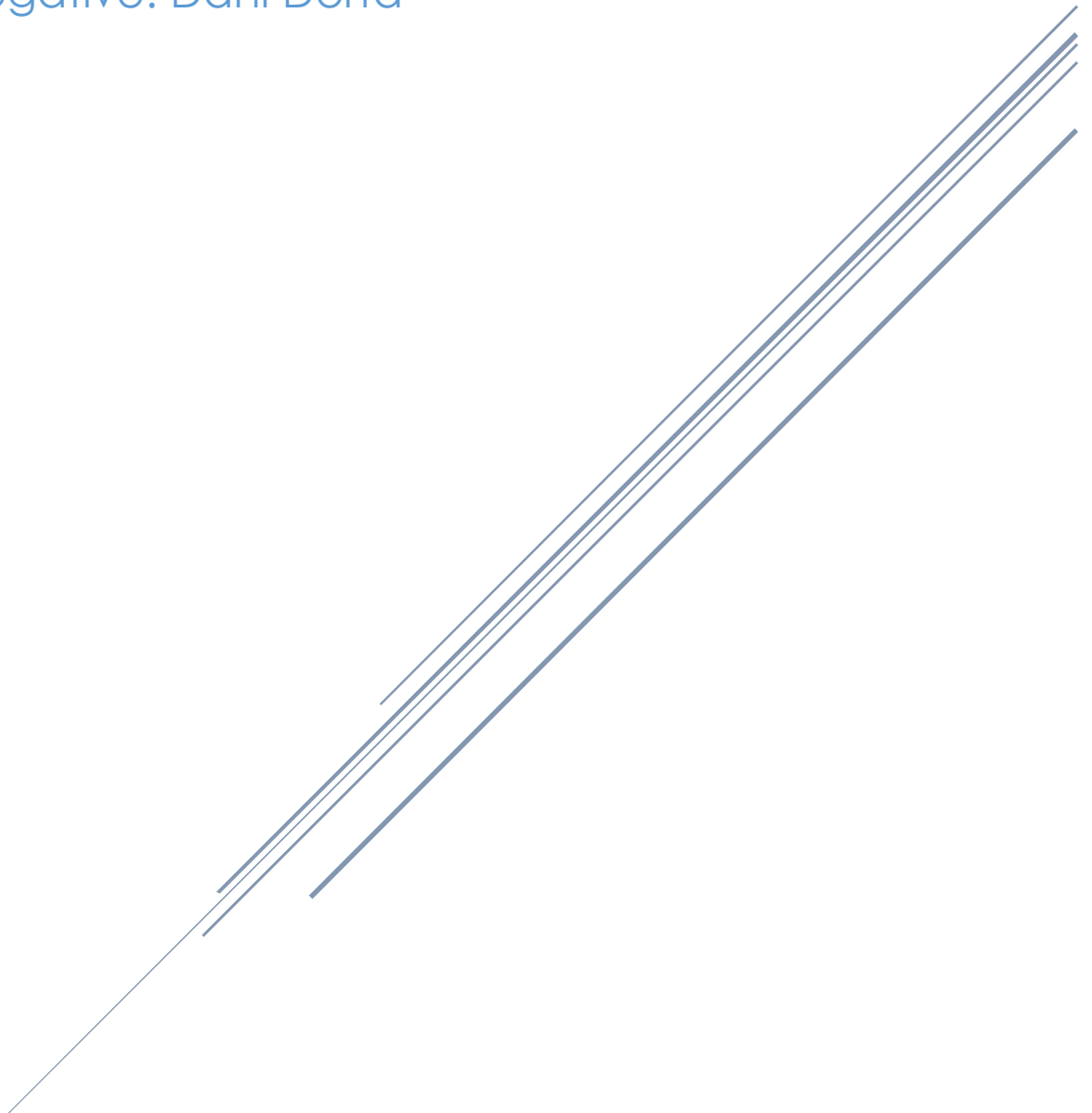


DEBATE PORTFOLIO

1st Affirmative: Hannah Daughtry
2nd Affirmative: Dani Dorta

1st Negative: Hannah Daughtry
2nd Negative: Dani Dorta



Affirmative

Hook: how many times have you been screwed over by a teacher who didn't know how to do their job? How many times have you been stuck with a terrible teacher, the entire year, and not be able to do anything to anything about it. How many first days of school do you hope, and pray you don't get that unfair, biased teacher, hoping your dreams of college don't get thrown away in the process. In today's world we need all the most help we can get, teacher's merit pay is one way to make sure that students get the most help they can get by motivating the teachers to work harder towards students test grades. It's a win-win situation. Teachers get rewarded for their hard work and if teachers aren't working their hardest and have given up the merit pay program shows that instantly and the slacking teachers are picked through and taken out.

I. The new law of merit pay based on student achievement is necessary and should be passed considering how awful the school system is working now.

A. Students are being deprived of their right to a good education by a good teacher.

1. "A handful of outdated laws passed by the California Legislature are preventing school administrators from maintaining or improving the quality of our public educational system by denying them the flexibility to make teacher employment decisions driven by the needs of their students," the suit said.(plain dealer)

So if a teacher has a tenure the amount of time the teacher is able to teach will be limited and the student won't get the proper education needed to pass or even graduate.

B. The reliable and diligent teachers are being paid much less than the inadequate teachers.

1. Takes too long to get the salary teachers deserve

4 years of experience and a bachelor's degree earns you a \$27,655 salary. 8 years and a master's degree earns you \$35,355. 36 years and a PHD? Congrats you've doubled your first year's income to about \$51,430 (Palmaffy)

You never know if a teacher wasn't able to put themselves through so much schooling to be able to get higher degrees. The ones with the most passion, the most determination, could be the ones with the smaller degrees. Yet we pay the teachers with higher degrees and just ignore the rest. The worst teachers could be the ones with the highest degrees.

C. Laws now are keeping bad teachers from being easily fired. (Tenures)

1. Tenure are not allowing schools to easily and quickly replace teachers.

A handful of outdated laws passed by the California legislature are preventing school administrators from maintaining & improving the quality of education by denying them the flexibility to make teacher employment decisions. (Daily News).

In other words, because of old laws that were passed, schools can't do anything about removing/ replacing teachers.

2. The process of removing them is tedious and takes to long.

Once tenured, teachers are extremely difficult to fire. The 10 step dismissal process can take years and cost a district hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees and continued salary payment. (Daily News).

The process is so long and complicated that schools just choose not to do anything. That causes even more problems. Now students are being taught by inadequate teachers and not getting the educations they should be getting.

3. Buyouts are now a problem because that is the most efficient and easiest way right now to replace a teacher.

Buyouts are a cheaper option for schools. Many districts simply opt to pay a teacher to resign or retire (Daily News).

Many schools resort to cheaper methods including buyouts, causing them to lose even more money making the salaries of the good teachers go even lower.

4. Schools are now forced to take drastic measures in order to keep their school and their students safe.

In 2011, for instance, Los Angeles Unified paid \$40,000 to former Miramonte Elementary teacher Mark Berndt, who was arrested on charges of committing lewd acts on a student, so he would retire and drop his appeals. (Daily News).

It has become an issue not only for education, but for safety. These laws were so complicated, and took so long, that the school was forced to pay the teacher, in order to keep the children of the school safe. This causes the school to lose even more money just to solve a problem that should not be one in the first place.

II. The new law of merit pay based on student achievement is crucial and will benefit, and raise the standards of learning in Washington Public Schools.

A. It will push teachers to work harder.

1. Teachers will perform their best for their goal of a higher salary.

Advocates of merit pay for public schools teachers say that performance based bonuses would substantially increase the average teacher salary encouraging teachers to perform their best (Eagle).

A teacher who might not have been trying their best, and just being plain lazy, will dust themselves off and actually try. Even though it is in the pursuing of money, teachers will educate students at their very best, helping students have a better education.

B. It has been working and helping in other states

1. The same teacher evaluation system has worked and helped in District of Columbia.

A controversial teacher-evaluation system put in place by former District of Columbia Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee has done what it was supposed to do, according to findings: It makes low-performing teachers leave the school system and improves the skills of those who stay (Toppo).

This proves the merit pay system can be effective. The people didn't like the thought of change. They thought, "the system is fine how it is now, change would just destroy it." Even though it was controversial, it still went into action. In the

end, it benefitted its schools, creating a better education for each and every student.

D. It will greatly increase the teachers' pay

2. Hardworking teachers will get the pay they deserve.

January 2006 public schools in the Houston, Texas begin to pay their teachers on a merit pay based scale. The best teachers in Houston public schools stand to earn as much as 10,000 in bonus money (Facts on File).

The good teachers, the teachers that work the hardest, and actually care about their students, should be the ones who receive the most pay. They are the ones making a difference in students' lives and education and thanks to the new law of achievement based merit pay, they have a chance to finally be recognized and credited

1. It would give many teachers reason to stay.

"Lots of teachers leave the profession, but this has kept me invested to stay", says Jhonson, who is a special Ed teacher at the Ron H. Brown Middle School in Northeast Washington. (Palmaffy).

Teachers who have been working their hardest and not getting the proper recognition, or reward, will finally have a reason to stay.

F. We already have and use state testing, so why not use them as a tool.

1. We have been testing since middle school.

All states must evaluate the progress they are making towards achieving NCLBJ goals by testing students every year in grades three through eight, and once during high school (US Federal News Service).

If we had taken all of our test scores and used them to filter out the good teachers from the bad. Then we would've had an even better education system.

2. Almost all of the states see the importance and of the state testings.

By 2000 every US state but Iowa had administered a state-mandated test. (Au).

Almost every state knows how and wants to use standardized testing. If most states already use it and support it, why not use it in collecting the best teachers possible, and creating an even better education program for our youth.

G. The idea of basing pay on performance of the students has been deliberated for a while.

1. The general idea of performance pay, also known as enhanced compensation isn't a new idea, says Vickie Mahrt, a teacher and president of the Unit 5 teachers union. She has worked on the union committee studying the issue for years (Coulter).

This idea isn't new. People have been pushing for this change, and it's about time we finally put this act into action.

Negative

Merit pay. It may seem like such a swell idea, but it's not. Idiots have been trying for years to push this law to be activated, but has it ever worked? No! Why you may ask? Because it is a plan destined to fail. There are just too many wishy-washy ways to go about enforcing this new act. State tests are so flawed, they would never work as a reliable source of evaluating teachers. This leads to unhappy teachers who have worked their butts off, and won't get te pay they deserve because of a false evaluation. People jobs, and lives are at stake. Why go ruining the system that has cared and benefitted teachers and students for decades.

1. The new law of Merit pay based on student achievement is not needed and would threaten the wonderful system we already have.

A. We already have the No child left behind act.

1. The No Child Left Behind Act is already being enforced.

Within the first week of taking office in 2001, with the overwhelming support of both Democratic, and Republicans, President George W. Bush pushed for , and ultimately resulted in the No Child Left behind Act of 2002. (Au).

This No Child Left Behind Act has already begun making progress. The schools are at their best right now and we can't risk upsetting that balanced that we have found, with a new law that many people are against.

B. The system now already works well

1. Works well based on experience.

4 years of experience, and a bachelor's gets you a \$27,655 salary. 8 years and a masters earns you \$35,355. All that plus a PHD and you've earned double your first years income at about \$51,430. (Palmaffy).

The teachers who work hard, are smart, and earn degrees, ultimately have higher pays. The ones who are passionate, and have earned it, through their own education, and years of experience are the best teachers and already get the most pay.

2. Statistics of merit pay

Students randomly placed with more experienced kindergarten teachers not only perform better on tests but earn more and save more for retirement as adults, are likelier to go to college, and go to better colleges than their peers with less experienced teachers (economist Raj Chetty of Harvard)

If we placed students in experienced teachers hands or taught newer teachers the same methods the experienced teachers use then the performances the kindergarten students had in this study could possibly spread to all over.

II. This new act is uncalled for, and will cause a lot of damage to the school system, and should not be allowed to pass.

A. The new system would be very unfair to underprivileged and special needs children.

1. Quotes by article that has done studies.

“Studies consistently show that students from poorer households struggle more in school, highlighting a key criticism of merit pay based on test scores: It unfairly

penalizes teachers who choose to work with underprivileged children,” writes (The Spokesman-Review’s Maben).

Students that are statistically proven to not do as well as students that are privileged should not be held against teachers because at that point its out of there hands.

B. Judges and authority have biased opinions causing evaluations to be inaccurate.

1. Personal opinions and biases will affect the evaluation too much

Particularly in districts facing little competition, the absence of accountability and formal school ratings likely enabled greater weight on factors like personal connection, demographic characteristics, and personal qualities un related to the classroom (Hanushek).

C. Merit pay systems have not worked in the past.

1. Districts have tried to embrace it, but the system ultimately failed.

Educational historians david Tyack and larry cuban have said “the history of performance based salary plans has been a merry-go-round. in the main, districts that initially embraced merit pay dropped after brief trial”(scholastic)

In this city in texas, this merit pay system did not work. Even though at first, the people of the district believed it would succeed, the system was flawed and it eventually failed. Which will happen to us if we pass this law.

2. The system is not producing the outcomes they thought it would.

Nashville-offering middle school math teachers bonuses up to 15,000 did not produce gains in student test scores (christopher connell)

Even though the nashville middle school was offered the bonus of 15000 dollars the grades did not change. Even if we offer school money for their teaching most teachers are already teaching to the best of the ability.

3. Time and time again the schools that experiment with the merit pay system, always fall short of their expectations.

In 2006-09 296 middle school math teachers volunteered to participate in the experiment were you experiment for merit pay provided by RAND corporation. Out of 296 middle school math teachers only 18 teacher got bonuses all three years.

This is yet again another example of a try and fail experiment.

4. Even in past, when schools have tried to suggest the merit pay system, they knew it was a bad idea and denied it.

A three year, 10-school pilot program was launched in 1999. At the end of the trial period union voted on merit pay system. in that second vote, merit pay was resoundingly rejected : 1892 votes against the plan compared to 73 notes in favor. (facts on file)

This is just one more of many examples of how TEACHERS don't like the way the merit pay program system is set up because of its unpredictability and unreliability. If it didn't work then, why would it work now.

D. Accumulative and state tests are unreliable.

1. There are too many flaws and problems that come along with state testing.

Using test scores is incredibly flawed, as some students will do better than others no matter who is teaching them, and it's practically impossible to judge exactly how much of a role the teacher played in one's success or in another's downfall (Toronto Star).

There are too many problems that come along with state testing. Even now many people are against it. Teachers aren't able to choose which students are in their class. And teachers who are teaching in poorer communities don't have all the resources that others do. They could be wonderful teachers, but get lower salaries just because of the students or the school they teach at.

E. Teachers would be untruthful in order to attain a greater pay.

1. People usually will have biased opinions

Parents frequently base their opinion on the quality of a teacher by how well he or she connects with the child. Teachers, being human, will connect well with some students but not others (Toronto Star).

Since all teachers don't connect with all students as expected, it would be more of a motive to cheat to get the merit pay if teachers are in desperate situations.

G. It's not possible. There is not enough funding in order to have pay increases.

2. There is no money to be able to raise the salaries of the teachers.

Even if teachers would like larger salaries, they typically aren't money-driven. A 2000 public agenda survey of 900 new teachers noted, that considerations other than money are “significantly more important to the most important to most teachers and would-be teachers(scholastic).

Many teacher often wont take the bribe. If they wanted to be good teachers, they wouldn't need the merit pay system.

1. Schools have no funding, and will not get any anytime soon.

This is the third year that Minnesota schools have received no increase in state funding. Against that backdrop, metro school districts have laid off almost 1,700 staff members and slashed more than \$285 million from budgets in the past two years (Smith).

Even if we wanted to use the merit pay system, there is not extra money to raise the salaries of the teachers. Why promise teachers a raise in pay if the work harder, when we're just going to break that promise in the end anyways.

Affirmative Rebuttal Questions

1. How do you expect to pay for all the rising salaries of the good teachers? The school system has no funding so there's no money to raise the pay of those teachers.

-The Philadelphia Inquirer states, "Public schools are expected to get about \$100 billion in new funding under the economic-stimulus package. Obama's education plan stresses accountability and urges states to set more rigorous, uniform academic standards."

Obama's new education plan is already expecting to give a lot of new funding to schools. This is going to raise the money in schools making it much easier to raise the salaries of great, hardworking teachers who have earned it, under this new merit pay system.

2. State testing is flawed and not a proper way of testing. Why can't teachers just give the tests?

Grant Wiggins, who is the coauthor with Jay McTighe of *Understanding by Design* and *Schooling by Design: Mission, Action, and Achievement*, and President of Authentic Education in Hopewell, New Jersey, states, "Studies have shown for years that in terms of Bloom's taxonomy, most teacher questions only hit the first two levels (knowledge and comprehension) instead of the higher levels (application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).¹ In one high-income suburban New Jersey, no test question that required any higher-level thinking in all the marking-period tests. Even more surprising, there was no difference across honors and regular-track versions of the same courses."

Teachers' tests are the flawed ones. Many times they don't make the student fully comprehend, analyze, and evaluate problems. If a teacher isn't teaching up to

those standards, state testing is a great way to test states and the country as a whole and compare to see where they are lacking

3. Teachers don't get to choose their students, and some teach in poorer communities where kids have less of an education. What if a really great teacher teaches at one of these environments and the students scores do not reflect the teachers abilities?

-Students and teachers of an Australian school agreed that, "Those with better alternative employment opportunities, those earning lower salaries, and those in more difficult working conditions should be more able to exit a school.

Because without the long 10-step dismissal process, teachers will be able to more easily change schools or even jobs. They wont have to go through that complicated process and be able to exit more simply

4. What happens when the state tests make a mistake?

Those same students and teachers in Australia also told the newspaper, "In practice, schools use a range of info to evaluate teachers including administration observations, and parent feedback along with the standardized testing."

Even if standardized state tests make an error, in which they normally don't, there are other ways schools evaluate teachers. Tests can't how well the teacher teaches the material, let alone how they interacted and function with the students. There are many different ways a teacher can be evaluated, but what is most important, is that they are paid what they have earned.

Negative Rebuttal Questions

1. Does the merit pay program, plan on paying each teacher in the district the same amount of money?

-(New york times)"I've taught 9-12 grade math/physics at a public school for 12 years, education classes offer zero benefit for doing my job more effectively. We need teachers who are more competent in their subject areas! Unfortunately, the only way to do this is to pay more to the people who know more"-Wayne Hila

Since there are always people who are more experienced than other in certain fields of teaching -mostly because they have worked longer hours and days to make sure there students get the most education and the correct grading needed for the students to graduate- The merit pay program is always looking for the new ways to benefit there hard working teachers. Teaching for many years with the same subject can be taxing. So the system would make sure to give the experienced teachers the bigger salary.

2.How would teachers merit pay be helping out the economy today?

-We're in the middle of teaching shortages and merit pay would inspire potential teachers to give the professionalism more consideration as a viable career choice -Beth Lewis

Head of the school board Beth Lewis is showing that if there are people out there in need of jobs after they go through the proper training they can also be a teacher and be financially dependent.

3. How is the merit pay based system being checked on?

-(nea.org)"if you meet the guidelines you set at the beginning of the year with the administrator you advance" -Mr. Neilson (teacher for 19 years)

At the beginning of the year you have a meeting with the school administrator and set a goal of what you would like your year to look like and your grade expectations of the students. If after the year has passed and the teacher has done the best of their abilities (that being shown by students grades) they get to move on with their success rate and get a bigger amount of merit the next year.

4. Is the raise in salary the teachers are getting paid noticeable in any way?

-(national education association) When changing lanes, staff members can permanently increase their salary from between 2,100-8,900 depending on their starting step.

The amount of change in the teacher's salary takes depends on how hard the teacher worked that year like always. If the teacher has met their expectations for the year they may be rewarded by a huge increase in money to keep the teacher focused for the next year and the upcoming years.

Works Cited

- Au, Wayne, and Karen Gourd. "Asinine Assessment: Why High-Stakes Testing is Bad for Everyone, Including English Teachers." *English Journal* 2013: pgs. 14-19. *ProQuest*. Web. 15 Nov. 2013.
- Brenner, Mark. "New York Teachers Union Accepts Merit Pay Deal." *Labor Notes* Nov. 2007: 6+. *ProQuest*. Web. 14 Nov. 2013.
- "Civics Lesson Students File Suit Over Bad Teachers School: Tenure Laws Deprive them of Quality Education, The Group Alleges." *Daily News* 16 May 2012: n. pag. *Proquest*. Web. 25 Nov. 2013.
- Coulter, Phyllis. "Plenty of Obstacles for Teachers to Merit Pay." *The Pantagraph* 4 April 2007: n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 5 Nov. 2013.
- Hanushek, Eric "Learn Lessons Of The Past - MAKING SCHOOLS BETTER." *The Australian* 26 Aug. 2004; n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.
- Mathews, Dylan. "Does teacher merit pay work? A new study says yes." *The Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 23 July 2012. Web. 2 Dec 2013.
- "Merit Pay for Teachers." *Issues & Controversies On File* 17 Dec. 2006: n. pag. *Facts On File News Services*. Web. 2 Dec. 2013
- Palmaffy, Tyce. "Teachers Warming Up to Merit Pay, but Will That Boost Student scores?" *Investor's Business Daily* 6 Jul. 2000: n. pag. *ProQuest*. Web 25 Nov. 2013.
- Provance, Jim. "Merit pay: How to Judge Teachers' Worth." *The Blade*. 9 March 2011: n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 5 Nov. 2013.

Schultz, Jason. "Teachers Union, District Spar Over 'Job Security' Issue That Stems From New Merit-Pay System." *The Palm Beach Post* 8 Sept. 2012: n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

Simmons, Deborah. "Merit-Pay Deal Included in D.C. Teacher Contract." *The Washington Times* 8 April 2010: 6+. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 7 Nov. 2013.

Smith, Kelly. "Teacher Pay Freeze Plan: Is it Unfair or Overdue?" *Star Tribune* 22 Jan. 2011: n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 13 Nov. 2013.

"Teacher merit pay a flawed concept." *Toronto Star* 17 Sept. 2013: n. pag. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 29 Nov. 2013.

"Value-Added Models: Using Numbers to Evaluate Teachers." *Issues & Controversies On File* 17 Dec 2006: n. pag. *Facts On File News Services*. Web. 2 Dec. 2013

Wiggins, Grant. "Why We Should Stop Bashing State Tests." *Educational Leadership* Mar 2010: 48-52. *Points of View Reference Center*. Web. 1 Dec. 2013

Dani Dorta

Hannah did a great job on working on this debate outline. Even though I mostly was in charge while creating it, we both agreed on how to divide up the work and she worked extremely hard and finished everything she needed to. For the first due requirement we each made 20 note cards, 10 for the affirmative side, and 10 for the negative side because we both wanted to be familiar with both sides. For the next due requirement of 30 more cards, we each did 15 affirmative, and 15 negative to make a total of 50 note cards each. Also, Hannah gave me her citations and I put mine and hers together into the works cited page. Next we created a google doc for each side that way we could both work on both sides equally. We first created a structure of our main ideas and then within the two weeks we added our own evidence and analysis wherever it applied. For the rebuttals, I wrote the affirmatives, and Hannah wrote the negatives. Hannah gave me more citations and I added more of mine and hers to the works cited page. Next I went out and bought us a note card box, we both sorted our cards into affirmative and negative. Lastly, I put everything together into one portfolio, and sent it to turnitin.com.

Hannah Daughtry

I was amazed at how hard Dani worked. I was scared and nervous about the debate and she definitely helped me a lot by taking charge. We both divided up the work as evenly as possible and Dani even offered to put together the whole thing. First we wanted to know both sides the same, so we each made 20 note cards, 10 for the affirmative side, and 10 for the negative. Then, 30 more cards, we which was 15 affirmative, and 15 negative to make a total of 50 note cards each. I gave Dani my citations and she put hers and mine together to make the works cited page. Then we made google docs so we could work on both together. We made an outline of our main ideas and then, in the two weeks we added our own evidence and analysis wherever it fit. For the rebuttals, I wrote the negatives, and she wrote the affirmatives. Dani finished the works cited page with more note cards. In the end, she put everything together into one portfolio, printed it, and turned it in to turnitin.com.