

## Recapping PDS’s Pandemic Policies

We’ve reached the end of 2020, so here are the updated policies from the school concerning pandemic safety

ARSHAAN SAYED, X  
NEWS ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown the Department of Education the difficult challenge of deciding how to manage the 2020-2021 school year. Many public schools have decided to play it safe and remain entirely remote like last spring, while other schools, like PDS, have chosen to open their doors. On September 9, PDS invited select grades back to school and on October 5 invited all grades back to campus. Despite being a smaller school, PDS still needs to take certain precautions to maintain a safe environment. After intense preparation, PDS has established several guidelines relating to eating, socializing, walking in the halls, playing sports, and studying, all of which take on the paramount task of keeping us safe.

One of the most apparent changes when coming back to school is the one-way hallways. PDS established this rule to minimize hallway traffic, where, in many cases, you are unable to stay over six feet from others. When entering from the main entrance, you can either walk left towards Shepard Commons, turn right towards the math and language classrooms, or walk forward towards the arts atrium. Going towards Shepard commons is a one-way trip, and you need to circle back to the main entrance from outside to get to any other part of the building.



The PDS community continues to adapt to the pandemic (Photos/ Princeton Day School Flickr)

## PDS Arts Department Adapts to Online School

The pandemic has presented challenges for the arts department, but they are committed to finding solutions

REED DILLON, X  
STAFF WRITER

After a quarantined second semester last school year, Princeton Day School is back in person. While all students attending in person classes are familiar with the typical classroom rules, such as socially-distanced desks, plexiglass separation, and frequent cleanings, the arts



Mr. Cook’s photography class meets over Zoom (Photos/ Princeton Day School Flickr)

department has had more unique issues to solve in an effort to provide a safe environment.

Artist-In-Residence, US Visual Arts head Jerry Hirniak has provided his Fine Arts students with individual supplies to avoid the spread of COVID-19, as well as creating a curriculum that works well for both in person and online students. Mr. Hirniak has worked themes of COVID-19 and quarantine into his Fine Arts curricula, as students began the year with a study of places and spaces, many focusing on their isolated experience, creating images of their rooms or work spaces. Later on, students completed a “Three Walks” assignment in which they mapped out a house, property, and neighbourhood walk in circles. These assignments allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences over the past several months, as well as utilize their immense creativity from their homes.

## The PDS Community Celebrates the Holidays

Hear how friends and faculty are planning to celebrate this holiday season

ADYA JHA, IX  
STAFF WRITER

In previous years, the weeks leading up to winter break at PDS have been full of joy and excitement for the holidays. While this year is no exception when it comes to anticipation, it will look quite unlike any holiday season before. With a pandemic ravaging the globe and many unable to see family and friends like usual, celebrations will be restructured in order to fit new constraints. Despite these limitations, the Upper School has launched several student life initiatives, like a holiday themed spirit week and the usual vibrant Christmas tree in the lobby, aimed at providing joy and some semblance of normality in an abnormal time.

However, as one walks past the main entrance, they

may notice other religious symbols, such as a Hanukkah menorah and Kwanzaa candles. While PDS has always celebrated holidays from other cultures, over the course of several years, Christmas has become an increasingly secular holiday, with many who don’t engage in the Christian faith still engaging in Christmas celebrations. Thus, it becomes quite easy to forget the various other cultures which have holidays at concurrent times. I reached out to a few PDS students who engage in different celebrations or recognize Christmas in a purely secular manner.

Freshman Jamie Creasi shared, “A couple weeks ago I was looking at pictures with my mom from when I was little, and something that always stayed the same every year was our mid-December tradition.

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## 5 Tips for PDS Seniors During Application Season

Director of Counseling & Learning Specialist Dr. Dawson weighs in on Senior stress

ALLISON LIANG, XI  
SPORTS EDITOR

As most seniors are going through the stressful process of college admissions, here are some tips for how to best deal with and manage that stress, courtesy of PDS Director of Counseling & Learning Specialist, Dr. Dawson!



The college admissions process is stressful for students around the country (Photos/ The New York Times)



## A RECAP OF PDS'S SAFETY PROCEDURES (cont'd)

The science wing, which connects directly to the Campus Center and Theater Lobby, grants a two-way flow to both areas. Although these guidelines were tricky to navigate at first, signs and arrows were put up to help students get to class and make the trip a lot smoother. Acting Head of Upper School Christian Rhodes explains how they devised the one-way hallway system: "We found one-way hallways overall improve social distancing. In finding the best configuration, we tried several approaches. The current layout was finalized during the faculty meetings prior to the start of school." Though the new guidelines are relatively new, the social scene of PDS is perhaps the most drastic and notable change.

As per the new regulations, Upper School students can socialize only in certain designated spots when they are free and are not allowed into the Middle and Lower School areas. These spots include Shepard Commons, the Boulevard, the theater lobby, the library, and the campus center (only during lunch). Many of these were main spots to socialize before COVID-19, but they have turned into quiet spaces for students waiting for their next class or looking to complete an extra assignment in their free periods. Desks, positioned classroom style and six feet apart, have been placed in many of these locations, and teachers regularly monitor the students sitting there. Although these spots are now primarily quiet study areas, PDS also intended for them to be hangout spaces to laugh and

chat with friends—in a socially distanced manner, of course.

Mr. Rhodes explains, "Students are allowed to talk in the indoor common spaces, but all chairs and tables needed to be placed six feet apart. This distance makes the space feel like a quiet study area, and many students respond to these environmental cues. The distance also requires those who want to talk to use louder voices. Since there are classrooms adjacent to the indoor common spaces, we must keep voices down. These two factors have created a quiet study feel." PDS, aware that this could happen, knew that the students needed a place to take off their masks, let loose, and hang out. Their solution: the outdoors.

Several tents were arranged in front of the building, spanning from the main entrance to the campus center. Students can travel outside, sit down on chairs placed six feet apart under the tents, and talk to one another. Often, they will also remove their masks to eat lunch and get some fresh air. Most enjoy the change of scenery but still miss their original hangout spots. Sophomore Ryan Vandal, who used to hang out in Shepard Commons and the theater lobby, reflects, "It's pretty sad to see places I love so much turned into study areas, but it's just something we have to live with in order to come back to school. And the tents and tables outside have been a pretty good substitute, though it'd be nice if there were some place inside to hang out on rainy or cold days." For Vandal, the social scene change

was a little strange, but he is just glad he can see his friends again.

Perhaps the most perilous risk PDS considered when reopening their doors was the campus center. Since students must remove their masks to eat, there would be plenty of opportunity for infection to spread. In addition, the campus center during lunchtime holds hundreds of students, which would be a complete violation of the social gathering protocol during the pandemic. Fortunately, the staff created a solution so that everyone could have enough time to eat lunch. There are now three distinct lunch periods, based on students' third period class on any given day. At first, this took quite a bit of time to get used to. Walking into a third period chemistry class at 11:25 and finding no one there or coming to your third-period English class at 11:20 and finding class started 10 minutes ago was definitely confusing. The new schedule also means fewer breaks between classes, which is tiring for many. However, students have adjusted, and many like it better than the previous lunch schedule. Senior Aidan McChesney notes, "The split lunches were a little tough at first because there was always a break between each class, and now there isn't. Still, the second lunch is nice because it's in the middle of a class and makes it feel shorter."

Finally, fall sports at PDS have resumed, but with enhanced safety guidelines. Before you even step onto the field, faculty take a temperature check to ensure you do not have a fever, a common

symptom of COVID-19. Of course, passing this test does not exempt anyone from needing a mask on the field or the bench. Social distancing rules for drills, breaks, warmups, and cooldowns have also been put in place. In addition, team rooms, shared water coolers, and the practice of sharing equipment have also been taken out. Along with these guidelines, games between schools did not start until the beginning of October. With all these changes, sports seasons this year are drastically different from before, but many are ready to push through to play.

Senior Aaliyah Sayed, captain of the Varsity Field Hockey Team, reflects on this experience: "This has been a hockey season like no other, and I am proud of everyone for adapting to the new normal. The captains were on Zoom meetings throughout the entire summer with coaches to plan for this fall, and we hosted Zoom workouts in place of summer stick skills at the field. All of that preparation paid off because we [enjoyed] a safe and healthy season." Without a doubt, COVID-19 has rocked the school system in ways it had not been ready to handle. Fortunately, thanks to our determined faculty members, specific procedures, rules, and schedules have been put in place to make sure students and faculty coming to school feel safe. As time goes on, additional regulations may be put into place depending on the situation.

In any case, it is good to be back.

□



Princeton Day Upper School students have returned to school with a new set of regulations in place (Image Amy Zhou)



THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON COLLEGES

NIKITA BHARDWAJ, XII  
OPINIONS EDITOR

As colleges in the United States prepare to re-open and maintain in-person learning, they are faced with the challenge of keeping students, faculty, staff, and volunteers safe from COVID-19. The CDC offers considerations for ways that institutions of higher learning can help protect students and employees and slow the spread of COVID-19. Because these institutions vary in location, size, and structure, the administrators of these schools can determine, in collaboration with local health officials, how to implement the CDC sanctioned considerations. In this regard, they can adjust to meet the circumstances of their respective communities, and schools have attained varying levels of success depending on their reopening plan.

In addition to keeping students safe, colleges must respond to their students’ specific needs. The pandemic has caused widespread economic uncertainty, and in order for higher education institutions to serve their students and communities through the pandemic, they must understand how students are being affected and for whom the impacts are most severe.

In the Understanding America Survey, 23% of postsecondary-enrolled respondents reported increased family care

responsibilities due to COVID, 23%reported their employment status changed as a result of COVID, and 28%had an increased desire to be close to home. Many students enrolled in higher

education are reliant on jobs near their college, which may not exist in the same numbers in the fall. In addition, students who were previously able to afford textbooks may now need their institution

to help cover these costs, while students who have taken on a larger caretaking role may require greater flexibility in their attendance and/or deadlines on their assignments.

Collective mental health has also seen a decline. In a survey in the Journal of Public Economics, it was found that COVID-19 has led to a large number of students delaying graduation (13%), withdrawing from classes (11%), and intending to change majors (12%). Moreover, approximately 50% of the sample separately reported a decrease in study hours and in their academic performance.

Colleges and universities should consider programs to retain and support students, such as providing institutional grant aid to students forced to go part-time and mental health services for those students hit hardest by the pandemic. In the longer term, institutions should plan and budget to have more students enrolled than they may have in past years, as this cohort of students may need more time to complete their programs than is traditional.

As campuses welcome back students this fall in one form or another, institutions that respond to their students’ specific needs will enact the most impactful policy change. Higher education institutions should adapt to the changing contexts of the pandemic and adjust to suit the needs of their communities. □.



Hand sanitizer is provided in front of “Touchdown Jesus” at University of Notre Dame (Photo/The Chronicle of Higher Education)



The pandemic has impacted how students learn (Photo / CollegeData)



## TIPS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS (cont'd)

### 1. Acknowledge that not all stress is bad.

Not all stress is bad—in fact, a healthy amount of stress is motivating. Our goal should be to harness that motivation without getting so anxious that we break down.

### 2. Use a planner.

Using a calendar or planner (digital or paper) and creating a “to-do” list with college deadlines or academic work is SUPER helpful. You can take each item on the list and put it in an open time on your schedule when you can work on it. Your calendar should reflect not only when things are DUE but more importantly, when you are going to DO them. This gives you a visualized and organized plan to meet deadlines, so if you ever feel overwhelmed, you can always

come back to view your calendar and be reassured by a concrete roadmap on how to get everything done.

### 3. Maintain healthy habits.

Healthy habits are important! Make sure you eat and sleep well, take time to relax and enjoy whatever your passions are, exercise, and spend time with people that support you. All of those things create a healthy balance that can greatly improve your emotional wellbeing.

### 4. Prioritize process over product.

Put your effort into the things that you can control—whether that is researching interesting college programs, being a good student in the present moment, writing an application essay that expresses who you are, or working with your

college counselor. Try to focus on what is within control rather than just on the outcome.

### 5. The ultimate Dr. Dawson advice!

Remember to view yourself through a broad lens that captures all of your many positive qualities, talents, and hopes! Know that is what defines you, not what college you go to. Although our college admissions culture does not always help you all with this, try to keep in mind that wherever you go after PDS, what will matter most is how you continue to grow and learn, follow your passions, demonstrate kindness and integrity, and make a positive impact on the world. There is no one best place to do that. Certainly, no college name or ranking makes that a reality; rather, it is you that will make any

place you go a part of your unique journey to success.

Learning to deal with stress during the college admissions process is no easy task, but learning and growing from it will not only benefit you in college but also for the rest of your life. □



During application season, seniors feel a lot of weight on their shoulders (Imagine/ Ava Fong)

## A 2020 VISION FOR OUR 2021 SCHOOL YEAR

NEHA KHANDKAR, X  
STAFF WRITER

With every new school year comes changes and challenges that our community must adapt to. This year, the most significant of challenges is clearly the Covid-19 pandemic, which has pushed PDS students to think creatively about plans and programs. After all, most school-wide activities of previous years require an amount of contact that make them impossible to carry out with social distancing. The burden of planning falls largely on the shoulders of our student council, with senior Alex Hollander as president, senior Will Sedgley as vice-president, and junior Milan Shah as secretary-treasurer. The faces of student council change each year, so there is pressure for the aforementioned students to prove themselves, even without factoring in the unique circumstances of late. Regardless, they seem to be off to a good start.

Sedgley shared, “The initial plan for student council [was] to focus on the mock election that will be held on Election Day. We [were] working on making the ballot for the mock election as well as infographics to educate the PDS community about the election and the candidates.” Student council intended to use this mock election to emphasize hard facts and the relevant issues at hand, as opposed to the characteristics or personalities of the candidates themselves. Honing in on the

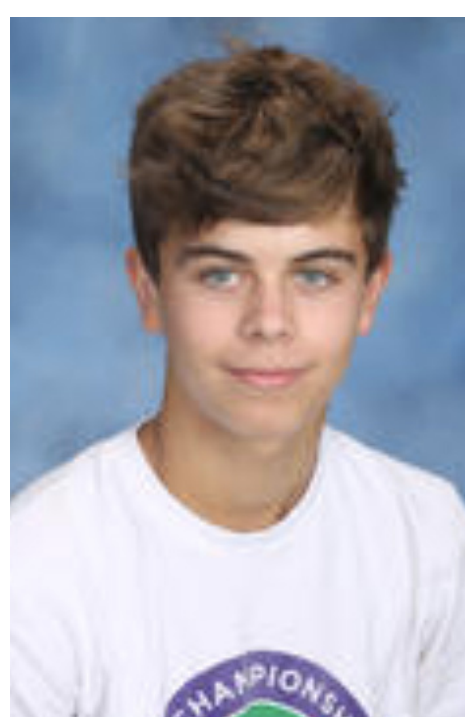
problems rather than the people allowed PDS students to look at the bigger picture and hopefully created a more informed student body. The mock election took place on November 3, the same day as the national election, to recreate the environment as much as possible. A Google Form was sent out on which students could vote on their candidate as well as on issues presented on the New Jersey ballot. To assist with this process and ensure the google forms truly reflected our community and its viewpoints, the council provided infographics surrounding common areas of discussion such as immigration, the Green New Deal, criminal justice, and healthcare. Once the google forms were in, the council provided the Upper School with

access to the results in the form of pie charts, percentages, and clearcut statistics, not only about the candidates but about various policies such as legalization of marijuana.

That said, the mock election was not the only vision the student council had for the year. Hollander mentioned, “After [the mock election], we plan to resume more typical council duties. By this, I mean writing proposals that focus on aspects of PDS that we wish to improve or implement as well as creating events (whether they be virtual or not).” The details of these events are still up in the air; the ultimate goal of the student council is to take initiative and create change in the school community where it is needed, and to do so, they

need opinions across the Upper School. Therefore, they are not making too many concrete, fully-formulated plans as of now since representatives for each grade still have to be elected. Once those elections finish, Hollander, Sedgley, and Shah will work with the other student council members to adapt to the circumstances and guide our student body through an unpredictable school year. For those who may have questions about the specifics of student council, what it entails, and how it operates, council meets on Day Five community block in Room 203. The world’s events may be out of our control, but it is in the hands of the student council to make this school year better than we could have imagined.

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Alex Hollander (left), William Sedgley (middle), and Milan Shah (right) (Photos/ Schoology)



## PANDEMIC-APPROVED ACTIVITIES

EMMA OZDOGAN, XI  
STAFF WRITER

Were your usual Halloween plans been ruined by the pandemic? Can't think of any safe, socially-distanced gatherings to have with friends or family? Here are several fun, fall-themed activities!

A long-standing favorite amongst Halloween traditions, pumpkin carving can be easily adapted for social distancing, as suggested by freshman Mimi Lytkowski. Despite having to socially distance, you can still have fun carving various designs and conversing with your friends; you may even find that going outdoors to social distance makes the activity more manageable and easier to clean up. Alternatively, if you would prefer to remain at home rather than visit a friend's house to participate, you and your friends could easily host a pumpkin carving party over

Zoom and virtually show-off your unique patterns and skills. Another remote activity, suggested by senior Jasmine Maggio, is to use the Google Chrome extension Netflix Party to watch horror movies with friends. If you don't have Netflix, however, or would prefer to use video chat rather than just text-chat as included in Netflix Party, several alternatives exist: Amazon Prime has a built-in watch-party feature of its own, and Chrome extensions such as Scener allow you to host watch parties for various streaming services, such as Disney+ and Hulu, with the option of both text and video chat.

In addition to these remote activities, taking a hike through your local land reserve, forest, or park and finding a picnic spot is a great way to spend an afternoon. Not only would you make the best of light exercise with friends, but you would also be able to safely

enjoy all the beautiful hues and colors fall has to offer. Similar to this activity, another popular fall event that can be done while social distancing is apple picking, suggested by junior Neha Kalra. With many farms offering public apple picking across New Jersey and Pennsylvania, such as Terhune Orchards, finding an orchard should not be a challenge. By the end of the day, you will not only have harvested tens of apples but you will have also made plenty of

fantastic memories with friends.

Despite our love for classic activities, these unique circumstances call for adaptive and creative alternatives to stay safe. As long as social distancing and mask-wearing are enforced, all of these activities are safe to do during the pandemic, so give one of them a shot! No matter which one you choose, you are guaranteed to create memories with your friends and make the most of these trying times. □



(Photos/ Goodhousekeeping)

## PDS CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS (cont'd)

We would go to downtown Princeton, specifically the Christmas tree and the hotel. It would be much different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but under normal circumstances, there would be so many people taking pictures by that HUGE tree, other kids running around, Christmas lights in favor of the holiday season, and even some Christmas carols... there's just an atmosphere of merriness and happiness [about the season]." Many other PDS students who celebrated Christmas secularly shared Jamie's feelings about Christmas, expressing that they enjoyed the season for the joy and happiness that came along with it, as well as the added plus of a break from school activities.

Freshman Shivani Manikandan noted, "I mean as [someone who celebrated the holidays non-religiously], I'm Hindu and we put up a tree and do presents. We've only done this for around 4 years but what we do is we get a tree and we put lights around it and we put ornaments on. A little before the holidays, my sister and I would make a 'wishlist' and tell our parents what we would want or something along the lines and then on Christmas Day we would each get a gift. It varies how we do it over the years though, but it's essentially the same." Freshman Sam Elkin, who is Jewish, said "I don't celebrate Christmas, but I

do celebrate Hanukkah with my family."

Members of the diverse PDS community are engaging in various kinds of celebratory activities, both religious and purely for the holiday. As students leave school for winter break, a few weeks of quality time with their families, and (hopefully) a reprieve from academics, they might be able to think about how their time differs from their peers and widen their understanding of the holiday season.

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Sophomore Jenna Galla added a 5'6" Nutcracker Toy Soldier now greets guests at the door. (Photo/ Jenna Galla)



The well known and beloved Director of Admission and Financial Aid, Mrs. Cucchi, celebrates Christmas. This photo shows the Cucchi family's beautifully decorated, traditional Christmas tree (Photo/ Julia Cucchi)



Sophomore Haley Schragger celebrates Hanukkah! In true Hanukkah spirit, Haley and her family go all out when decorating for the week long celebration, especially when it comes to the outside of their house! (Photo/ Haley Schragger)



## PHOTOSPREAD: 2020 EVENTS!



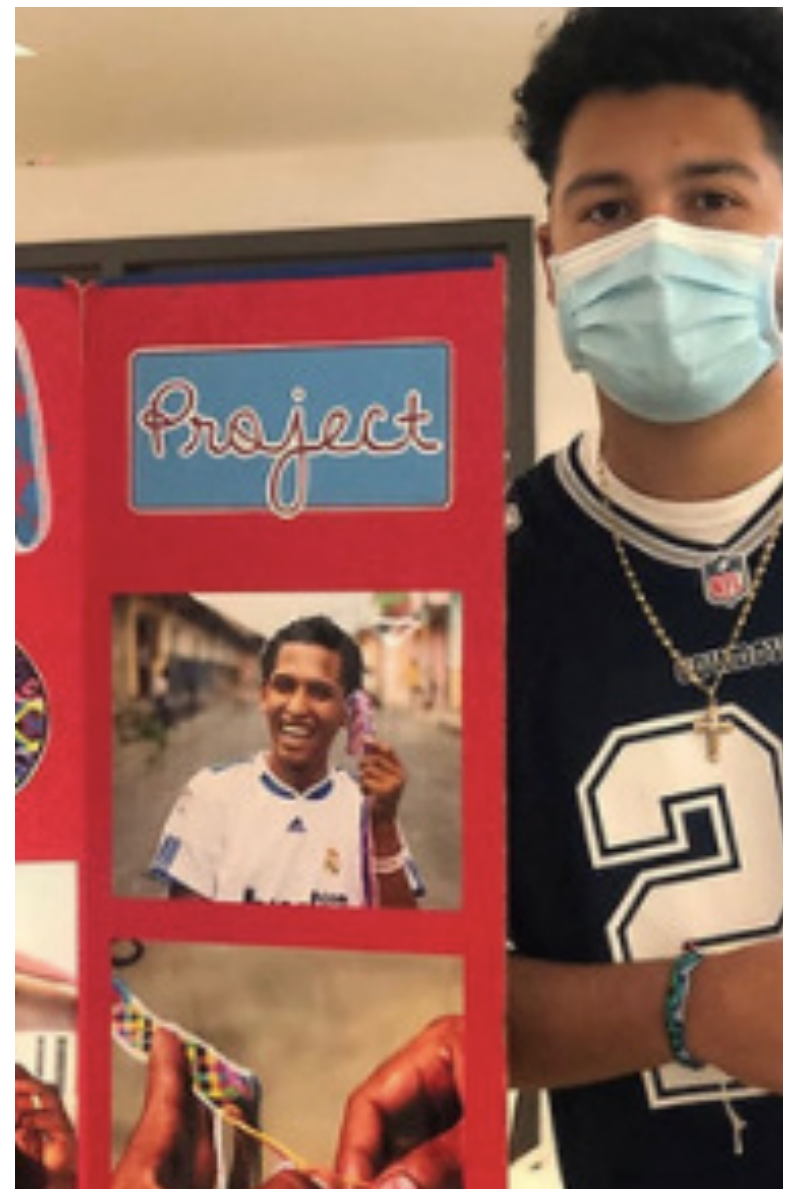
GLOW Educated PDS during US Announcements (Photos/ PDS Flickr)



Diwali Celebration (Photos/ PDS Flickr)



Happy Halloween! (Photos/ PDS Flickr)



The Pulsera Sale Benefited Communities (Photos/ PDS Flickr)



PDS Returned to School this September(Photos/ PDS Flickr)



PDS Sports were a Great Success! (Photos/ PDS Flickr)



## ARTS IN THE TIME OF COVID (cont'd)

Director of Performing & Fine Arts/Design Stan Cahill explained some difficulties the Theater Department has faced in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak: "Theater is certainly more difficult because the whole art form is constructed around the idea of a group experience. The need to get together to tell stories is primal; whether around a campfire or in a theater, we have a basic need to share and experience together. And I think that the pandemic has underscored that need. Our approach to theater is very physical, so we've had to pivot." As many students have probably experienced, quarantine and the coronavirus epidemic as a whole have made it hard to be social. This is a big struggle for theater, as physical interactions usually make up a large part of acting. When asked if there were any pros to the new, socially distanced methods, Mr. Cahill added, "The upside is that we can explore some of the aspects that can feel tedious: theatre history and text analysis. And since we are working constantly with cameras now, we can explore on camera performance technique."

While there will not be a traditional Fall Play in the McAneny Theater with a live audience as in previous years, there will be the Fall Ten-Minute Play Festival, composed of five student-scripted plays. As Mr. Hirniak

utilized the events of COVID-19 to create an unparalleled student portfolio, Mr. Cahill hopes that this socially distanced Theater program will bring to light the innovative ideas of students. Its rules include actors maintaining a minimum of six feet distance, and the use of masks, plexiglass, face shields, or Zoom. All of this must be justified creatively in a situation that does not relate to COVID. Mr. Cahill mused over this, saying, "I think the rules tend to make us more creative. Artists are like water...they always find a way." These ten minute plays will also be directed by students, and the results will be recorded for virtual viewing. Mr. Cahill reflects, "The only thing I really teach is 'get out there and make something.' It's crazy that a pandemic has given us this opportunity!"

Upper and Middle School Photography teacher Thatcher Cook explained that COVID-19 has slowed down the learning process a bit. Along with the basic rules for classroom COVID safety, Mr. Cook also tries to have students shoot work outside. Unfortunately, photography students are not allowed to use the wet darkroom, and as the digital lab is closed, students work on their own computers.

This semester, the introductory photography courses have worked with f-stops, shutter speeds, and Lightroom photo editing software.

In the Photo Book class, students stitched together notebooks, and are now working on a photobiography assignment. The Lighting and Printing class is finishing their first still life assignment: photographing a leaf, tinfoil, and an egg. Mr. Cook says, "These are object families that generally... offer different challenges to lighting." Finally, the majors are focusing on the theme of surveillance, and, as Mr. Cook explained, "They each get a digital field camera, the kind used by hunters to track game." Mr. Cook used several COVID related themes, such as having students make exposures six feet away from their subjects to exemplify social distancing.

Upper and Middle School Ceramics teacher Eric Rempe spoke on how his class has changed this school year. Fortunately nothing in the ceramics studio is completely off limits; however, pottery wheels now have tables between them to keep students six feet apart. The biggest challenge was how to keep tools from being used by multiple students in one class period, which is how things have gone in years past. Now, students have individual tool kits, and tools are sanitized after every period.

So far, ceramics students have wedged clay, made pinch pots and stamps, as well as finished their own slab built plates; they have not

yet used the pottery wheels. Mr. Rempe had a positive outlook on this year, stating, "The students are doing a fantastic job of everything they're supposed to."

Junior Bolin Shen, student cohead of the Gallery Club, along with Director of Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery, Jody Erdman, has been helping the Gallery with its cautious approach in accordance with COVID-19 safety regulations. The small, indoor space of the gallery most likely could not properly distance its visitors. Shen commented on how Gallery Club has been handling this situation: "We are currently working on a website for the gallery this year, and since we're online, there is a lot more flexibility; we plan on having student projects on there and hopefully plan exhibitions together to feature students' work." Students will have an opportunity for their work to be shown on the gallery website, even if it cannot be viewed by many people in person.

The Arts department has handled COVID-19 creatively, and the impact of this is reflected in student work. With limited space and safety restrictions, many classes have had to reexamine the physicality of their work to create something that can be made at home or online and displayed virtually.

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PDS art students and faculty are hard at work during the pandemic (Photos/ Princeton Day School Flickr)



# WHAT IS THE BEST MOVIE OF ALL TIME?

SKYE HARRIS, XII  
NEWS EDITOR

I’ve seen my fair share of unforgettable movies and TV shows over the years, especially as streaming services grew in popularity during the early 2010s. Watching films is a form of therapy for many members of the PDS community, and being able to bond over and discuss favorite moments is exciting and interesting. Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, The Truman Show, Ratatouille, Hidden Figures, and Dead Poets Society are some of my favorite watches, but each of us has several films that stand above the rest.

Personally, my all-time favorite movie is The Martian, directed by Ridley Scott and starring Matt Damon. It is a powerful story of strength and determination, especially when the main character is faced with complete isolation from humanity. Matt Damon plays Mark Watney, a NASA astronaut who becomes stranded on Mars and is presumed dead after a storm destroys his spaceship. Watney is faced with the ultimate challenge—

surviving in the harsh Martian environment with limited food and water, and no communication with his crewmates. The screenplay, special effects, and plot-line are all phenomenal, and Damon brings the character of Mark Watney to life in a special way. It is a long movie—over two hours—but you will not be able to take your eyes off the screen.

For Dr. Latham, our beloved English department chair and full-time cinephile, Federico Fellini’s 8 ½ wins her top spot for the greatest movie of all time. This Italian surrealist comedy-drama film, which won the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film in 1964, stars Marcello Mastroianni as a struggling director who finds his best creative work comes when he searches his innermost thoughts and feelings. Michael Newton of The Guardian describes director Fellini eloquently: “Federico Fellini never stuck to the facts. At his best, his films strike a perfect balance between fantasy and reality—and nowhere is this more evident than in his autobiographical classic, 8½.” The movie was released in 1963 but

has clearly been a fan-favorite for the past fifty years.

The Dark Knight Rises, the final installment of the Dark Knight trilogy, wins first place for senior Ava Sarnow, an avid media fan. Directed by Christopher Nolan, The Dark Knight Rises takes place eight years after Batman was last spotted in Gotham City, and focuses on Bane, a supervillain with a desire to cause nuclear destruction. The 2012 film grossed approximately 1.1 billion dollars against a 200-300 million dollar budget, proving to be a commercial and cinematic



The Martian, starring Matt Damon, is a fan favorite (Photo/ 20th Century Studios)

success. It received high reviews from critics and DC Comics fans and is considered one of the highest-ranked DC movies in recent years.

For senior Natasha Ray, Parasite is the best movie of all time. “It has so many complexities, and it’s such a thrilling watch,” Ray explains. Parasite, the comedy thriller directed by Bong Joon-ho, was released in 2019 and won the Academy Award for Best Picture. It tells a story of class and trust through the contrast of two different families in South Korea. John Nugent of Empire Magazine says, “A miracle of a film. It feels like Bong Joon-ho’s already extraordinary career has been building to this: a riotous social satire that’s as gloriously entertaining as it is deeply sardonic.” The film stars South Korean actors Cho Yeo-Jeong, Park So-dam, and Woo-Sik Choi, and has a massive international fanbase.

Are there any movies that you recommend to the Spokesman or the PDS community? Let us know, and happy watching! □

# HOW TO: CHUNKY HAND-KNIT BLANKETS

NATASHA RAY, XII  
FEATURES EDITOR

As the weather gets chillier by the day, we find ourselves packing away our pool floaties from this past summer to replace them with thicker jackets and cozy blankets. However, those cozy blankets can get pretty pricey at stores, and you might be hard pressed to find one at this point in the season. Lucky for us, senior Vanessa Devin has a newfound penchant for hand knitting blankets, and the Spokesman was able to talk to her about how to create one of them from scratch! Though Vanessa is an arts and crafts aficionado, the steps she advises us to follow are simple and do not require prior experience with knitting.

## Materials:

5 Skeins of yarn

## Instructions:

1. When you have gathered all of your yarn, find a surface to lay it all out so that you are able to spread out chains of yarn while working.
2. Take your first strand of yarn and form a small loop, then thread the end of the yarn into the loop to make a knot.

3. Once you have created your first knot, this becomes a loop that you then thread another looped section of yarn through.
4. Repeat this process, creating more loops until you have reached your desired length of loops for the blanket.
5. Once you have finished making the first line of loops, rotate your loop chain horizontally, and make another loop to thread another



Chunky hand-knit blankets are a great idea for an at-home craft (Photo/ Simply Maggie)

loop of yarn through.

6. Use the first line of loops as starting points to thread other loops of yarn through them horizontally, creating a second row of loops.
7. Repeat this process for more rows until you have used up all of your yarn. Remember, you want all of the rows to have the same number of loops! (And if you finish a skein of yarn, just double knot the last piece to the first of

the next skein!)

8. To finish up your blanket, pull through your second inner loop through the first outer one of the last row, until it seamlessly forms a braid.
9. Done! This blanket would be perfect for a cozy fall day, sitting by the fireplace enjoying your favorite Netflix show or movie and sipping a pumpkin spice latte □.



(Photo/ Pinterest)



## ALL DRESSED UP AND NO WHERE TO GO

OLIVIA PHILLIPS, XII  
FASHION COLUMNIST

**D**uring peak lockdown months, I longed for the days where I could rifle through my closet, primp, prep, and light up the town without a second thought. With another quarantine potentially looming, I am relishing in the current moments when I can get all dressed up with somewhere to go, even if it's school. Although I will admit I did enjoy slipping on sweats every day for 7 months and counting, phase two of quarantine fashion relies on that sweet spot between loungewear and sophisticated pieces to stay de rigueur through the winter.

### Sweater Pants

Now that we can see our friends at school and have taken baby steps out into the world, I have concluded that loungewear is no longer très chic. Although the colder months call for warm layers it's time to fold up your pajamas and retire that attire. Despite my exhaustion from relaxed dressing, I am not one to forgo comfort in its entirety. Instead, this season I'm relying on soft knitted sweater pants paired with any fitted top. If you're suffering separation anxiety from your hoodie, combine these pants with a cropped one to keep you toasty and effortlessly stylish.

### "The Balloon Affair"

From sleeves to dresses, you will not look like a clown wearing ballooned attire this winter. This look was spotted across runways for Autumn/Winter 2020 and is now available at retailers such as Revolve and Zara so we can all get a taste of the craze. This trend is all about volume and extravagance, making it easy to dial back the rest of the outfit and rely on this as your statement.

### Combat Boots

If you didn't take my advice last winter, let me help you out by telling you combat boots are a 2020 staple. If you don't already have a pair, get a move on, you're behind the times. If you did read my Winter 19-20 article and happened to follow my suggestions, you're in luck and oh so in vogue; just



Add a pair of combat boots to your collection  
(Photo/ Fashion Jackson)

dig them out and slip them on!

### Flight Jackets

Ladies, you're more than welcome to hop aboard this trend, but gentlemen, this one's for you. We all know and love the flannels you have been sporting for years (and don't get me wrong, you look fabulous), but I think it's time to bid adieu and welcome in a new form of outerwear. NERDY FASHION HISTORY ALERT: flight jackets were actually designed during WWI to keep pilots warm while dodging enemies. Not only will you look incredibly stylish, but now you can sound intelligent when women fawn over you and your bomber.

### Wellness

The hottest accessory to sport year-round is your best self, and taking



Try out a bomber jacket to elevate your look  
(Photo/ Pinterest)

care of your mind and body during stressful times is ultra important. Some of my favorite ways to practice self-care are working out, doing yoga, and feeding my body properly. I love to take showers right before bed, and despite the heated debate between morning vs night showers, I will always stand by the logic that you need to "wash all of the bad off." You'd be surprised at its ability to be a complete reset for your spirit.

Throughout this wild ride of a year, it feels I've been in a rut that, while productive, stays stagnant. I go to school, come home, do work, and go to bed, all to be repeated day after day. Although I have little moments of excitement, such as a field hockey game or dinner at a restaurant, it seems that the only thing in life that is ever-changing is fashion. Not only do the runways bring a breath of newness each season, but every day all of us can do a little shopping in our own closets to create something fresh and unique.

Until next time,

XO  
f



## AMONG US: A REVIEW OF THE HOTTEST GAME RIGHT NOW

TIMOTHY FONG, XII  
FEATURES ASSOCIATE

**I**f you find yourself walking down the one-way hallways, past the tents to class, or across the theater lobby, there is a good chance that you will overhear, "Red sus" or "The body is in electrical" or even, "Get blue out, he just vented." This kind of heated debate is an important part of the game Among Us, where a group of 10 people, two of which are alien imposters, try to figure out who is the killer.

Why has Among Us become so popular? Part of the reason is that the discussion with other people is an integral part of the game, and this unpredictability in the conversation is what makes the game so replayable. If you are an imposter, you have to be able to pretend to be a crewmate in order to not seem suspicious during the discussions. Crewmates have the power to vote people off, but voting the wrong person will cause the game to be a lot easier for the imposters. There are a lot of strategies that come with imposters trying to point figures at other people, and crewmates having to eliminate potential suspects. If

the imposters kill enough people so that the number of crewmates is equal to the number of imposters, the imposters win. However, if the crewmates vote off all the imposters or finish all their assigned tasks, the crewmates win.

There are three maps in Among Us: a spaceship, an airship, and a ground base. The ground base is the largest map, so naturally, it would favor the imposters, because it would take a lot longer for people to find any dead body; the imposter would also have a longer period of time to construct alibis before people find the bodies. Junior Bolin Shen says that the ground base map is one of her favorites because there is a variety of ground base-specific tricks that imposters could pull off, but it is also more heart-pounding for the crewmates on that map. On the other hand, junior Christian Meyer prefers the airship map because of how every single vent connects (vents allow imposters to teleport to different locations). These vents can allow imposters to frame innocent crewmates, and this kind of complex strategy is why Among Us has risen to such popularity among the PDS community. □



The Impostor's goal is to kill all of the crewmates without being voted out (Photo/ Inverse)



There are a variety of colors users can choose from for their character profile (Photo/ Stanford Arts Review)



# WELCOMING THE BAGA D'MBA TO PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL

BOLIN SHEN, XI AND  
MEHAK DHALIWAL, XI  
ARTS ASSOCIATE, FEATURES ASSOCIATE

What if we told you that a centuries-old piece of artwork so famous that it has been written about by the Metropolitan Museum of Art is currently located in our very own hallways?

The massive wooden headdress shown below, measuring about four feet high by two feet wide, is an example of regional artistic traditions dating back to the 17th century. It is known as the D'mba, and was created and worn among the Baga cultures of Guinea coast, Africa. Historically, these headdresses have been worn in dances held at planting times and harvest celebrations, as well as at marriages, funerals, and ceremonies in honor of special guests.

Originally in the private collection of Isabella de la Houssaye, mother of five PDS alumni, the headdress was lent to Upper School Dean of Students and AP Art History teacher Dr. Elizabeth Monroe. It has been kept in her office for the past six years. This August, the D'mba headdress was offered to Director of the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery, Jody Erdman. She says, "...in the past, the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery has had four extraordinary exhibitions of works on loan of African and Asian cultures from [Isabella de la Houssaye's] collection. The Baga D'mba was included in one of her exhibitions of African Art but it remained on loan after the exhibition was over until August, when she asked me if the school would like to keep it." Considering factors like storage and preservation, PDS rarely ever acquires any artwork from outside of school, but Head of School Paul J. Stellato recently accepted the generous gift from Ms. de la Houssaye.

The D'mba has a fascinating history and unconventional iconography. It is illustrative of the role of females in Baga culture, symbolizing femininity and the universal mother. It is interesting to note that, instead of being representative of a spirit, which is common for masked representations from other African cultures, the Baga D'mba is more abstract in its portrayal of a woman at her zenith and height of power. The headdress is known as the inspiration for giving strength to young women and completing the roles they were assigned

in society (raising children, inspiring the ancestors, etc.). In addition, it is remarkable through its very survival and preservation. In the late 19th century, Roman Catholicism became a huge hindrance to Baga culture. Even after Guinea became independent in 1958, its government suppressed all non-Muslim religious practices and destroyed large amounts of artwork from the Baga people. Having endured the vicissitudes of socio-political upheaval, the headdress now stands witness to perseverance in the face of intolerance and aggression.

The D'mba presents Princeton Day School with a remarkable range of cross-divisional teaching opportunities and meaningfully intersects with a variety of our outreach and programming initiatives. During the short time the Baga headdress was displayed in the front hall of the school and in the gallery, it was a compelling source of fascination and a focal point for class discussions and projects. Now fully adopted by Princeton Day School, the sculpture will be a catalyst for experiential learning across all divisions.

For instance, given that the

cotton cloth shawl added to the D'mba during performances was always imported from Europe, and never of African manufacture, history classes studying global trading networks or the European colonial presence will find the wooden headdress an exciting, physical manifestation of these otherwise remote concepts. Further testimony to the power of similar objects as teaching tools from the "Currency and Costume in Pre-Colonial Africa" exhibition at the Anne Reid '72 Art Gallery is given by Acting Head of Upper School Chris Rhodes: "My ninth grade World Studies class visited the Africa exhibit during our unit on early civilizations. One of the central lessons of the unit was how the agricultural revolution allowed for the creation of larger, more complex and less egalitarian societies. The exhibit allowed the students to explore and think about job specialization, patriarchy, and social classes. The students quickly saw and understood how different dyes, styles of dress and ornamentation highlighted gender and class differences. It was a great mini field trip."

The Baga D'mba will be a powerful expression of PDS'

commitment to diversity, sustainability, and global citizenship, not to mention our fostering of creativity in a range of forms. If displayed in the newly renovated spaces of Colross, for instance, with an informational plaque, one can easily imagine prospective families and students admiring the carving while appreciating our school's emphasis on experiential learning. Newly invigorated programs, such as interdisciplinary teaching, will also benefit from having the sculpture easily accessible.

As Dr. Monroe puts it, "PDS is incredibly fortunate to have received such a generous and impactful gift. This magnificent shoulder-headdress will resonate across all three divisions of our school as our students and teachers engage with it from almost innumerable perspectives - from the visual and performing arts, to our history, English, and Language courses. The power of the Baga D'mba stems from its immediacy; one cannot help but be entranced by it as an object, an embodiment of innumerable stories and relationships, a witness, and a catalyst." □



(Photo/ Met Museum)



(Photo/ Khan Academy)



The Baga D'mba is an important historical artifact for the Baga peoples (Bottom Photos/ Rand African Art)



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# MENTAL HEALTH AT PDS: STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

ELEANOR DING, XI  
COPY EDITOR

The past few months have been an extremely stressful time for the PDS student body. With the general atmosphere of worry and fear created by the pandemic, compounded with normal stressors such as tests, essays, and college applications, it is only natural for students to be concerned about their mental health. PDS should be a place where students feel comfortable expressing their mental health issues, which brings up the question: has PDS done enough to support students during the pandemic?

Several students have expressed concerns about how PDS has been handling mental health issues during this time. Junior Anshika Virani says, “I feel like they’re doing well in the sense that they have Upper School gatherings to talk about how there are outlets to go to if you need support, but it’s not openly advertised or advocated.” Indeed, PDS does offer counseling services. If you find yourself struggling, you can reach out to Learning Specialist Samantha Dawson or Director of Wellness Maritoni Shah.

Virani and other students are also critical of how academics are being handled in the time of the pandemic. She comments, “I feel like sometimes teachers don’t really see if you’re super stressed, especially given COVID-19. There’s not a lot of support for students who are going through a lot.” Junior Bolin Shen adds, “we have the same amount of work as past years but it is harder to stay focused, learn, get feedback, and have meaningful exchanges with teachers.”

Personally, I think that PDS could do a lot better with mental health support during this pandemic. Like Virani, I believe outlets for support could be more openly advocated. I also think that PDS should use advisory periods as a time for counseling and mutual uplift, rather

than setting a strict agenda every time. Advisory provides a time where students can more openly talk about their struggles and experiences with an adult and in a circle of close-knit peers and setting a specific topic to talk about during every advisory almost defeats that purpose.

As for how academic stress can be better alleviated, junior Linda Qu suggests: “I think for people like me, it would be helpful if deadlines on major assignments are a bit more flexible and lenient... I would also enjoy one-on-one conversations with teachers, whether it’s with my advisor or with the teachers who are teaching me this year. Even if we talk about things that are not really directly related to mental health, I think deep conversations would help me to focus on something beyond myself that myself and effectively de-stress.”

Unfortunately, many students are currently finding it difficult to seek help at PDS. In general, I think that the conversation around mental health in PDS and the larger local community is still stigmatized—although there is plenty of talk of mental health in the abstract, few students actually feel comfortable openly talking about their own mental health or seeking support. This can be highly isolating, as students who perceive themselves to be struggling alone may be less likely to seek help. I think PDS needs to more directly address mental health within the community, and this starts by creating spaces where people feel comfortable opening up about what they are struggling with.□

The logo of Princeton Day School, featuring a circular emblem with a torch in the center, surrounded by the words "PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL".

A photograph of a student with dark hair tied in a bun, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The image is tinted with a blue color.

(Photo/ The University of Kansas)

A black and white illustration of a person's head. The top of the head is open, revealing a brain filled with various shapes and symbols, including the letters "COVID". The person has a distressed expression.

Students are in even grater need of support during these time (Images/ Ava Fong)



# MENTAL HEALTH AT PDS: FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

ELEANOR DING, XI  
COPY WRITER

Mental health is a tricky subject in PDS, especially now that the Covid-19 pandemic has created added stress in an already stressful high school experience. While students have their own perspectives on how mental health has been addressed in PDS so far and what can further be done to improve student experiences in this unique school environment, the PDS faculty has also been working behind the scenes to support student mental health through rigorous teacher workshops and improvements to the design of student learning platforms. Learning Specialist Samatha Dawson acknowledged the difficulty that online learning has brought to supporting student mental health. “It’s easier to support you when you’re [in school],” she explained. “One of the biggest challenges that the pandemic has made for students is that students who are struggling tend to disengage... Usually if an advisor or teacher was really worried about someone they would walk them down to my office. But when students are disengaged and not on campus, it’s really hard to get them to re-engage.” The distance created between students and their normal support systems due to social distancing protocol both exacerbates mental health issues and makes it more difficult for students struggling with mental health issues to seek the help that they need. To address this disconnect, US Dean of Students Elizabeth Monroe suggests that advisory should be used as a space to create

connections. “Given more than ever this dislocation and the fact that so many of us are in physically different places right now, I think advisory could best be used as a baseline check in between advisor and student to really understand the student’s experience and then be connecting that student with whatever supports they need,” she elaborated. Advisory check-ins should be frequent, in order to form a community in which students feel comfortable sharing problems with their advisor and with one another. Both Dr. Monroe and Dr. Dawson mentioned that teacher-student relationships in PDS are central to the PDS experience, and that teachers are always available as an outlet for support if needed. “I think we’re fortunate that we see

our students having good adult relationships, and when they need help they frequently do reach out to a trusted adult,” said Dr. Dawson. Additionally, teachers have received extra training this year in order to recognize signs of distress within students, and to refer them to mental health resources if need be. The PDS administration has engaged with a great amount of research on the subject of online learning and engagement in order to create a safe and warm learning environment, even despite the circumstances. However, the system as it currently stands is not perfect, and the faculty are aware of this: “I would point out now that teachers are learning along with students,” Dr. Monroe states. “If there’s a student right now whose experience is sub-

optimal, or if they are drowning in a class, or if they are not doing well on tests repeatedly, then teachers don’t know how to help if they don’t know the issue. I would just encourage every student for their own mental wellbeing to just communicate: to let a department chair know, let an advisor know, let a teacher know... the adults are here to help you and we want to.” If you are currently struggling with your mental health or know someone who is, PDS counselors and teachers are always available to provide support. Additionally, if you know of an urgent mental health crisis, please do not hesitate to seek immediate help, either by calling 911 or telling a trusted adult. □



PDS faculty are working to make hybrid-learning effective for students (Photo/ PDS Flickr)

# WHICH IS BETTER: IN PERSON OR ONLINE SCHOOL?

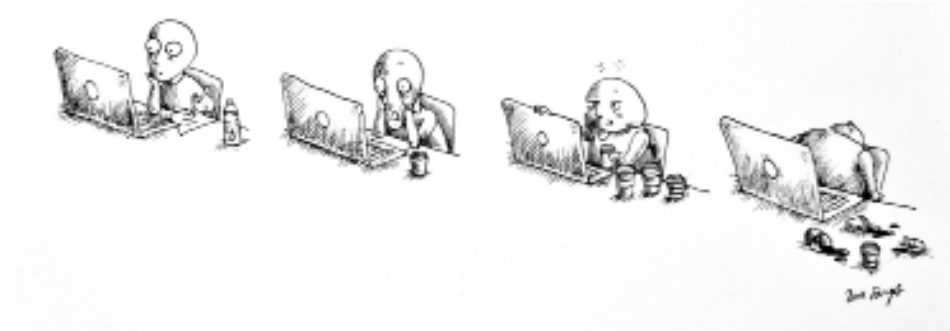
MILAN PATEL, XI  
STAFF WRITER

Online versus in-person learning is a debate that has been lacking a consensus for well over a month now. There are benefits to both sides, but which one actually helps more? Which one is more desirable to the students? Which one provides the best access to learning? These are all good questions, the answers to which will be personal to every student. Home is where we sleep, where we feel free to do whatever we want, but also where we do a lot of homework. There are pros and cons to being in the comfort of your own room while still being able to contribute to class discussions. Sophomore Jaden Hall, who stayed home this past week, talked about his experience and how online learning was beneficial for him: “The benefits to being at home are greater than I expected. I have been able to get more work done

without feeling tired, and I can do whatever I feel like during my free periods.” Hall is clearly using the advantages of being home to his benefit, but is online learning really that much better? Hall answered: “I am getting a little bored sitting here by myself, considering I can’t connect with my friends, but other than that, it’s pretty good.” He brings up an interesting point—that even though it might be easier to get work done, there is a good chance it’ll be without your friends. The interactions you have will be limited to siblings, parents, and the occasional unmuting on Zoom. So, although there are benefits to being at home, it will come at the cost of decreased social interaction. Even though online learning has been working for a significant amount of time, a lot of students are starting to come back to school. Now, one answer as to why kids might be coming back is because they miss their friends. Students are

becoming more anxious to be with people that they haven’t seen in over six months. Freshman Sebastian Rzecki believes in-person learning definitely beats sitting in the same old room for eight hours. He says, “The feeling of being at school is greater than I remember because, even though I may be more tired at the end of the day, I would look back and think it’s worth it. Staying at home meant I couldn’t be with friends, and I couldn’t socialize even if it means staying six feet apart.” Having tried both online and in-person learning, like many of us,

Rzecki has decided that in-person learning makes him a better student. Rzecki did not have any complaints, which is impressive considering many students still feel disconnected from friends while they’re at school due to the new systems in place. Both online and in-person learning contains pros and cons, but there is no one to say which one outweighs the other. Both sides will tell you that they made the right decision, which may be true for them, but not necessarily for everyone else. □



Many students are struggling to keep up with school this year (Image/ Ava Fong)



THE DANGERS OF PERFORMATIVE ACTIVISM

SANJANA PARAMESH, XI  
STAFF WRITER

Without a doubt, 2020 has brought unprecedented challenges, and although the world constantly faces new issues, the old ones cannot be overlooked. With the killings of Breonna Taylor in March and George Floyd in May, the Black Lives Matter movement resurfaced and received unparalleled recognition. The streets were overflowing with protests, marches, and even violence, yet the most attention came from social media. Millions of posts, videos, petition links, and overall outrage flooded the internet, demanding that Taylor, Floyd, and the countless other African Americans who died at the hands of the police receive justice. The iconic fist that represents the BLM movement and allyship replaced millions of profile pictures, and Instagram stories filled with endless dashes signifying reposts. On June 2, 2020, Instagram went dark with “black out Tuesday” posts—a singular black square made it onto almost every feed in our demographic in support of the BLM movement. As June came to end, however, summer pictures and everyday posts once again clouded our cyberspace. Black squares were archived, the BLM fists were replaced, and suddenly it felt as though the trend had passed. What happened to all of the support? The phenomenon of showing support for a cause for social capital rather than because of true support or allyship is called

Performative Activism, and has become a touchy subject. When BLM was no longer “trending,” activists and allies were enraged at the fake support from countless social media users. Social media has always been known to perpetuate misrepresentations, and with the “trend” dying down while thousands continue to die at the hands of the police, this outrage is more than justified. The issues of police brutality and institutionalized and internalized racism continue to prevail—the fight is not over. White people need to continue to be educated about their privilege, non-Black People of Color need to continue to be allies, and the BLM movement must continue until institutionalized racism and inequality are resolved. When looking intrinsically at Princeton Day School, many students of color have formulated their own views on performative activism. Junior Dhruti Raghuraman says, “I am noticing that being politically aware has become a ‘trend,’ one that many people can easily partake in by posting a few things on their Instagram story and moving on. I can never know what others are doing outside of what they post,

but I do know that we cannot really see change in society unless we translate our thoughts and opinions into action, one that involves a larger audience.” Junior Andre Williams adds: “There’s absolutely no point in being an activist if you don’t genuinely believe in the cause you’re protesting. It makes you look fraudulent, and you can generally tell when someone is actually pushing for change, versus when they simply don’t want to be seen as ‘anti-black’ due to their silence.” In terms of school-wide change, we have seen efforts to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion from the administration, especially in light of the posts on the black@pds Instagram page regarding the experiences that black students have had while attending our school. English teacher and BLSU leader Tony McKinley was named Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; English teacher and AAPI leader Ms. Lee is now the head of CMDT (Community Multicultural Development Team); and the administration has sought guidance from Dr. Diana Artis from Olive Tree Educators, who is a professional in this field. Though performative activism can be seen as detrimental and frowned upon,

Dr. Artis notes that “While [she] understand[s] that one may become frustrated, even angered...[she’s] not sure what we gain by labeling [people’s] effort as performative activism. The paradox is that we might be also angered and frustrated if they did nothing. Perhaps their post is a first step along the path towards anti-racism. Can we truly know their intentions?” She highlights the fact that when someone reposts for the sake of seeming progressive, they are bringing awareness to a subject whether or not their intention was skewed. Ms. Lee adds by saying: “I do think that activism has to go beyond the surface level talk. My hope is that activism is driven by the individual’s commitment to do the work on themselves—to really self-examine their own identities in the service of changing a system that oppresses and dehumanizes people.” Both Dr. Artis and Ms. Lee remark that the difference between performative activism and true activism relies on how much an individual is willing to educate themselves. It is a fine line to tread, but with the right tools, performative activism can be avoided and instead turned into true allyship. Ms. Lee recommends that white individuals who are seeking to become true allies “do the work on themselves and within their communities, look for ways to build solidarity with BIPOC, [and] do not make whiteness the ideal.”

Left Image: Earlier this year, many people posted a black square in support of Black Lives Matter (Image/ Madeline Chia)



(Image/ University of Pennsylvania)



# IS FAIR PAY IN SPORTS REALLY FAIR?

SAM ELKIN, X  
STAFF WRITER

As the Los Angeles Lakers defeated the Miami Heat in the NBA finals on October 11, 2020, Lebron James won his fourth championship ring. WNBA player Sue Bird also won her fourth championship this season, as the Seattle Storm beat the Las Vegas Aces to win the WNBA finals with a sweep of 3-0 on October 6, 2020. These two legends, LeBron James and Sue Bird, should be paid equal salaries, based on their similar statistics and championship wins. However, LeBron was given around \$370,000 as a finals bonus, whereas Sue Bird only received \$11, 356. LeBron’s salary is \$37.44 million annually, while Bird’s is only \$215,000, which is one of the highest yearly earnings in the WNBA.

Some believe that unequal pay in sports is a form of misogyny and that gender shouldn’t determine pay. Increasing the salary of the WNBA would give more of an incentive for women to strive to play in the league and would increase the skill level of the player pool. Currently, many WNBA players also play for other club teams outside of the WNBA for more income, limiting the amount of time to rest and train in the offseason, which can affect their performances; for instance, Sylvia Fowles of the Minnesota Lynx has

also played overseas in China at the same time as playing in the WNBA. Additionally, the Las Vegas Aces, in 2018, had to forfeit a game because of flight cancellations; this problem would never occur in the NBA, as teams have private jets to transport them to games. Junior Arnav Kokkiralala noted that “It’s upsetting that [WNBA players] are paid so little, considering that they’re also professional athletes, but it also makes sense, considering how many more viewers and sales the NBA makes; it just has more revenue. I would focus on promoting the WNBA more if they want them to be paid more.” That being said, as Kokkiralala mentioned, others argue that since the NBA generates more revenue than the WNBA and has a larger fanbase, the NBA players should get paid more than players in the WNBA. This makes sense, as the 2020 NBA finals had more

viewers than the WNBA finals. Game 3 of the 2020 NBA finals had about 5.94 million viewers, which was surprisingly the lowest viewed NBA finals game in history. The WNBA finals, on the other hand, had only 440,000 viewers, which is still much less than the low turnout of the NBA finals. Don’t get me wrong, 440,000 viewers is still a significant amount, but it is diminutive compared to the average number of viewers for an NBA finals game. The average generated revenue of an NBA season is estimated to be \$7.4 billion, while an average WNBA season produces less with \$60 million in revenue. So, people against equal pay believe that since the NBA produces more revenue, the players should make more, hence the reason why LeBron was paid tremendously more than Sue Bird. Freshman Aadi Shankar says, “Sue Bird and LeBron James are both

tremendous athletes. However, I think the wage difference is more dependent on the viewership difference between the WNBA and the NBA, rather than the skill of the players, even though it is unfair that the difference of wages is so drastic.” Although some may argue that the viewership and revenue of the NBA is much higher than that of the WNBA, the wage gap shouldn’t have such a large difference between male and female athletes, as Shankar noted. Because of this, this wage gap is improbable to change drastically, and for the foreseeable future, the NBA players will make more money than the WNBA players, as the NBA generates more revenue. However, a slight increase in the salaries of WNBA players would be more fair to them and could be a plausible, although not ideal, solution to the male and female athlete wage gap. □



(Photo/ Archyworldys)

READ MORE ONLINE



## PHOTOSPREAD: FALL ATHLETICS



Senior Gunnar Clingman running for the cross country team (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Senior Gaby Namouni serving the ball (Photo/PDS Flickr)



**PHOTOSPREAD (cont'd)**

Field Hockey players at a home game against Hun (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Senior Hayden Masia with her parents on senior night (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Girls soccer team running off the field after their last game (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Junior Joaquin Rodriguez passing the ball (Photo/PDS Flickr)



Senior Jules Romano playing in a game against Monroe Township High School (Photo/PDS Flickr)



# OUR JOURNEY ON THE SPOKESMAN

MADISON SINGS, XII, KATIE JAIN XII, ANJALI BHATIA, XII  
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

2020 was, to say the least, an interesting year to be an Editor-in-Chief of a newspaper. From threats of World War III to COVID-19 to the Black Lives Matter Movement to the election, the world at large provided an almost endless supply of material to be discussed and subjects to be shared. After these few years as members of *the Spokesman* and one year as Editors-in-Chief, we reminisce on our roles as our journey on the Spokesman comes to a close.

## Our Journey on the Spokesman

The three of us joined *the Spokesman* our Freshman year—in the fall, we all attended our first meeting as contributing writers, anxious to publish our first articles. While we took different paths—Anjali as a copy editor, Katie as an online associate editor, and Madison as an arts associate editor—through hectic production schedules and hours spent interviewing, writing, and editing, we found a sense of camaraderie within the Spokesman. The fall of our Junior year, we each applied to be an Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, and after the dreaded four-hour deliberations and interview session, we were elected to the position of Editor-in-Chief.

In our first issue, the three of us constructed a Decade-in-Review to usher in the ‘20s. We shuffled

through old *Spokesman* issues dating back years, gathering the articles we felt were most indicative of the PDS experience this past decade. From Davon Reed’s basketball career to the new GLOW club to the Sexual Harassment Clause in the student handbook, these diverse moments defined the 2010s at PDS. Followed by the more traditional February issue, producing PDS’s first Decade-in-Review issue was one of our proudest moments as Editors-in-Chief.

A few months later, COVID struck and the print staff was forced to reevaluate our roles. Our printer facilities shut down, and the valuable feeling of holding a newspaper in our hands was lost. With the help of our persistent staff, we transitioned the entire newspaper online and began publishing online articles at

an exponential rate. Where we had once published once a week, we were able to publish three articles per day. The more we published (and the more colorful posts Katie wrote on Schoology), the more readership grew—by the end of the school year, online readership had tripled. While the Decade-in-Review might be our most tangible achievement, seeing the community engage with *the Spokesman* was a huge milestone.

Upon returning to school this fall, we were excited to continue growing the newspaper. Although we had to jump over some hurdles, we were able to publish a summer, fall, and winter issue while still maintaining our newly built online presence. We still weren’t able to publish print issues, but hearing students talk in the hallways about their results on the new *Spokesman* quiz or listening

to people watch the video content we published was more than enough to make up for COVID-induced issues.

As we reflect on these past years, we’d like to say thank you to our dedicated editors, associates, and staff writers—your insightful comments, enthusiastic work, and unmatched drive provided clarity during this uncertain time. Without the 50+ members of the newspaper, publishing regular articles and issues would not have been possible. Thank you also to our faculty advisors, Dr. Friedman and Ms. Matlack, whose patience, guidance, and encouragement helped us through each twist and turn as Editors-in-Chief.

And finally, thank you to the PDS community—we’ll be forever grateful for your support. □



(Photo/ Katie Jain)



(Photo/ Anjali Bhatia)



(Photo/ Madison Sings)

# SENIORS SHARE MEMORIES OF THE SPOKESMAN

## THE SPOKESMAN EDITORS

As volume 56 wraps up, senior Spokesman members look back on their time on the newspaper.

Skye Harris, the Print News Editor, says, “Over my past four years in Spokesman, I’ve made amazing memories and relationships with the staff and faculty. A particular tradition that stands out for me was working with the News team during production sessions after school during my sophomore year as an associate. For four hours after school each month, Harjap, Audrey, and I edited our section, bantered and cracked jokes—I don’t think I’ve ever laughed as hard as I did in those moments. Despite the stress of school, being in that environment and collaborating as a trio made the process super fun. I’ll never forget Production in the computer lab with the Spokesman group.”

Natasha Ray, the Print Features Editor, echoed Harris’s thoughts, adding “I’ve loved being a part of Spokesman for all of my years of high school! My favorite part was getting to attend and eventually lead production for my section, as I got to work with a wonderful group

of people each year after school, and I’ll never forget the memories I made with people. It was such a fun and collaborative environment where I enjoyed meeting new people and working with them.

Print Arts Editor Hayden Masia explains that “I always loved production. Even though I was no master of adobe indesign, the combination of music playing

and that after school vibe really was so fun!” She loved getting to hang out with everyone and catch up from month to month.

As for the online staff, Online Features Editor Nazareth Mehreteab says “One memory I have from being a senior editor/writer at the Spokesman is conducting interviews with members of the PDS community. I like the fact

that I have the opportunity to hear how people feel about a particular topic or current event, which allows me to incorporate different viewpoints to my piece!”

After years of hard work and sleepless nights, the editors look back on these memories with fondness, and they look forward to seeing how the Spokesman continues to grow during the next volume! □



the Spokesman attended its first staff retreat during January of this year (Photo/ Diego Vogelmann)