

# The Cougar Chronicle

The Student Newspaper of Haddam-Killingworth High School  
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## HK Athletes Adjust to Cancelled Sports Season

By Haley Phelps

The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) released their decision to cancel all spring sports on May 5, leaving many athletes across the state heartbroken. Here at HK, we have nine spring sports teams and many senior athletes who are trying to make the best of this difficult situation by staying active and continuing to bond with teammates.

Our spring sports coaches have been doing their part to keep their players staying active during quarantine. Jeffrey Talbott, head coach of girls' softball, sent workouts to his players encouraging them to jog, sprint, and play catch with a family member.

Senior pitcher Faith Torello says she has been lifting weights and running in her free time to stay in shape.



Meagan Sears, head girls' lacrosse coach, has provided her players with fitness challenges such as "Friday Fun Run" and workout videos.

Girls' track captain Becca Fisher says she's "staying active by doing the track

workouts that my coach gives the team. I've also been going on walks with my dog a lot."

School trainer Brishen Dearborn has also provided the athletes with weekly workout challenge videos through Select Physical Therapy on YouTube.

Social media has played a large role in keeping the spring sports teams connected. The girls' lacrosse team has made team TikTok videos from their homes, and the HK Wellness Instagram page has shared athletes' baby pictures for people to guess who it is.

For the seniors, this season's cancellation has been especially hard. "It was horrible to lose out on my last season – I really wanted to play with my friends and I won't have the opportunity again," said Torello.

Fisher shares in this grief as well: "I was devastated when I heard track and field was cancelled. I worked so hard over the past four years and it was very upsetting to hear that I would miss my last season."

Although a traditional senior night to honor the work of these senior athletes will not be possible, Ann Deibert, girls' assistant basketball coach and Spirit Club co-advisor, has taken to Instagram to honor the spring athletes.

The HK Cougar Den Instagram now features profiles of each senior with their picture and message from their coach. The Instagram site also features junior captain profiles and videos of students doing sports activities at home to keep the Den community alive.

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## School Makes Transition to Distance Learning

By Anna Biondi

During the past few months, students all over the world have had to switch from in-person learning to online schooling. This change has had its ups and downs, but it will forever change the way education is done in the future.

The RSD 17 Board of Education recently passed a mandate that would allow every student in the upcoming school year to have their own Chromebook. Students in grades K-5 are not allowed to take Chromebooks home after school, but students in grades 6-12 will be allowed to take theirs home for school purposes.

This decision was made in light of the distance learning that is occurring during the governor's Covid-19 Stay Home, Stay Safe order. There have been mentions of a possible return of the virus later this year during the colder weather, which could issue another school cancellation.

It is not certain if schools will be open in the fall or open for long. Many Connecticut officials are still discussing what will happen in the upcoming months.

State Epidemiologist Dr. Matthew Carrter said, "We are going to continue to see transmission of this virus through the summer and it is quite likely that we will see a second wave of this pandemic in the fall. Our plans need to be flexible to turn rapidly and adjust to that."

As explained in a series of emails sent out by HK Principal Donna Hayward, a survey asked parents about the workload students were receiving and how challenging they thought it was. The survey showed mixed results: the workload was seen as being too light, just right, or too heavy. Also, some students were able to adjust to it, while others struggled.

Ms. Hayward said, "It is no surprise that, as education is very much a human endeavor and we are all very different in our needs and responses, we will need to continue to communicate, adjust, and support our kids throughout this experience."

One of the interesting points about the shift to online learning is that there might not be "snow days" in the future. This means that even if school is canceled due to snow, students will still be able to have access to their work and teachers.

While the future is uncertain, many appear prepared to adjust to the new normal of online learning. Eventually, COVID-19 will pass. But the long-term changes to schooling are imminent.



## Hollywood Star Offers "Some Good News"

By Griffin Robinson

Hollywood star John Krasinski, star of *The Office* and *A Quiet Place*, provided people throughout the country with a glimmer of hope in his web series, "Some Good News." Available on YouTube, the series premiered on March 29 and aired a total of eight weekly episodes.

"Some Good News," also referred to by the acronym "SGN," is "a news show dedicated entirely to good news," according to Krasinski. Each episode is hosted by Krasinski, who talks about feel-good stories, as well as introducing celebrity guests to join the show.

One aspect of quarantined life Krasinski focused very heavily on is the graduating class of 2020. The coronavirus cancelled proms, graduations, and other senior activities that Krasinski was determined to emulate to the best of his ability.

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“Episode 4: Prom 2020” featured musical guests such as The Jonas Brothers, Chance the Rapper, and Billie Eilish, all of whom played a short musical segment for the show. The episode finished off with a stream from NASA astronauts Jessica Meir, Chris Cassidy, and Andrew R. Morgan aboard the International Space Station, and Brad Pitt providing a weather forecast

Ava Lindell, a senior at HK, said the virtual prom was “fantastic! Everyone needs a little positivity in their life right now, and Some Good News certainly made senior prom memorable.”

Multiple episodes of SGN also included a charitable donation or gift, usually to frontline workers of the pandemic. In “Episode 3: Baseball is Back,” Krasinski gave five healthcare workers a trip to Fenway Park. Krasinski also announced that he had negotiated a deal with AT&T to provide free cellphone service for all doctors and nurses for the next three months

The finale to SGN aired on May 17 with “Episode 8: The SGN Community Episode!” that featured submissions from viewers across the country. However, the show may have a future in the works after being purchased from Krasinski by CBS.

## Shows to Binge-Watch Safely from Your Home

**By Devin Gallant**

During these times of social distancing and prolonged stays at home, binge-watching has never been more popular. Here a few suggestions to add to your personal viewing list:

### *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (Netflix)

This 2005 animated series has become a widely popular and nostalgic show for both people who are revisiting it and those who are first-time watchers. Set in a world which is divided into four nations – Earth, Water, Fire,

and Air – some people are able to “bend” or control one of these elements.

The series follows Aang, the last existing Airbender, who also happens to be The Avatar, the only person who can control all four elements. Aang, along with Waterbender, Katara, her brother Sokka, and Aang’s pet flying bison Appa (the cutest animal of all time), must learn to bend each of the four elements in order to end the war which has been taking place for the past 100 years, waged by the Fire Nation.

Adding to the show is the “villain” Zuko who was banished by his father from the Fire Nation and must capture and stop The Avatar in order to return and bring himself honor. Zuko is also accompanied by his Uncle Iroh, who ends up being a very wise and fun character to provide comic relief.

While made for children, the show is still largely enjoyable to binge-watch during this extended amount of downtime. I would highly recommend this three-season Nickelodeon show for people looking for a lighthearted watch to distract from these not-so-lighthearted times.



### *Chuck* (Amazon Prime)

Starring Zachary Levi, this 2010 action-comedy series follows Chuck Bartowski, a worker for the “Nerd Herd” at the local “Buy More.” Chuck receives a strange email from a former Stanford roommate and accidentally becomes the US government’s most important and sought after asset.

Chuck and his FBI and NSA guards, Sarah and Casey, have to execute their various missions as well as protect Chuck who is now “The Intersect” from those who want him and his knowledge. Meanwhile, they all must maintain their cover among Chuck’s sister Ellie, best friend Morgan, and everyone else in his life.

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The show is a comedic, action-packed tale that will easily envelop you in a most enjoyable way. It's definitely a great watch for people who have re-watched "The Office" one too many times and are looking for something new. It looks and feels like it's from 2010, but it's a very entertaining and fun watch.

### ***Documentary Now!*** (Netflix)

From the minds of Saturday Night Live alums Bill Hader, Fred Armisen, and Seth Meyers, "Documentary Now!" is a hilarious series from IFC, especially for Documentary and Film buffs, as well as for comedy and SNL fans.

The show consists of episodes which are each separate parodies of famous and interesting documentaries, usually starring Bill Hader and Fred Armisen. One of my favorite episodes, from Season 3, is titled "Original Cast Album: Co-Op" and is based on the documentary about the production of the cast album for Stephen Sondheim's Broadway show "Company." The episode tells the story of the cast and production team of the new, and already cancelled, show "Co-Op," a musical that takes place in a New York City co-op, telling the stories of the various members and tenants. It follows the grueling and hilarious production of the cast album in the year 1970. The episode stars additional SNL alums like John Mulaney and Taran Killiam, as well as Broadway stars like Alex Brightman and Renée Elise Goldsberry.

This series is a perfectly wonderful and comedy-filled anthology of fake documentaries that is perfect for comedy and film lovers alike. Also, every episode starts with an introduction from Helen Mirren.

### ***Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan*** (Amazon Prime)

This Amazon Original Series stars John Krazinski, of "The Office" fame, as Jack Ryan, an CIA analyst in DC. Ryan, along with his new boss played by Wendell Pierce, investigates a series of suspicious bank transfers, which quickly move Ryan from his desk and into the field where he has to eliminate a rising terrorist movement that is preparing for a massive attack against Western societies.

This show is intense and action-packed, telling the story of two hard-working men and the systems of the US government taking down a powerful network of terrorists. Not only is there an interesting and thrilling plot, but the complexity and growth of the characters, specifically Jack Ryan, is very attention-grabbing and brings a deeply heartfelt and driving force to the show and its plot.

Through two seasons, the fast-paced action and captivating detective/spy work definitely appeals to lovers of crime dramas, thrillers, and politically focused entertainment. I would highly recommend this show, as I have re-watched the entire series twice after having Amazon Prime for about eight months.

## **Seniors Share Reflections Through Personal Videos**

The Haddam- Killingworth High School senior class of 2020 created video reflections of their time at HK with help from Broadcast teacher Ms. Topa- Finberg. The videos include funny memories, advice to underclassmen, and thanks to their favorite teachers.

Dalton Modehn: <https://youtu.be/BljE-oAUzsc>

Emily Bagnoli: <https://youtu.be/JHNBf04LqR0>

Anna Biondi: <https://youtu.be/1Ouve4TKVgc>

Devin Coon: <https://youtu.be/E8Ja5NNJ2aM>

Kevin Giulini: <https://youtu.be/YY92yvPTHNk>

Tea Marinaro: [https://youtu.be/uAo3Nv\\_Xu50](https://youtu.be/uAo3Nv_Xu50)

Ryan Klimaszewski:

<https://youtu.be/fVMJAMZX3o0>

David Tinker: <https://youtu.be/jAuq--rB5wk>

Joseph Formica: <https://youtu.be/ZiLJzVoy4Qk>

Haley Phelps:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6seDhmt1TEQ&feature=youtu.be>

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